

Univerzita Hradec Králové
Pedagogická fakulta
Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Ženy Velké Británie napříč kulturním a literárním životem

bakalářská práce

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Women of Great Britain across Culture and Literature

Bachelor's Thesis

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Práce vymezí pojem feminismu. Dále se zaměří na studium postavení ženy ve společnosti a historicko-společenské vlivy, které se podílely na vzniku feministického hnutí ve Velké Británii. Součástí práce bude drobný výzkum.

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“Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla jsem všechny použité prameny a literaturu.“

v Hradci Králové dne

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Tímto bych chtěla poděkovat vedoucí mé bakalářské práce Mgr. Olze Vraštilové, M.A., Ph.D. za trpělivost a vstřícnost při konzultacích a panu Mgr. Michalu Pištorovi za poskytnutí odborných rad.

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Práce vymezí pojem feminizmu. Obsáhne jednotlivé feministické směry rozvíjející se v průběhu jeho vývoje, představí hlavní proudy, kterými se ubírá v posledních letech a neopomene také faktory a historicko-společenské vlivy podílející se na jejím vývoji a samotném vzniku. Dále se zaměří na studium postavení ženy ve společnosti s ohledem na historická dění především v oblasti Velké Británie a různá kritéria rozdělená dle oblasti působnosti ženy. Součástí práce bude drobný výzkum mapující současné problémy žen týkající se porušování jejich práv, jak v zaměstnání, tak i v osobním životě, dále pak postoj žen k feministickému hnutí a ženské emancipaci na základě dotazníků předložených jen respondentům britské národnosti. Dotazování byli muži i ženy.

Klíčová slova: Feminismus, práva ženská, Velká Británie, Literatura, Postoje k feminizmu

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1. Introduction

My bachelor thesis named *Women of Great Britain across Culture and Literature* is dedicated to the issue of feminism and women's rights. The first chapter is focused on feminism in general, on the official definition, formation and development from early history to recent years. The article also comprises an examination of each of the branches of feminism in detail, an introduction to the most significant types of feminism and the psychological factors which have influenced feminism and women's perception the most. In this article, the first political parties which have adopted the quotas on access of women to the Parliament and generally the access of women to the political sphere in UK are also mentioned. The next chapter concerning the declaration of women's rights and history of the position of women in society is divided into several parts explaining various spheres of women's activities, their limitation and permission within the domain of parental rights, marriage, divorce, civil and legal acts, education, work position and abortion. The chapter also includes improvements in the form of Acts of Parliament. As feminism has just been described I turn to explain its development in Great Britain. The first organized group and the leading personages contributing to the creation and direction of the movement. The chapter is comprised of a description of the transformation of feminism into the suffrage movement demanding women's enfranchisement and including various types of interventions and reciprocal influences among different groups. Afterwards, I state the main impulses for the foundation of these groups, the first organized marching protests in the streets and the development of modern feminism with the main features. The last chapter of the theoretical section is dedicated to the feminist literature which contributed a lot to the development and the creation of the movement. It includes an introduction to the leading writers supporting the idea of human equality and enfranchisement from the early history with a short presentation of the main literary pieces of work.

As for the practical section, the aim of the thesis is to survey social attitudes towards feminism and women's emancipation to summarize the current situation of British women and contemporary difficulties concerning the sex based on a questionnaire filled-in by solely British people.

When it comes to the citing literature and sources, I opted for MLA (Modern Language Association) style footnotes quotation through the whole text, e.g. Walters, 2005, p. 9 in case

of Internet sources e.g. Feminism, 2014, [online]. Bibliography is available at the end of the thesis. In theoretical section, some parts of the text are translated from Czech into English by the author, all the time it is mentioned in the text and cited as required, according to the previously presented rules. Most of the text of the theoretical section includes sequenced of paraphrases accompanied by my own comments at the beginning or/and at the end of the sequence. The own text and paraphrases are visibly separated by the opening part, e.g. As mentioned in the book of Nancy Cott..., It is said that..., As these authors state in their books..., etc. All of the paraphrases and quotations are cited in footnotes.

2. Feminism

The following chapter is dedicated to the feminism itself and its history and development in general. The aim of this chapter is to give a clear and comprehensive view on the topic, to present the factors which influenced feminism the most, how demands of feminists have changed over time and to introduce current tendencies. This chapter concerns also psychological factors influencing the women's status in society and women's political situation nowadays and in the past.

2.1 Feminism as a term

As mentioned in the book of Nancy Cott, the term feminism officially appeared in the 1910s but, in fact, it has been determined and developed over hundreds of years. In the 19th century, people did not use the word feminism, but they spoke of advancement of women, women's suffrage or the cause of women. As women openly manifested their rights and confirmed their social position, people started to speak of the women's (liberation) movement. In the 20th century, when the word started to be considered a little archaic, feminism as a term came into use. But the term is still hardly definable and there is more than one definition.¹ As an example, the definition of feminism according to the Oxford Dictionary is: "*Feminism is the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes.*"²

2.2 History of feminism

It is said that the first attempts of feminism started much earlier. It stretches back to the times of Mesopotamia, to the discussions of matriarchy. Also in Antiquity, in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance women fought for asserting their rights.³ For example, in 1405 the French woman writer Christine de Pisan published *The Book of the City of Ladies*.⁴ In those times, it was mostly more educated women who actively participated in the issue as well as during the

¹ Cott, 1987, pp. 3-4

² Feminism, 2014, [online]

³ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, p. 1

⁴ Baumgarden, 2011, [online]

Enlightenment in the 18th century.⁵ One of the example of women's public initiative influenced by the enlightened period is the work called *Declaration of the Right of Women* written in 1791 and issued by Olympe de Gouges, a French political activist. Nevertheless, the movement considered to be 'real' feminism emerged in the early 19th century in the USA and Western European countries and we distinguish 3 main waves: ⁶

2.2.1 First wave

The first wave grew out of the attempts to abolish slavery.⁷ But it fully appeared during the Industrial Revolution, during the period when women were stereotypically required to be at home, to care for their husband and children and not to be engaged so much in public activities. During the time of the first wave feminists, the main structure, fundamental principles and ideas were created.⁸ As Nancy Cott mentions in her book, "*to feminists was the main goal a real social revolution, freedom of all women's expressions, women's economic independence, end of double standard of sexual morality, equal opportunities in education, employment and rights of property and of political representation.*"⁹ At the turn of the century, industrial capitalism was consolidated which led to the massive migration of people from farms to cities, but also to European immigration. Rapid urban growth, visible differentiation of social classes and rise of the tertiary sector were also noticed. "*Those years were a period full of innovations and inventions such as telegraph, photograph, telephone, electricity, automobile, airplane, wireless, electric railway and science and also professional, educational and occupational advance of women.*"¹⁰ It led to increasing numbers of women wage-earners and white-collar female workers, as „*women doctors, lawyers, women public health officers, women architects, newspaperwomen or women novelists, etc.*"¹¹ The growth of women's employment and of the number of the new type of educated women in public life provoked a new era in the women's movement. Women, then, demanded to be enfranchised. They grouped together and founded the women's suffrage movement, the so-called Suffragettes in Great Britain. This newly-established movement was sometimes mixed up with feminism because of the similarities in their demands, but it was not quite justified.

⁵ Walters, 2005, p. 34

⁶ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, p. 1-2

⁷ Baumgarden , 2011, [online]

⁸ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, pp. 5-7

⁹ Cott , 1987, pp. 15-20

¹⁰ Cott, 1987, pp. 15-20

¹¹ Ibid, pp. 15-20

Although all feminists demanding the right to vote were suffragists, not all suffragists were feminists as they were focused particularly on enfranchisement.¹² In the late 19th century, black women commenced to engage in the women's movement which elevated the fears (especially in southern America) that thousands of the women, mostly illiterate, could attempt to confirm their rights.¹³ But paradoxically these women were usually not accepted as equal members of women liberation movement, were refused and discriminated by white feminists.¹⁴ During the first decade of the 20th century, the American movement met with British Suffragettes and they started to influence each other. The cooperation of U.S. Suffragists with their British and European counterparts led to the International Woman suffrage Alliance being established.¹⁵ British Suffragettes were first to break usual stereotypes and to engage in public. They became persuaders and made speeches.¹⁶ They also disrupted male politicians' meetings, arranged street demonstrations, mass marches and used them all as means of expressing their own attitudes. This type of manifestation escalated into militant actions including civil disobedience and physical violence.¹⁷ So, when it comes to the first wave feminists, initially, they demanded basic rights as more frequent involvement in spheres they had never been involved in before, they demanded to be enfranchised and to have the same work opportunities. Over time their attitudes have changed and they started to be more and more aggressive.

2.2.2 Second wave

Some authors say that the second feminist wave emerged between the 1960s and 1970s. Radical feminism was widely spread during the period. Performance was used as a type of protest, as an example we could mention guerrilla or underground theatre. Feminists of this period criticized Beauty Contests and commercialized beauty that both were victimizing women. At that time, the women's movement grew out of left-centred Socialist (Marxist) feminism demanding equal pay for equal work, the end of the gender division in education, the destruction of capitalism and rise of socialism.¹⁸ The differences among women increased, thus, the new feminist approach called 'identity politics' was formed. *"It was based on*

¹² Ibid, pp. 15-20

¹³ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, p. 4

¹⁴ Bryson, 2003, p. 16

¹⁵ Cott, 1987, p. 25

¹⁶ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, p. 5

¹⁷ Cott, 1987, pp. 26-28

¹⁸ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, pp. 7-10

diversification of gender, class, race/ethnicity, sexuality and pairing equity and difference."¹⁹ The feminists' arguments supporting the equality of women and men were based on differences among genders. They did not want to be like men and to quash their female qualities. "Moreover, they supported the idea that gender hierarchy of men and their superiority over women was not natural but arbitrary."²⁰ In the 1970s, research and teaching on women's issues were launched and disciplines such as gender or feminist studies developed.²¹ With reference to the acquired women's rights, second wave feminists wanted even more than just basic rights, they enforced that with the new and more aggressive measures. They demanded to have the same opportunities not for being similar to men, but for their individuality, uniqueness, their womanhood and their essential difference.

2.2.3 Third wave

As Kroløkke and Sørensen says, the third wave of feminism was born in the 1990s and it is still developing. Feminists call themselves 'Lipstick feminists' or 'Grrl feminists'. In Europe the term 'new feminism' is used. They often make bands to manifest the revolutionary feminist style as a form of protest. Although members of the movement criticize sexist language and stereotypically true womanliness, they flaunt their femininity by trying to conquer men's world and showing their self-confidence and newly gained power. New words have been invented and feminist theory and politics have been developed. It is a generation in which the new global world order is influenced by newly created technologies and by globalization, having a great impact on women's status in society. It is one of the most serious challenges feminists have ever faced to prove their desired independence. All of these aspects created a new feminist approach to the women's issue called transfeminism which is based on transversity. It demands respect for the diversity of both women and men and necessitates respect for all of the individual human identities (concerning sex) such as gays, lesbians, transsexuals, masculine women, feminine men, etc.²² Unlike the second and first wave feminists, the third ones have already achieved the goal of being more independent, having more opportunities and experiencing less sexism, they are influenced a lot by modern lifestyle, are more open and inclusive of respect to others and often criticize stereotyping of beauty.

¹⁹ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, pp. 12-15

²⁰ Cott, 1987, pp. 15-20

²¹ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, p. 15

²² Ibid, pp.16-19

Sometimes, it is also said that a fourth feminist wave exists. It was launched in 2008 and members of the group create blogs or profiles on Twitter, Facebook and other social web pages or online media in place of real rioting and manifesting.²³

According to Nancy Cott, there are four factors which had greatest influence on the development of feminism. These were: **Enlightenment rationalism** from which feminism adopted a policy of liberalism and a social idea of natural rights and liberties of all humans; **Protestant faith**, particularly Evangelical Protestantism of the 19th century and an idea of women's superiority over men followed; **Quakerism** inspired feminism by an the idea of equality of all human beings before God; and finally **Socialist criticism** which criticizes all inequities in industrial capitalism based on competition and individualism and inspired especially the second way feminism.²⁴

2.3 Nowadays feminist trends

The main source for this topic is the book *Abc Feminismu* written by Lenka Formánková and Kristýna Rytířová which I have read in Czech and translated the chosen articles into English.

As these authors state, currently, there are several feminist movements which are sorted according to their gender theories. They do not actually exist in a pure form, they are reciprocally intermingled and the ideas influence one another. The first group, especially the feminists based on first wave feminism, places the emphases on the similarities among women and men and struggles to gain fundamental rights. **Liberal feminism** is counted among the most dominant. It is one of the strongest movements confirming women's rights based on gaining the equality of women and men in the frame of the legal system, and the opportunities to act and to assert women's rights as equal to men's. **Marxist/Socialist feminism** demands economic equality of women and men, growth of women's economic opportunities, development of job positions open for women, possibilities of retraining, increase in salary and improvement in conditions at work. They criticize, as Marxism itself, capitalism and sympathize with the Marxist theory of the unequal position of women in society rooted in economic dependence on men as well as in gender stereotypes.²⁵ Another

²³ Baumgarden, 2011, [online]

²⁴ Cott, 1987, pp. 15-17

²⁵ Formánková and Rytířová, 2004, pp. 199-204

feminist group is prone to solve the gender inequality not only by changing legislation but also by separating themselves from men's world and their dominance through the creation of women-only organizations and communities. **Radical feminism** also belongs to them. Radical feminists try to solve the problems concerning discrimination against women not by endeavouring to change the causes of the discriminatory manners, meaning the laws in which the rules are rooted, but by creating their own world instead. Radical feminists are concentrated mostly on sexual exploitation of women by men. They do not agree about the Marxist theory of economic superiority of men over women and claim that the main factor influencing women's social inferiority is sexuality. **Lesbian feminism** is another type of radical feminism related with lesbian women considering themselves to be discriminated differently from heterosexuals. Moreover, they seem to be even more confronted with women's rights abuse as their relationship of woman with woman is often regarded as an illegitimate structure.²⁶ Third feminist groups sympathize with the principles of third wave feminism which has become a social phenomenon. The fundamental thoughts and ideas were fragmented and the groups differ in their way of thinking about the social inequities. "*The most important contribution of the third feminist movement is putting great emphasis on relations between gender and other social groups based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social classes, age, religion etc.*"²⁷ Some examples of the third wave feminist movement are **Multiracial feminism** and **Men feminism**. Men feminists support the idea that not all biological men are considered to be 'men' by society, or to be superior. Not all of them receive the benefit of their privileged social position, and not all biological women are regarded as 'women', or as inferiors. There are, of course, more feminist trends which are mostly sorted according to the fields of interest, for example ecofeminism, spiritual feminism or cyberfeminism.²⁸ To sum up, in these days we should not speak about feminism in the singular. There are various types of feminism with various thoughts and ideas, which use various ways of expressing their attitudes.

²⁶ Ibid, pp. 205-206

²⁷ Ibid, pp. 206-211

²⁸ Ibid, pp. 206-211

2.4 Feminism and Psychology

The role of psychology in perception of women in society is crucial. There were some psychological factors which influenced women the most and forced them to tolerate being treated as inferiors for centuries. According to Rae Langton's theory, the first of them was **Dualism** which claims that women and men are two different elements with different attributes. We can recognise body and mind, then emotion and reason. Dualism associates mind and reason with men and body and emotion with women. This inevitably led to women being regarded as incapable of reason. The second factor was **Androcentrism** which is profoundly represented by men and expresses masculine superiority over women. The last factor was the fact that women were always treated as objects and therefore the attitude of denying someone's individuality, subjectivity and autonomy ultimately leads to underestimation of their own personality. A person is said to have a sense over his/her body which is taken as social recognition. This self-reflection is called 'mirror reflection' and creates our personality.²⁹ Moreover, Josef Tomeš points out another factor to consider, it was religion, namely **Christianity**, which further lessened the position of women in society. For example, in the Bible it is for example stated that man had been created before woman and God had given him the power over her and also that Eve and her weakness was the cause for their expulsion from Eden. Androcentrism in religion is further expressed in practice and it is manifested by a prohibition of women against being engaged in ecclesiastical hierarchy. Contrary to this, he claims, the Islamic Koran was a little bit gentler in judging Eve, and women in general, at least in written form. In practice however, it is paradoxically vice versa and Islamic women usually have no right to live independently.³⁰ Not only did scripture, Christian traditions and theology influence the development of women's liberation negatively, they were also sources of information supporting thoughts of women independence through an idea of human equality before God.³¹

2.1 Feminism and Politics (with reference to GB)

Position of women in politics has changed over time as well as the attitudes of women towards politics and political parties. As Nancy Cott states, feminism was created as a left-

²⁹ Langton, 2007, pp. 234-254

³⁰ Tomeš, 2009, pp. 11-13 (own translation)

³¹ Regan Penaluna, 2009, [online]

wing ideology in the political spectrum. From the very beginning, members of the movement considered themselves to be more socialist than capitalist - *“feminism and socialism were regarded as the two greatest movements of those days.”*³²

As it is written in the publication of Russell, Lovenduski and Stephens, it was the Primrose League (PL), a women’s organisation under the patronage of the Conservative Party (the first major UK political organisation) which admitted female members in 1883 and the Conservative Party which was the first to adopt the international quotas concerning women’s representation in Parliament in 1927. The Labour Party was later seen to embrace quotas in the 1980s - 1990s. While the Women’s Labour League (WLL) was formed in 1906, unlike the Primrose League the WLL was fully integrated into the party from the very beginning. But the Conservatives took no advantage of the fact that women tended to sympathize mostly with their programme during the 20th century and the Labour directive made an immense effort to catch women’s attention, in order to change tendencies and to persuade them to vote for their party. They started at the local branch level then continued at constituency, regional level and ultimately the feminisation of British politics had impact on female representation within the National Executive too. Between 1945 and 1997, almost all of the major political parties endeavoured to improve women’s underrepresentation in politics. The Labour Party had been the most successful of them and the Conservatives always had poorer female representation. The admission of the international quotas was influenced mostly by a shortage in female political support and by pressure of feminist members and women’s organisations’, calls for improving women’s representation in politics and demands for training and confidence building for women emerged. It was also an issue of territorial dimension and different cultural customs throughout the UK which affected the differences in political attitudes towards the admission of ‘positive actions’, assuring that women would be selected as candidates for election. These differences were more significantly notable in UK parties. For example Northern Irish parties did not elect any women until the year 2000. *“Generally, the women representation was poorer in Scotland and Wales than in England”.*³³

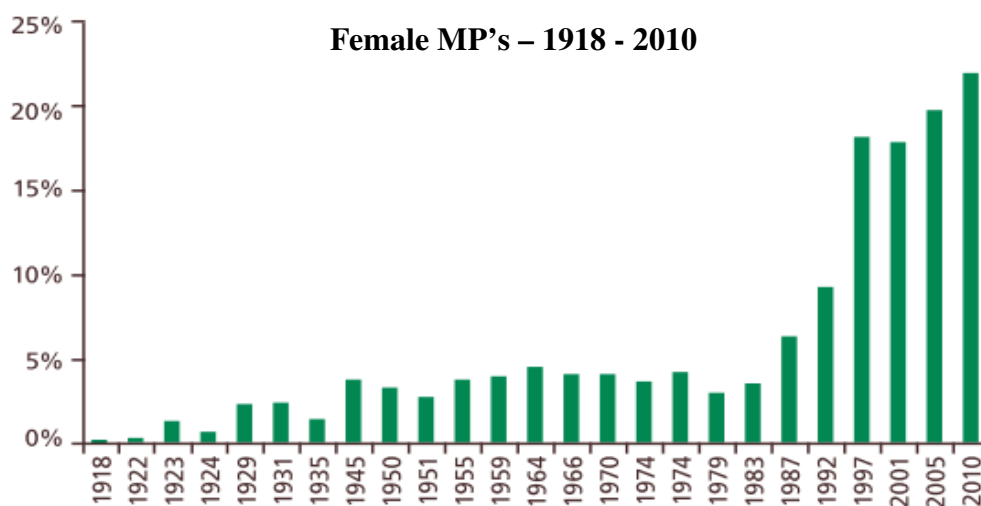
Bergman Gavin et al. also add that Wales has had only 14 female MP’s and Northern Scotland, Borders, Cumbria, parts of Dorset and Hampshire were the regions with the lowest number of female MP’s. Women have been more likely to be elected in towns and cities than in rural areas. This also corresponds closely with the tendency of supporters of the Labour

³²Cott, 1987, p. 35

³³Russell, Lovenduski, and Stephens, 2002, [online] pp. 14-17

party. The party is likely supported in urban areas. “Women MPs have tended to be represented in politics in the UK’s biggest cities as London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle or Glasgow.”³⁴ As far as the women in parliament since 1918 are concerned, the statistical data, announced in the book of Bergman Gavin, et al., show that “in England, 369 women have been elected to Parliament since 1918, 61% (224) were elected for Labour, 28% (105) for Conservative and 6% (23) for the Liberal Democrats”.³⁵ When it comes to the more recent statistical data released by Richard Cracknell, “75% (278) of women have been elected to Parliament since 1980, just about 68% (251) became MPs since 1997 and 35% were elected within the last 20 years.”³⁶

In the following graph and table, both borrowed from the Richard Keen’s notes, we can see the development of women’s representation since 1918, when women (over 30) won the right to vote and could sit in the House of Commons.



Graph 1 – Women MPs 1918-2010³⁷

As we can see in the graph above and following table and as Richard Keen stated in his notes, between the years of 1918 and 1983 the number of women in politics was not swiftly growing. Female representation peaked at 15 in 1931. In 1935 the number of female MP’s decreased to 9. In 1945 at the general election, 24 women were elected and the situation did not change markedly during the next forty years. The highest number of women represented in politics in that period was 29 in 1964, which was still less than 5% of the total. That was caused by the fact that women were still in less winnable seats than men. It means that the

³⁴Bergman, Gavin, et al., 2013, [online] pp. 2-3

³⁵Bergman, Gavin, et al., 2013, [online] pp. 2-3

³⁶Cracknell, 2014, [online]

³⁷ Keen, 2015, [online], p. 5

number of female candidates usually highly exceeded the number of elected women MP's. He also adds that when Margaret Thatcher became the UK's first female Prime Minister in 1979, the number of female political representatives was on rapid decrease. Then in the 1990s, the Labour party started to use the all-women shortlists which opened more potentially winnable seats to female candidates and forced local members to replace retiring male MPs with a certain number of female candidates. This led to the slow increase in number of elected female MP's, but it only started to be visible throughout the following years. To be more precise, in 1992 the number of women MPs rose to 60 and in 1997 it even increased to 120 elected women, i.e. 18.2% of the total and 143 female MPs in 2010. In 2014 only one in five MP's were women, nevertheless the UK had the fifteenth highest proportion of women MP's out of the 28 EU Member States. When female ministers are concerned, during Tony Blair's term in office from 1997 to 2007, the Cabinet was the first to include more than two women in 1997 and even eight women holding the office concurrently, i.e. 36% in 2007 which was the highest number ever. An example of Tony Blair's attempt to be worth mentioning is the creation of a new Women's Unit in the Cabinet Office and the appointment of a Minister for Women. In 2010 during Gordon Brown's Cabinet, there were four female ministers, in 2010 also four women included in the Cabinet under David Cameron and in April 2014 the number of women holding the Cabinet positions fell to three and rose in July the same year to 5.³⁸

	Conservative	Labour	Liberal	Other	Total	% MPs
1918	0	0	0	1	1	0.1%
1922	1	0	1	0	2	0.3%
1923	3	3	2	0	8	1.3%
1924	3	1	0	0	4	0.7%
1929	3	9	1	1	14	2.3%
1931	13	0	1	1	15	2.4%
1935	6	1	1	1	9	1.5%
1945	1	21	1	1	24	3.8%
1950	6	14	0	1	21	3.4%
1951	6	11	0	0	17	2.7%
1955	10	14	0	0	24	3.8%
1959	12	13	0	0	25	4.0%
1964	11	18	0	0	29	4.6%
1966	7	19	0	0	26	4.1%
1970	15	10	0	1	26	4.1%
1974 (F)	9	13	0	1	23	3.6%
1974 (O)	7	18	0	2	27	4.3%

Table 1 - Women MPs 1918-2010, part 1

³⁸Keen, 2015, [online], pp. 9-10

	Conservative	Labour	Liberal	Other	Total	% MPs
1979	8	11	0	0	19	3.0%
1983	13	10	0	0	23	3.5%
1987	17	21	2	1	41	6.3%
1992	20	37	2	1	60	9.2%
1997	13	101	3	3	120	18.2%
2001	14	95	5	4	118	17.9%
2005	17	98	10	3	128	19.8%
2010	49	81	7	6	143	22.0%

Table 1- Women MPs 1918-2010, part 2³⁹

As authors Rosenbluth, Kalla and Dawn state, generally, nordic countries are regarded as the most gender equal with 41.6% of the total numbers of MPs being women. Contrary to this, Pacific countries' percentage rate of women in politics sits at only 15.3%. When it comes to the legal barriers they almost do not exist in these days, but there is another obstacle women face in politics which is natural and is not set up by law, so called a 'glass ceiling'. It concerns for example pre-determined roles of women in family which mean that women usually start politics later than men, the average age for men is 40, for women about 45-50. *"That is why women are still more worried about the loss of privacy, not being taken seriously, gender discrimination or negative advertising."*⁴⁰

The results show the tendency of women in politics over time. We can note that it was not until 1992 that the total number of female MPs surpassed 10%. This proves that the situation of women in politics has been improving really slowly. We can deduce as well that the number of female members of the Labour Party exceeded the number of female Conservatives most of the time which proves that it was mostly Labour Party which tended to be more open to women.

The following list, adopted from the brochure *Making a Difference since 1918* written by Bergman, Gavin, et al., shows the first women in politics:

1918 First woman elected to the House of Commons – **Countess Markievicz**

1919 First woman to sit in the House of Commons – **Lady Astor**

1929 First Cabinet Minister as Minister of Labour – **Margaret Bondfield**

1953 First Conservative Cabinet Minister as Minister of Education – **Florence Horsburgh**

³⁹ Keen, 2015, [online], p. 6

⁴⁰Rosenbluth, Kalla and Dawn, 2015, [online], Foreword

- 1958** First woman to receive letters patent as a life peer in the Lords – **Baroness Wootton of Abinger**
- 1964** First woman to hold successive posts in Cabinet – **Barbara Castle**
- 1970** First woman Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons – **Betty Harvie Anderson**
- 1979** First Prime Minister – **Margaret Thatcher**
- 1992** First woman Speaker of the House of Commons – **Betty Boothroyd**
First woman chair of a departmental select committee – **Marion Roe**
- 1997/8** First woman Leader of the House and first Chief Whip – **Ann Taylor**
- 2006** First woman Lord Speaker of the House of Lords – **Baroness Hayman**
First Foreign Secretary – **Margaret Beckett**
- 2007** First woman Home Secretary – **Jacqui Smith**
- 2008** The longest serving woman MP with 38 years in parliament – **Gwyneth Dunwoody**⁴¹

⁴¹Bergman, Gavin, et al., 2013, [online], p. 18

3. Women status and social environment in Great Britain

The following chapter determines the position of women in society according to the social standards available to women mentioned in books *A Short History of Women's Rights: From the Days of Augustus to the Present Time* written by Eugene Hecker, *The Status of Women in Great Britain* by Olive Stone and *The Women's Charter of Rights and Liberties* written by Lady MacLaran, all these books were used as the main sources for this chapter. The social standards include rights of woman in marriage, in divorce, as a parent, as a student, as an employee, as a voter and politician and right to contraceptive information and services for women. This chapter is a sequence of paraphrases without my comments as it is a summary of historical development of women's status in the society.

3.1 Woman in marriage

As these authors state in their books, as for a married woman and marriage itself, it was always the Church which decided if marriage was valid or not, by the 12th century. From very early times, only a single woman of mature age was given the same legal rights as a man. “*She could hold land, make a will or contract, she could sue and be sued and she should not have had any guardian.*”⁴² But a married woman was not allowed to take any legal action on her own, her husband was allowed to chastise her and give her a moderate correction by law. Although men's power was reasonably bounded in order not to abuse it, husbands were given great authority over their wives. “*They were permitted to beat her with ships and clubs for misdemeanours and to give her a moderate correction.*”⁴³ During the reign of Charles II (1660 – 1685) this type of superiority started to be doubted and in 1891 was completely abolished. But in reality, wife-beating frequently appeared in the early 20th century in England.⁴⁴ Assaults on or brutality against wives or even the murder of wives were not treated in the same way as a murder of a husband by his wife who was for this type of crime burned alive. In simple terms, the conditions of women were lower than servants'. Their individuality was subordinate to their men who were only under an obligation to support the wife and children by calculated amounts of money or provide them with food.⁴⁵ As far as property of women in marriage is concerned, it was highly limited. The husband was allowed to handle the land in

⁴² Hecker, 1914, [online], p. 121

⁴³ Ibid, pp. 121-127

⁴⁴ Ibid, pp. 121-127

⁴⁵ MacLaren, 1909, [online], pp. 5-14

tenancy of her wife and he was a 'tenant by courtesy' of their children during his whole life. Only widows could be guardians of their own children. All movable property which a woman had at the date of marriage or would acquire during the state became the husband's. The husband could even sell his wife's things during his lifetime, except for necessary clothes which she could only regain after his death. But at first, all property had to be used for the husband's debts and only the rest could become the property of the wife. In 1882 the husband's full ownership over the property of his wife was finally abolished by the Act of Marriage' it was also preceded by less radical laws such as the law of 1857 which forbade the husband to keep his wife's earnings and to neglect her. Before this act, men usually had abandoned their wives and from time to time had confiscated all their property. Since the Act of 1866, the husband had to pay his wife a weekly sum after a desertion and was permitted at any time to come back to his wife but only with certain penalties.⁴⁶ It was since 1966 that courts had the greatest power to validate the inheritance.⁴⁷

3.2 Divorce

After the Reformation, divorce became a civil act because Protestants did not regard divorce as a sacrament. Marriage could be nullified but it was only the Ecclesiastical Court who governed divorce, and it could be initiated only by men. Not until 1801 did a woman file for divorce. Furthermore, because of the high costs of the divorce, the real dissolution of marriage happened very rarely, only in the case of rich people. Scotland was more liberal concerning this issue, thus adultery or desertion started to be one of the reasons for divorce since 1570s. Generally, there were usually double standards of morality concerning an unchaste life. It was always a gross injustice to a woman who had to tolerate the occasional infidelity of her husband while he did not. Man could for example validate a divorce in case of the adultery of his wife whereas a woman had to prove her husband's adultery and then either the cruelty or desertion of her husband.⁴⁸ The Matrimonial Causes Act was passed in 1857, establishing the Court for Divorce, extending opportunities to initiate divorce to ordinary people and giving power over all decisions concerning a divorce to the newly-established court which could nullify a marriage.⁴⁹ Since the year 1923 the position of men

⁴⁶ Hecker, 1914, [online], pp. 121-133

⁴⁷ Stone, 1972, [online], p. 608

⁴⁸ Hecker, 1914, [online], pp. 132-134

⁴⁹ MacLaren, 1909, [online], p. 15

and women in a process of divorce was equal. By approval of the Divorce Reform Act in 1970, the court obtained the power to decide which one of the couple was to transfer their property to another or to any of the children of the family. The main problem was that most decisions were taken by men (the county court registrars) who often openly discriminated against women.⁵⁰

3.3 Woman as a parent

*“Initially, it was always father who was the only guardian for children born in a marriage.”*⁵¹ He earned money and alone decided education, religion, future profession and all matters concerning children. As there was no mother-preference in England and parental rights were actually paternal rights, a woman was only given a right to take the application for bringing up her children to the Court when she did not agree with the father’s decisions. Afterwards, the Guardianship of Infants Act was passed in 1925 and was followed by the Guardianship of Minors Act of 1971 which enacted that all power over children could be conveyed to one of the parents who could provide better for their children. After all, it was the court who decided who could maintain a child. Although, in theory, there was a possibility for women to raise their children since 1925, in practice the circumstances of women did not permit this to happen at the beginning.⁵²

3.4 Education

In the past, women were offered only elementary education provided by monastery or hospital. It included writing, reading and simple arithmetic. During the reign of Queen Anne (1702 – 1707) there were numerous of boarding-schools for young girls which provided only ‘pure women’ subjects such as Needle, Dancing, French or even Cookery.⁵³ Later, boys and girls had the equal opportunities to free compulsory education until the age of 15, later augmented to 16 years, though the opportunities in the choice of subjects differed. *“Women*

⁵⁰ Stone, 1972, [online], pp. 609-610

⁵¹ MacLaren, 1909, [online], p. 32

⁵² Stone, 1972, [online], pp. 613-615

⁵³ Hecker, 1914, [online], pp. 137-141

did not have access to Physics, Chemistry, Technical drawing, Metalwork or Woodwork".⁵⁴ There were, of course, some women who were well educated in earlier years but they were only the rich ones. In the last half of the 19th century, Bedford College, the first college providing higher education to women, was established. About eight years later, the first courses in pharmacy were opened to women in Edinburgh. In those days, there were also many schools providing the studies to women together with men.⁵⁵ At the second half of the 19th century, it was actually Emily Davies who pioneered the idea of access of women to university and founded the first women's college, Girton College, at the Cambridge University. Six years later, it was Lady Margaret Hall who continued in Oxford. *"But finally in Oxford women gained full-membership in 1919 and the Cambridge University commenced to grant them degrees from 1921."*⁵⁶ Concerning industrial training, unlike girls, boys got access to apprenticeships or comparable training during employment more easily. That is why the research of 1969, released in Stone's book, shows that women are much less engaged in apprenticeships. While there were about 7.1% of girls participated in training, the boys were about 42%.⁵⁷

3.5 Woman and work

When Queen Victoria gained the throne in 1837, the status of women was one of the lowest in history. On the one hand, the Victorian period was the period of gentility, full of exaggerated nobility and false morality but also full of paradoxes. Women of the lower-class, on the farms for example, had to work hard in the field or in cottage industries or were even engaged, together with their children, in mills or mines. It was restricted not until 1842 by Mines Act. The development of industry led to the expansion of employment for women but it had also a negative impact on women leading to an extension of prostitution and pornography which also contrasted with the genteel Victorian society.⁵⁸ Generally, when conditions of a family were good, it was not common for woman to go to work. She worked only because her husband did not do so, he was not willing to support her or she did not have any husband and

⁵⁴ Stone, 1972, [online], p. 617

⁵⁵ Hecker, 1914, [online], pp. 141-143

⁵⁶ Walters, 2005, pp. 62-63

⁵⁷ Stone, 1972, [online], pp. 617-618

⁵⁸ Stone, 1972, [online], pp. 592-593

her earnings were essential for the family.⁵⁹ Open access to universities for women during 19th century led to women being employed in nearly all types of professions, nevertheless, they had not obtained enough training and technical education which caused low wages for many of them. But the number of women employment was still strictly regulated. The various Factory Acts prevented women from entering more than a few occupations and limited the hours worked by them. On the one hand, these restrictions prevented women from hardworking and exploitation in work but, on the other hand, they allowed for the exclusion of women from numerous usually lucrative employments which were yielded to men. For example the Bar, legal or medical profession were mostly inaccessible for women, however it was possible for them to obtain adequate medical education.⁶⁰ The Sex Discrimination (Removal) Act received Royal Assent in 1919 and lifted the rest of the restrictions concerning women's professions and the civil services.⁶¹ Nevertheless, the differences in salaries between men and women were still alarming, "*women provide about one-third of the labour force of the nation and earn about 55% of men's earnings.*"⁶² The insufficient average earnings of women provoked the approval of the Equal Pay Act in 1970 which was implemented by April 1971 and assured women of equal earnings 'for the same or similar work' and caused an increase in the average earnings of women, from 1969 to 1970. The situation of women employment is shown in the survey of 1971, again released in Stone's book, when out of a total of 3,281 full professors in universities in GB only 44 were women (London University contained half the total). In 1972 Council of the London Stock Exchange opened membership to women and accepted them as members.⁶³

3.6 Civil and legal acts

From very early times, only a single woman of mature age was, as mentioned, allowed to assert the same legal rights as a man. Nevertheless, women were not admitted to sitting on a jury or to holding offices or voting.⁶⁴ The issue of women's enfranchisement started to be taken into account after the Reform Act of 1832 which totally excluded women from voting. This act provoked mass campaigns supporting women's suffrage. One of the first

⁵⁹ MacLaren, 1909, [online], pp. 28-29

⁶⁰ Dilke, 1885, [online], pp. 78-79

⁶¹ Walters, 2005, pp. 85-88

⁶² Stone, 1972, [online], pp. 598-599

⁶³ Stone, 1972, [online], pp. 598-600

⁶⁴ Hecker, 1914, [online], pp. 122-123

parliamentary attempts to give women the right to vote was provoked by John Stuart Mill in 1865 who presented a petition supporting women's enfranchisement and proposed universal usage of the word for both women and men – 'person' instead of the original 'men', but all were finally defeated. It was followed by further unsuccessfully attempts. For example in 1870, Mr Jacob Bright presented a *Bill to Remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women*. In 1869, all women were given municipal suffrage in England. One year later, the Education Act gave women the right to elect and to be elected in newly-founded school boards. In 1894, women, even the married, gained the right to vote in parishes and district elections in England. In 1907 the Qualification of Women Act allowed women to be elected and hold the office of mayor aldermen, county and town councillor.⁶⁵ The first woman mayor was Mrs. Garrett Anderson at Aldburgh in 1908. Finally on 6 February 1918, the Franchise Act enfranchised women over the age of 30. In the same year, the Qualification of Women Act gave them the right to stand as MPs. In 1919, The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act removed all limitation concerning voting and holding public office in England and Wales (still only for women over 30) and also the limitation concerning the civil rights such as the loss of British citizenship in case of a marriage with a foreigner or gaining the British citizenship for foreign women. And finally, in 1928, the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act enfranchised women and men over 21 years old. The first female Cabinet Minister was Margaret Bondfield in 1929. In 1970s British parliament consisted of about 16 women, most famously including Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Minister of Education and Science. In 1971 the only female member of the English High Court Bench was Mrs. Justice Lane. The annual Finance Act in 1971 decided that the wives' earnings and incomes should be chargeable to income tax separately from husbands'. There was no taxation of women earnings before because a wife's income was actually her husband's income.⁶⁶

3.7 Abortion

In book of Stone, the other highly discussed issue was abortion. Because of the increasing number of illegal abortions during the year 1967, the Abortion Act was passed and permitted to terminate pregnancy lawfully by a registered medical practitioner. But the specified conditions had to be fulfilled, for example, the abortion was legitimate only when the

⁶⁵ Ibid, pp. 143-147

⁶⁶ Stone, 1972, [online], pp. 594-620

pregnancy endangered the life of the pregnant woman or in case of anticipated physical or mental abnormalities of the unborn child. Predominantly, it was really difficult to find a registered medical practitioner in some areas because of the prejudices of leading doctors. Official abortions were performed in the National Health Service which were not accessible to everyone and in every city. In that case, the pregnant women were forced to go to private nursing homes which were extremely expensive, even more than illegal abortion. And that was the reason why still lots of women opted for the illegal way. In the same year (1967), the National Health Service (Family Planning) Act allowed the provision of advice on contraception. The following research, released in Stone's book, shows the improvement of the situation through the presentation of the total number of official abortions noticed by the Registrar General: *"in 1968 there were 22,256 of recorded abortions, one year later 54,119. In 1970 it was 83,851 and in 1971 the number rose to 126,774 of abortions year."*⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Stone, 1972, [online], pp. 602-604

4. Feminism in Great Britain

As I have already described the development of feminism in general and have just observed how the status of women in British society had changed over time, it is necessary to focus on more concrete areas to present this topic thoroughly, to give more details and concrete personalities who contributed to the movement in the UK.

As Camille Paglia claims, despite the fact that many of the earliest feminist writers were British and that the American and British feminism developed nearly simultaneously, America is considered to be the place of birth of real Feminism as a movement which became the model for British feminists. But the British women's movement also inspired the Americans in some cases.⁶⁸ As it is said, the word feminism came to England in the 1890s from originally French usage.⁶⁹

According to Margaret Walters, in the 19th century, the first organized campaigns for equal opportunities and education were founded which led to real feminism being formed. The conditions of women were not satisfactory, a married woman had no rights over her own property, even her children and her fortune were the property of her husband. Probably the first organized feminist group in England was the Married Women's Property Committee founded in 1855 by one of the most significant feminists Barbara Leigh Smith followed by women with the same creed such as Bessie Parkes and Anna Jameson. This first true women's movement was lately known as the Ladies of Langham Place, as one of their early meeting places was called. Among the goals of the group were better education for women, improvement of the position of married women and more possibilities in employment.⁷⁰ In 1866, Smith founded the London Society for Women's Suffrage to support the situation of women and their contemporary demands concerning enfranchisement of women. Around the same time, Lydia Becker formed nearly the same organization in Manchester. As several papers refused to print the text containing the arguments for women's enfranchisement, she founded her own newspaper, the Women's Suffrage Journal, in 1870. During the whole 19th century, demands concerning the enfranchisement of women were raised. But some attempts had already been launched a little bit earlier. The group of spinsters was among the earliest demanders of women's vote. One of them was Frances Power Cobbe. Attitudes towards the

⁶⁸ Paglia, 2013, [online], p. 5

⁶⁹ Cott, 1987, p. 14

⁷⁰ Walters, 2005, pp. 41-58

voting among women were positive but a great number of them still claimed that it was not natural for women to vote and others that it would change the superior role of men in households. Emily Davies, who was among the supporters of the feminist movement and one of the collaborators of Barbara Leigh Smith, came out, as mentioned in the chapter 3.4 Education, with the pioneering idea of access of women to the universities. In the course of time, still more and more associations protecting women were founded. One of them was the Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts established in 1869 as a response to the passed Act of Parliament of 1864 which permitted policemen to arrest all prostitutes suffering venereal diseases or working in certain banned ports and in protest against the acts representing the double sexual standard. The leader was Josephine Butler. In 1877, when the issue of contraception emerged, the pro-birth control organization called the Malthusian League was established and started to unofficially give some contraceptive information to poor women. For this 'unconventional' idea, two prominent members Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh were put on trial. In 1884, Parliament passed the Reform Act which extended suffrage, but only for men. In that time, there were 63-68% of men who could vote while women were completely excluded. This fact reinforced women's feminist ideology even more.⁷¹ Thus, as Walters mention, in 1906, the term suffragettes, as all women fighting for the enfranchisement were called, was created and presented in the Daily Mail, however, the idea of 'no taxation without representation' was highly spread among women already during the 1870s. The famous feminist Pankhurst family funded Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1903. Although there were many others organization fighting for the vote of women such as the Women's Freedom League, the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, the Actresses' Franchise League, they were not as effective as WSPU, the leading militant British suffragettes association. The group around Christabel and Emmeline Pankhurst comprised of about 58 branches and included such personages as Annie Kenney, a speaker, Flora Drummond and Teresa Billington, a socialist teacher. The militant actions of the WSPU escalated. They organized their own mass public meetings, marches through the streets, demonstrations and disruptions of male politicians' meetings (Picture 1). They created leaflets, postcards and posters and used the power of mass media. The aggression of the group increased and finally turned into civil disobedience and physical violence. It was usual for them to break shop windows or set letterboxes or libraries on fire. They were always colliding with police and arrested. However, there is no doubt about their

⁷¹ Ibid, pp. 75-84

courage to risk their lives not all of the feminist's supporters agreed about the violent tactic.⁷²
As Christabel Pankhurst, one of the leading protagonists, claimed in 1910:

*„Ladies! The truce was all very well, but there is nothing like militancy.
We glory in this fight because we feel how much it strengthens us.”⁷³*



Picture 1 - Suffragette demonstration, led by the Pankhursts, 1911, adopted from Walters's book⁷⁴

As Nancy Cott adds, nonetheless, the militant behaviour inspired the later practice of U.S. suffragists who started to initiate street parades (first in New York in 1908) and to take advantage of the interest of mass media. They joined the British actions between 1906 and 1911 and according to the model of British suffragettes they commenced to give speeches and to call meetings in the open air. They acquired new methods of publicity such as writing literary works, mostly pamphlets and creating leaflets.⁷⁵

In 1913 the Prisoners (Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health) Act colloquially called Cat and Mouse Act was passed (Picture 3). It concerned a release of the imprisoned militant suffragettes who undertook hunger strikes and were so weakened that they were at risk of death. But only on the condition that after recovery they would be re-imprisoned on their

⁷² Ibid, pp. 69-91

⁷³ Ibid, p. 83

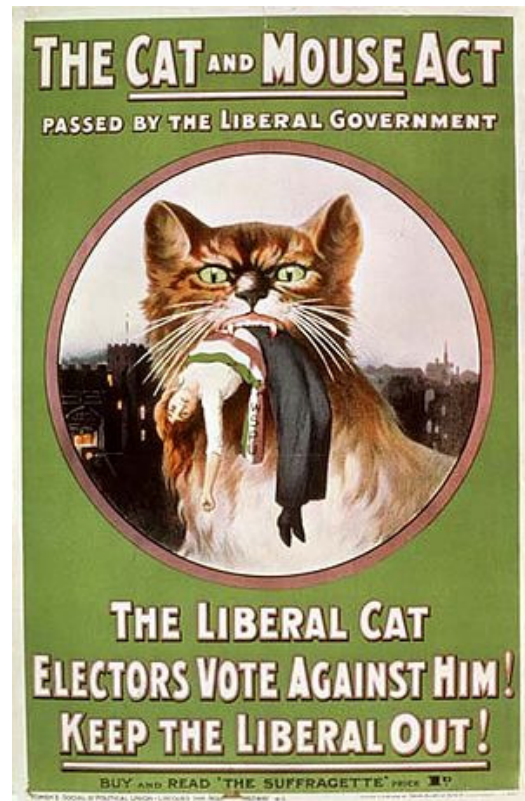
⁷⁴ Walters, 2005, p. 79

⁷⁵ Cott, 1987, pp. 26-28

original charges. It was called the Cat and Mouse Act as the process resembled the play of a cat with its prey.⁷⁶



Picture 2 - Women's Liberation groups marching through London, 1971, adapted from Walters's book⁷⁸



Picture 3 - WSPU poster 1914, adapted from webpage en.wikipedia.org⁷⁷

Walters also claims in her book that, during World War I, lots of women were employed outside their home in munitions factories or hospitals, lots of them were left widowed and unmarried. In those days, women started to demand equal pay for men and women and the suffragette's movement was suspended a couple of times. In the 1920s, the economic recession started to be visible and women were the first who faced unemployment. In 1918 women over the age of 30 were enfranchised. Concerning the women in politics, as is mentioned in chapter 3.6 - Civil and legal acts, women were allowed to sit in Parliament as early as 1918. The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC) was an association of women fighting for the rest of their rights such as equal pay or newly opened professions for women. The members tried to confirm the equal position of men and women

⁷⁶ Prisoners (Temporary Discharge for Ill Health) Act 1913 , [online]

⁷⁷ Prisoners (Temporary Discharge for Ill Health) Act 1913 , [online]

⁷⁸ Walters, 2005, p. 111

in society and started to emphasize differences between sexes, not just the equalities, as was usual to that point. Lady Astor was one of the members. One year after the partial enfranchisement, the Sex Discrimination (Removal) Act opened new professions and civil services to women. In 1923, the grounds for divorce were improved and equalized for men and women by the Matrimonial Causes Act. In 1928, the Equal Franchise Act gave all women and men of the age of 21 the right to vote.⁷⁹

The following table adapted, from webpage *nzhistory*, represents countries and the year of full enfranchisement. It aims to show differences between the individual states in terms of women's enfranchisement.

Country	Full suffrage of women
New Zealand	1893
Australia	1902
	1962*
Finland	1906
Norway	1913
Denmark	1915
Russia/Soviet Union	1917
Austria	1918
Germany	1918
Czechoslovakia	1920
Poland	1918
Netherlands	1919
America	1919
	1960**
Sweden	1921
Great Britain	1928
France	1944
Belgium	1948
Switzerland	1971
Spain	1931

* Australian Aboriginals

** African Americans

Table 2 - The women's suffrage in the World adapted from webpage www.nzhistorz.net.nz⁸⁰

Walters also states that in 1936, the group of women dealing with at that time the controversial issue of abortion founded the Abortion Law Reform Association. In the 1950s several women's organizations started to campaign for the legalization of abortion which became one of the most discussed issues. In the 1960s and 1970s, a new women's

⁷⁹ Walters, 2005, pp. 85-88

⁸⁰ Women and the Vote, World Suffrage timeline, [online]

organization called Women's Liberation emerged in all Western European states, but mostly in America. The members of the group fought against Beauty Contests. The first organized marching protest in Great Britain took place in London in 1971 and included demonstrations with banners and announcements such as "*we are not beautiful, we are not ugly, we are angry*" (Picture 2).⁸¹ In that period, another issue spread called 'body issues' concerning the questions about beauty and criticizing the stereotyping of woman's appearance. In this period lesbian feminism was born as lesbians seemed to have been side-lined from the other women's movements.⁸²

As we can note, development of the British feminist movement follows the traces of general development of feminism, concerns the same topics and deals with the same problems. We can deduce that development of this movement does not significantly differ from country to country and the aims of the feminists are similar all over the world.

⁸¹ Walters, 2005, p. 94-108

⁸² Ibid, pp. 104-110

5. Feminism in British literature

In previous chapters, I have already presented development of feminism in general and also in Great Britain. Now we proceed to introduce particular British writers and explain in what way they contributed to creation and development of feminism. The primary source of information for this chapter is the book *Feminism: A Very Short Introduction* written by Margaret Walters. There are also some parts of the text borrowed from other sources, cited in footnotes. Some direct quotes are also used as extracts of books to give more accurate information about author's writing style. This chapter is also a sequence of paraphrases without my comments as it is a summary of historical development of feminist literature in the UK.

As it is mentioned in Walters' book, feminism in literature was actually born very early but it is not possible to determine the precise date of creation of the movement.⁸³ According to Helen Wilcox "*between 1550 and 1700, was the time of first female writers, including poems, plays, conversion narratives, advice books, translations, letters, devotional texts, prophecies, pamphlets, memoirs and works of philosophy and fiction*".⁸⁴ Those women writers were suffering from the so called 'inheritance of Eve' which means that all their live they were repeating the Eve's failures and were the bearers of the punishment for her betrayal. But these writers cannot be regarded as profeminists yet. Nonetheless, one of the earliest female feminist writers criticizing the social position of women rooted in religion was a writer under the protection of a pseudonym **Jane Anger**.⁸⁵ She stated:

*"Women are more excellent
as God created them of Adam's flash
whereas he was created by dross and filthy clay"*
*"Adam was as much to blame for the Fall as Eve."*⁸⁶

The beginning of feminism in literature was initiated by female authors commencing writing literary works and breaking down the barrier between women and men, such as **Mary Astell**. The works reflect her life and are influenced by her deep depression and frustration caused by the death of her father and also the inconvenient situation of females in a society full of conventions. She insisted on women being cultivated and educated as men. Between 1699 and

⁸³ Walters, 2005, p. 9

⁸⁴ Wilcox, 2007, pp. 27-29

⁸⁵ Wilcox, 2007, pp. 27-29

⁸⁶ Walters, 2005, p. 9

1704 she established some charity schools and gave an opportunity for women to be involved. In 1694, she wrote her first book called *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* in which she expressed her negative attitude to women, encouraged them and tried to wake their own initiation based on refusal of masculine natural superiority.⁸⁷ In her pioneering work in which she directly expressed her negative attitudes to men and necessity for women to be educated is written:

*“We value them [men] too much and ourselves too little,
if we place any part of our desert in their Opinion,
and don’t think our selves capable of Nobler Things
than the pitiful Conquest of some worthless Heart.”*⁸⁸

Through the 18th century the situation of women changed. More and more women were being properly educated and able to read, write and publish books independently which led to the foundation of a group of writers called *Amazons of the pen*. The group strictly rejected the superiority of men over women and did not admit to being the mere property of men. The leading member of Amazons was one of the greatest feminist writers **Mary Wollstonecraft** with her book *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* published in 1792. This book is still widely-read and has become one of the grounding works of contemporary, modern feminists.⁸⁹ She stated there:

*“It is time to effect a revolution in female manners
- time to restore to them their lost dignity –
and make them, as a part of the human species,
labour by reforming themselves to reform the world.
It is time to separate unchangeable morals from local manners.”*⁹⁰

Mary, personally, witnessed how little education was available to girls/women and it is strongly reflected in her works and that is why her knowledge was based on self-education. Wollstonecraft was an author who expressed her own opinions through her women heroines strongly criticizing masculine dominance and violence and reflecting her own childhood and difficulties with parents. She was frequently criticized by her female counterparts, even by

⁸⁷ Walters, 2005, pp. 27-29

⁸⁸ Astell, 1697, [online], p. 11

⁸⁹ Walters, 2005, pp. 30-31

⁹⁰ Wollstonecraft, 2002, Chapter 3

some well-educated ones, for her up to date and controversial attitudes. Not only did she fiercely protest through her works, she also lived a controversial life too. In her earlier work *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* published in 1787 she supported the idea of having a chance to develop the natural intelligence of young girls. She exhorted women to narrate their own life stories and express their feelings. Although Wollstonecraft's works were never positively reviewed, she undoubtedly went down in the history of feminist writing. She died giving birth to her second daughter Mary, who married Shelley, the author of the gothic novel *Frankenstein*. In those days, the number of women reading prose fiction rose as it reflected their own experience, hopes, attitudes and difficulties. Moreover, a lot of women writers commenced to publish fiction to express the situation they were in and problems they solved. At the turn of the century, marriage was one of the most popular themes for novelists such as **Fanny Burney, Jane Austen, Ann Radcliffe, Susan Ferrier** or the **Brontë sisters**. They did not contribute to the development of feminism directly but their works are known all over the world and still well-read. In 1843, **Marion Kirkland Reid** published *A Plea for Women* which is considered to be the most effective book since Wollstonecraft's *Vindication*. Although it was reprinted many times and widely read, it was more successful in America than in England. The book concerns analyses of women becoming automatons by upbringing and the renunciation of self in favour of caring for husband, children or household. She also asserted there that women are rational enough to vote. She was among the first women who demanded votes for women.⁹¹ In her book, there is literally stated:

*“The one quality on which woman’s influence and value depends,
is the renunciation of self,
and the old prejudices respecting her inculcated self-renunciation.”*⁹²

Not only women struggled to fight for their rights. Men were also engaged in the process and confirmed the equality between women and men. **William Thompson** and John Stuart Mill were among them. They were mostly influenced by their wives. Thompson's book *Appeal of One Half of the Human Race, Women, against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to Restrain them in Political and thence in Civil and Domestic Slavery* is concentrated on conditions in marriage.⁹³ William Thompson was a leading economist and one of the male followers of Wollstonecraft's idea of the equality of women. He supported the idea of a co-

⁹¹ Walters, 2005, pp. 31-43

⁹² Kirkland Reid, 1845, [online], p. 18

⁹³ Walters, 2005, pp. 43-47

operative social society, where men do not have any motives to regard women as inferiors and economic dependents as they are in capitalistic systems. They also saw women's inequality as rooted in men's selfishness. "*Their theory has much in common with recent socialist feminist analysis.*"⁹⁴ **John Stuart Mill** was a major feminist philosopher who considered women's oppression to be so deeply rooted in the history of society as to become natural and common. He supported the idea of women's rights to be given access to education, employment and opportunity of voting and holding political office and to be free to choose their own occupation and, unlike the other contemporary feminists, he thought they should exercise their freedom responsibly even if it is through marriage and household. He also spread the attitude of Victorian feminism to emphasizing the female differences from men. He considered family, education and democratic society to be the base of female equality.⁹⁵ In 1869, he published the book *The Subjection of Women* which is, as well as the Thomson's Appeal, focused on married women and their rights. Mill was highly influenced by another female feminist writer Harriet Taylor, his wife, who published a short article on the enfranchisement of women in the Westminster Review in 1851. In 1866, Mill presented the first women's petition to Parliament, initially organized by Barbara Leigh Smith, concerning the enfranchisement of women. Even though it was finally rejected, it is considered to be an encouraging starting attempt.⁹⁶ In the *Subjection of Women*, he literally stated:

*"The equality of married persons before the law, is not only the sole mode in which that particular relation can be made consistent with justice to both sides, and conducive to the happiness of both, but it is the only means of rendering the daily life of mankind, in any high sense, a school of moral cultivation."*⁹⁷

Florence Nightingale another influential woman mentioned in Walters book and nicknamed the 'Lady with the Lamp' became a national heroine after participation in the Crimean War as a nurse. Initially, she undertook this occupation after looking after her old grandmother and nurses, then she decided to work voluntarily for the Invalid Gentlewoman's Institution and then in Middlesex London Hospital when cholera broke out.⁹⁸ She also contributed to the foundation of the Red Cross, she wrote *Note for nursing* published in 1859 which was used as

⁹⁴ Bryson, 2003, pp. 25-26

⁹⁵ Ibid, pp. 45-53

⁹⁶ Walters, 2005, pp. 43-47

⁹⁷ Mill, 1869, [online], pp. 78-79

⁹⁸ Walters, 2005, pp. 49-52

a guiding work for nurses and as an introduction to nursing for the public. As for her contribution to the women's movement, she wrote the essay called *Cassandra*, a story which partly mirrors Nightingale's life and her struggles to be independent.⁹⁹ Although she supported the idea of women's emancipation she bitterly criticized the contemporary feminist's attitudes and refused to be regarded as a member of the existing feminist movement. Nowadays, she is considered to be a model of femininity and an icon showing the possibilities of working outside the home and family available to women.¹⁰⁰ She literally wrote:

*“Why have women passion, intellect, moral activity
— these three —
and a place in society where no one of the three can be exercised?”¹⁰¹*

Harriet Martineau as the author of the book *Illustration of Political Economy* released in 1832 became the first well-known female sociologist and economic specialist. Her work was widely read. After having travelled in the United States, she compared the situation of women to the situation of slaves and published her second book called *Society in America*. Although she never actually maintained contemporary feminist arguments she insisted that everyone should be given whatever suits him/her. She turned down the opportunity to write for a new economics periodical preferring to publish a novel *Deerbrook* which analyses the problems, hopes and doubts she had in common with other women. Even though she was probably influenced by the Langham Place group she never became a member. At the time when women were given more and more employment opportunities Harriet wrote an article to the *Edinburgh Review* about how social gender roles started to overlap and complement each other.¹⁰² In *Society in America*, she wrote:

*“If a test of civilization be sought,
none can be so sure as the condition of that half of society
over which the other half has power.”¹⁰³*

Frances Power Cobbe was engaged in the Married Women's Property Act and in the London National Society for Women's Suffrage as an advocate. In her books she criticized the

⁹⁹ Florence Nightingale II., [online]

¹⁰⁰ Walters, 2005, pp. 49-52

¹⁰¹ Florence Nightingale, [online]

¹⁰² Walters, 2005, pp. 52-60

¹⁰³ Martineau, 1839, [online], p. 105

conditions in boarding schools, especially in Brighton where she studied, she insisted on the urgent need for girls' education to be improved. She also pointed out the alarming situation of both single and married women. According to Margaret Walters, "*her writings were vivid and thoughtful*"¹⁰⁴. She was among the women called spinsters, early demanders of women's suffrage, women property owners and taxpayers. **Barbara Leigh Smith** was a founder of the Langham Place group named after their meeting place and later (1866) also of the London Society for Women's Suffrage. She was one of the most significant feminists of the 19th century. Barbara herself was a controversial woman. When she married she kept her own name and refused to add the one of her husband. Her untypical way of life was highly influenced by her parents' cohabitation. She was also truly encouraged by them and, thanks to their generous allowance, she was able to travel the World. She concentrated her activism mostly on urgent situations of married women, their better education, training and employment. All of these efforts are expressed in her writings: *Women and Work* or *A Brief Summary in Plain Language of the Most Important Laws of England Concerning Women* published in 1854. These were sold at a cheap price and both were widely read and focused on both single and married women. In 1858, she founded *English Women's Journal* in which she criticized the position of middle-class women and the fact that women were socially predestined only to be married and were prepared for nothing else at school. She even insisted on the evaluation of work that women actually did, of household chores and of the upbringing of children. She co-operated with Emily Davies, organised many petitions and also established the first primary school in London where boys and girls were taught together.¹⁰⁵ In her work *Women and Work* she stated:

*"They [women] are placed at a great disadvantage
in the market of work because they are not skilled labourers,
and are therefore badly paid.
It is the duty of fathers and mothers to give their daughters this training.
All experience proves that the effect of the independence
of women upon married life is good."*¹⁰⁶

Emily Davies, a profound conservative and an author of the pioneering idea of university access for women, campaigned especially with the Langham Place group, wrote a series of

¹⁰⁴ Walters, 2005, pp. 54-72

¹⁰⁵ Walters, 2005, pp. 54- 72

¹⁰⁶ Leigh Smith, 1859, p. 35

letters to her local papers about importance of work opportunities and education of women. She was a rational woman who never insisted on exactly the same education and the same freedoms for female students as for the males but she made a great effort to unify the examination system for all women and men and to extend the number of women taking the University Local Examination by the committee established in 1862. Her book *The Higher Education of Women*, which appeared in 1866, was a crucial work although it was released long before women could achieve equality in higher education. She and Barbara Leigh Smith endeavoured to gain enough money to found a first women's university college. In 1870s, they finally managed to do it and the Girton College at Hitchin in Hertfordshire, later moved to University of Cambridge, started offering an education at degree level to women, this was followed by Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford.¹⁰⁷ In her book she literary stated:

*“What is really wanted in a woman is
that she should be a permanently pleasant companion. So far as education can give or
enhance pleasantness, it does so by making the view of life wide, the wit ready, the faculty of
comprehension vivid”¹⁰⁸*

In the 1920s several new magazines were released such as *Woman and Home*, *Good Housekeeping* or *Time and Tide*. **Virginia Woolf** was among the women who contributed to these papers. Her work *A Room of One's Own* describes the ill-treatment of women being regarded as second-class citizens in Cambridge. It expressed how women's talent was wasted and undervalued in early history as well in the days of George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë. Her second book *Three Guineas* was written during the war and expresses the author's view on war and women.¹⁰⁹ In her leading book *A Room of One's Own*, there is literally written:

*“A woman must have money and a room of her own
if she is to write fiction”¹¹⁰*

Marie Stopes, who became a friend with the famous American feminist writer Margaret Sanger, the author of the controversial book *The Law of Population* about controlled conception, wrote her first book in 1916 called *Married Love*, which was widely read. This was followed by *Wise Parenthood* released in 1918 and *Radiant Motherhood* in 1920. Her books concern the sexuality of men and women and were touched by the controversial issue

¹⁰⁷ Walters, 2005, pp. 61-63

¹⁰⁸ Davies, 1988, [online], p. 21

¹⁰⁹ Walters, 2005, pp. 88-96

¹¹⁰ Woolf, 2001, chapter 1

of contraception. She established a birth control clinic in North London to give contraceptive advice to poor women.¹¹¹ In her book, she stated:

*“What we are here concerned with is the fact
that birth control methods of all sorts are now so widely used
that it is high time serious attention should be devoted to the subject.”¹¹²*

The books of **Sheila Rowbotham** *Liberation and the New Politics* and **Juliet Mitchell** *Women’s Estate* were both released in 1970s and influenced the emerging Women’s Liberation movement in England demonstrating against beauty contests. Mitchell was a kind of socialist feminist writer. Her book describes the women’s movements in Europe and in the USA and maps four main areas with the highest prevalence of women’s oppression: *“production, reproduction, sexuality, and the socialization of children“*.¹¹³ So called ‘body issue’ was criticized not only by marching in the streets, but also in literature. The famous British psychotherapist **Susie Orbach** wrote a book called *Fat is a Feminist issue* in 1981 in which she explored the fear of ageing and self-hatred instigated by beauty contests and fought for the right to better health care, such as gynaecological advice, care in childbirth, right to contraception, abortion, and treatment for cancers of the breast and the womb.¹¹⁴ In her book, she stated:

*“Every women’s magazine has a diet column.
Diet doctors and clinics flourish.
The names of diet foods are now part of our general vocabulary.
Physical fitness and beauty are every women’s goals.”¹¹⁵*

The following authors are not British but significantly contributed to the creation of feminism also in Great Britain and are worth mentioning: **Simone de Beauvoir** from France and her book *The Second Sex* published in 1949 and **Betty Friedan** from America with book *The Feminine Mystique* released in 1963. Another remarkable feminist writer of the late 20th century was **Germaine Greer** from Australia and her notable work *The Female Eunuch*

¹¹¹ Walters, 2005, pp. 91-94

¹¹² Stope, 2003, [online], pp. 2-3

¹¹³ Walters, 2005, p. 106

¹¹⁴ Walters, 2005, pp. 106-110

¹¹⁵ Orbach, 2006, p. 13 (Introduction)

published in 1970 in which she cast doubt on natural inferiority and dependence on men which had been passively accepted by women.¹¹⁶ Germaine literally wrote:

*“If you think you are emancipated,
you might consider the idea of tasting your menstrual blood
—if it makes you sick,
you’ve a long way to go, baby.”¹¹⁷*

¹¹⁶ Walters, 2005, pp. 98-106

¹¹⁷ Greer, 2008, p. 57

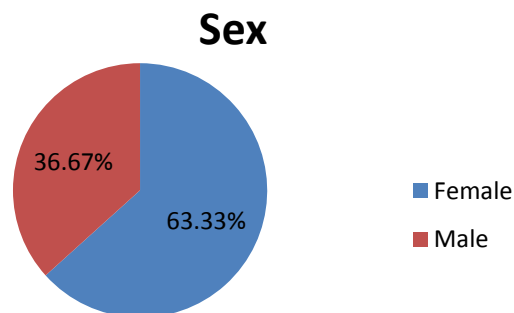
6. Survey

The practical part of the thesis is dedicated to a survey concerning the examination of feminism, women's rights, the current situation of women and their status in society. Firstly, I examine the greatest sources of information on the issues and attitudes towards women's emancipation and experiences with women's rights abuse. Next, I survey the differences between the different points of view of respondents on feminism and women's issues. Afterwards, my survey sums up the real attitudes of all respondents to the feminists, both nowadays and in older forms, and ask for the reason for their opinions. The questionnaire includes also a study of general awareness of well-known feminists and their main literary contributions. From the theoretical part, I summarized the factors which influenced the creation of feminism and which had the greatest impact on shaping the women's movement into its contemporary form to prove whether they still contribute to the continuation of feminism and if these thoughts are still influential and still correspond with current approaches. In the last part of the practical section I compare three surveys, the following one, another I conducted in 2014 and the third one created by European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, and try explore which group of the surveyed women is more likely to be confronted with discriminatory manners from the social, age and work point of view.

The following Internet survey was made on webpages <http://www.surveo.com/> free of charge. The questionnaire was distributed via the Internet (my British friends) and social networks to the target group of people, more precisely to the British ones. Hopefully, all respondents answered the questions as conscientiously as possible especially the first question concerning nationality. I opted for open and closed questions including both single-answer and multiple-answer questions. In the questionnaire, there are 17 questions concerning sex, age, political affiliation, religion, education, work position and feminism itself. The experience with women's rights abuse, feminism in literature, gender problems and justification of women's emancipation are also included. Both, women and men were surveyed, except for several questions directed only at women and their experiences. They were examined separately to find the differences in attitudes towards the issue. There are 19 women and 11 men who participated in the research. Only British people were questioned.

Sex	Percentage	Number
Female	63.33%	19
Male	36.67%	11

Table 3 – Sex



Graph 2 - Sex

6.1 Question no. 3 - Age

The average age of all respondents is 35, for women and men it is respectively 30 and 42 years. We can divide women respondents into four groups according to their age/physical stages. First group contains 15 to 19 year old women (Adolescence), second one comprises of women from 20 to 39 years (Young adulthood), third one 40 to 59 year old women (Middle adulthood) and the last group includes women 60 and over (so called Advanced adulthood).

Women of the age between 20 to 39 years old are the most numerous, the group comprises 63% of all participants. On the second rank in terms of number of participants there are the youngest female group and middle-aged women, both with 16%. The women over 60 have the lowest participation rate, only 5% (one woman) of all female respondents. Negative attitude towards the inception and development of women's emancipation is held by only one, 18 year old woman, who finds it unjustified. Nearly every surveyed woman was touched by gender inequalities which are formulated in question n. 17a in the questionnaire. Namely, there are questions related with emotional/psychological, physical, sexual and spiritual abuse. Twenty-six per cent of all women (5/19) have been confronted with all of the proposed unequal treatments (listed above) and had to cope with them. About 32% of women (6/19) have had to face up to three of the proposed abuses. Three women (15.5%) stated that they have experienced two of proposed abuses and two women (11%) have witnessed only one of them. Only three women have never dealt with any kind of discriminatory manners. The following table shows the number of female participants and the number of women with negative attitudes to women's emancipation and with personal experience with unequal treatment in each of the age categories. The highest prevalence of violence was recorded in group of women of the age of 20-39 who stated that they have been confronted with all four kinds of women's right abuse the most and had to cope with them. They are followed by women of the age of 40-59 and as for the 60+ year women we cannot draw any conclusion

line as there is only one respondent. The following table shows each age group, number of female participants, number of negative attitudes towards women’s emancipation and experiences with abuses (real amount of witnessed violence - physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual abuse / the highest possible amount of witnessed violence multiplied by number of all respondents in each age category)

Age group	Participation	Negative attitude	Experiences with abuse
15 - 19	3	1	1/12*
20 - 39	12	0	33/48*
40 - 59	3	0	8/12*
60+	1	0	4/4*

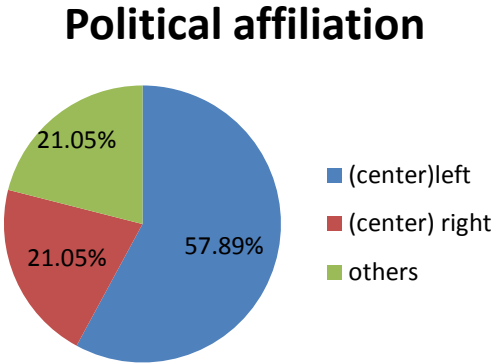
Table 4 – Age categories

6.2 Question no. 4 - Supported political party

The second question was answered by all of the respondents. According to the attached table, the biggest percentage rate, more precisely 63%, is represented by people with no political affiliation. The second place of the table is occupied by supporters of Liberal Democratic Party holding about 32%. Last two places are taken by supporters of United Kingdom Independence Party and Green party, respectively with 21% and 16% of responded voters. Other stated parties are represented each by one surveyed supporter.

Political affiliation	Number
Apolitical	12
Liberal Democratic Party	6
UK Independence Party	4
Green Party	3
Labour Party	1
Scottish National Party	1
Anarchist	1
Female leadership Org.	1
Woman day	1

Table 5 – Political affiliation



Graph 2 - Political affiliation

As the graph above shows the certain percentage rates, we can also divide stated political subjects and their supporters according to the main political attitudes and ideologies into parties with more left wing tendency, more precisely SNP, Labour Party, Liberal Democratic

Party and Green Party, with more right wing tendency, namely UK Independence Party and others as apolitical ones and supporters of Woman’s Day, Female Leadership Organization and Anarchists. According to the attached graph, the majority of respondents support predominantly left political parties and the same number of supporters is held by both predominantly right parties and others.

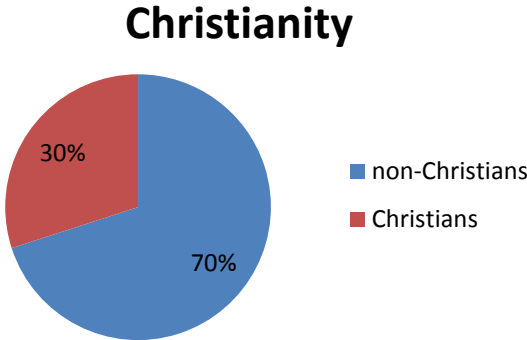
In the chapter 2.1 - Feminism and politics on page 9, there is stated that feminism and the women’s movement was mostly regarded as an ideology on the left side of the political spectrum. As it has been already mentioned, it was not so definite. A lot of feminist leaders or members of the feminist movement sympathized with the political program of Conservative Party and voted for them. Unfortunately, there is no respondent supporting Conservative Party in my survey. Although I cannot draw any conclusions from my limited results, the survey shows that two out of four (2/4) respondents supporting predominantly right wing political party (UK Independence Party) indicate that they consider women’s emancipation unjustified as women are neither enslaved nor limited in these days. While all supporters of predominantly left wing political parties regard it as justified. It might partly prove that women’s issue was and still is an issue with the more left political inclination.

6.3 Question no. 5 - Are you a Christian?

According to the attached graph, 70%, i.e. 21 out of all surveyed British people, thus the overall majority, are not Christians. The rest of them are Christians adhering to different denominations, displayed in attached table. Christianity, particularly Protestantism, is said to have been one of the main sources of ideas feeding feminist ideology. I cannot confirm or negate the statement as only one respondent in my survey inclines to Protestantism and finds women’s emancipation justified.

Denomination	Number
Church of Scotland	1
Roman Catholic	2
Church of England	1
non-denominational	5

Table 6 – Religion



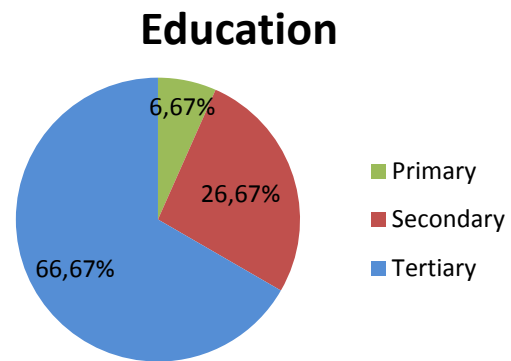
Graph 3 – Religion

6.4 Question no. 6 - Education

The attached table shows that the majority of respondents are people who achieved tertiary educational level, more precisely about 67%. The second largest group includes people with secondary education holding nearly 27%, and surveyed people with primary education comprise about 21%. Although having only 19 female respondents is not enough to make some general judgement but according to the results we can notice that prevalence of women’s right abuse among surveyed women increases with achieved educational level. The more women are educated, the more they feel they are treated unequally. Overall, 93% (13/14) women with tertiary education have experienced right abuse in their life compared with 75% (3/4) of women with secondary education and no woman with primary education

Education	Percentage	Number
Primary	6.67%	2
Secondary	26.67%	8
Tertiary	66.67%	20

Table 7 – Education



Graph 4 - Education

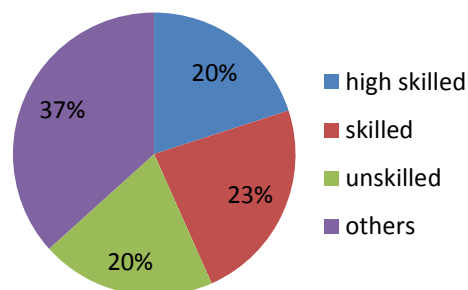
6.5 Question no. 7 – Job position

I divided all of the responded job positions into four groups. The first of them is the group of people occupying **high skilled jobs** (“*project engineer in a small private company, researcher (physics), prevention specialist for a domestic violence agency, electro device specialist, data support specialist, researcher*”); then the group of people with **skilled job** positions (“*teacher, trader, office worker, breastfeeding counsellor, supervisor in a hotel, advanced nurse practitioner, social worker*”); and **unskilled jobs** (“*care of my mother full time, three child carers, Wisdom Hospice volunteer, stripper*”); and **other** job positions as two “*retires*”, an “*unemployed person*”, five “*students*”, two self-employed (“*Owner, Freelance editing*”) and Armed forces occupations (“*US military*”)

Work position	Percentage	Number
high-skilled	20%	6
skilled	23.3%	7
unskilled	20%	6
others	36.7%	11

Table 8 – Work position

Work position



Graph 5 – Work position

As the attached table and graph show, about 23% of questioned people occupied skilled positions which require special abilities and work with skilled training and certain knowledge. Both high-skilled and unskilled job positions hold 20%. High-skilled jobs require workers who are responsible, are capable of supervising and have comprehensive knowledge. Unskilled workers are those who occupy a position which involves simple duties with nearly no responsibility and lower educational background. Even if there are not enough respondents to draw any conclusions, with the reference to the responses we can notice that women with highly skilled or skilled job positions are touched by rights abuse more than unskilled workers. All women (2/2) occupying high-skilled occupation have experienced all four proposed women’s right abuse compared with 75% (3/4) of women with skilled job position and about 67% (2/3) of women with unskilled occupation. So we can indicate that prevalence of women’s right abuse increases with the responsibilities, abilities and knowledge required by a work position.

6.6 Question no. 8 – Feminism according to respondents

An unabridged version of the question: “*What do you think Feminism is according to your point of view?*” The question is an open one and aims to sum up the opinions over the terms of feminism. I chose some fragments of responses to show the most accurate public view on this topic as possible.

Most of the respondents consider feminism to be “*the fight for equality of the sexes and the protection of women's rights*” and to have a positive impact on “*gender-stereotyping and gender roles*”. But not only does feminism improve the female gender problems, it also concerns multicultural aspects, “*it includes all different people in our fight; people of colour,*

transgender people, people of all different economic classes, etc.” In accordance with stated answers, the movement is not focused only on women, it is also indispensable for “*freeing both men and women from patriarchal standards.*” Another group of respondents express diametrically different attitudes towards feminism. More precisely eight of the surveyed people, all of them are men who regard feminism as “*a gross hypocrisy.*” They think that feminists just demand “*equality only when it suits them!*” Some of them also stated that the movement is “*an often really exaggerated women advocacy*”, “*redundant political ideology*” or a kind of “*supremacy movement*” desiring “*the matriarchy*” or just “*revocation of the Patriarchy (even though the Patriarchy doesn't exist)*”. According to their opinion feminism is based on “*hatred of men*” full “*of frustration against male apartheid.*” One female respondent did not answer the question and also stated that has never heard about feminism as a term more specified in following question. To sum up, most of the surveyed people come to an agreement that feminism is an issue which helps to protect women’s rights. However, there are some male respondents who find it unjustified and regard it as an excessive movement full of women who hate men.

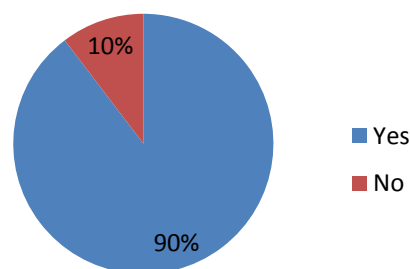
6.7 Question no. 9 – Awareness of feminism

An unabridged version of the question: “*Have you ever heard about feminism as a term which concerns the advocacy of women’s rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes?*”

Awareness of feminism		
	Percentage	Number
No	10%	3
Yes *	90%	27

Table 9 - Knowledge of feminism

Awareness of feminism



Graph 6 - Awareness of feminism

As the table and graph show, ninety per cent of respondents know feminism as a term which concerns the advocacy of women’s rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes and the rest of them, about 10% (3 surveyed women) have never heard about it. As for these three women, only two of them answered the previous question concerns the own idea they have of feminism and both indicate that “*feminism is fighting for women’s rights*” and “*women’s*

liberation from men's oppression". From the results we can assume that these two women do not know this certain definition but they are well aware of what feminism is in general.

To sum up, the main means of propagation of feminism is mass media such as newspapers, internet, television, social networks and blogs. The other important factor in receiving the information concerning feminism is school and the social environment such as family, friends or people we meet regularly. Other great sources of information are also feministic organizations, women, public or political debates and we cannot forget also the literature. As all early feminists predicted, mass media was and still is the best way of spreading the ideology, individual attitudes and thoughts and swaying people at the same time.

6.8 Question no. 10 - Nowadays feminism

The following question concerns current feminism and its characteristics. There are eight possible characteristics, namely: moderate, reasonable, intellectual, excessive, justified, men-haters, radical and militant to evaluate current feminism according to the respondent's opinion - 1 means I don't agree, 10 is an absolute agreement. In this case I also release some fragments of responses to show the most accurate public view on this topic as possible.

According to the table 11, the main conclusion to be drawn from the survey is that all British respondents concur with "*intellect*" and "*justification*" as the two features describing feminism the best. "*Reasonability*" and "*moderation*" were other frequent attributes assigned to the behaviour of feminists. As far as more negative characteristics are concerned, it was mostly men who opted for "*excessiveness*", "*radicality*" and "*hatred of men*" as the features which depict feminism the most and "*reasonability*" the least. While most of the surveyed women think that feminists are "*justified*", "*intellectual*" and "*reasonable*". In table 10 which shows average marks, we can notice that men's and women's opinions of feminists are diametrically different.

	Moderate	Reasonable	Intellectual	Excessive	Justified	Men-haters	Radical	Militant
Men	4.09	3.73	4.09	7.55	4.00	6.55	6.9	5.45
Women	6.84	7.37	7.84	4.63	8.05	3.52	5.10	3.26

Table 10 – Nowadays feminism men vs. women

Certain respondents indicate that nowadays feminists are mostly moderate *“as they are not so much publicly active”*, reasonable and intellectually-based people *“who care about others and want to advocate for equality and justice”*. Two female responded people think that *“militancy”* and *“radicality”* is needed when it comes to the fight for human rights and state that *“moderation does not achieve anything and appealing to reason never worked either”*, thus *“such issue needs radical leaders.”* One 33 year old woman finds men-hating justified as in her opinion *“male violence engenders hate and anger”*. Based on the survey, it is said that media has a great influence on spreading the misandry among people, for example according to one 26 year old female respondent *“there is a loud cadre, particularly on Tumblr, who take a very narrow view of feminism and spend more time policing other women and engaging in misandry”*. Nonetheless, respondents are well aware of the fact that even if there are some general views on feminists and as it is said that feminists are misandrist they admit that *“definitely not all are”*. Contrary to this, some male respondents claim that most of the recent feminists are *“men-haters who accuse every men of rape”* or *“of their gender problems“*; some also regard women’s right activists and feminists as two entirely different personalities and claim that men-hating is another stereotyping of the movement which leads to the misinterpreting of the main purpose and idea of feminism. *“If they [feminists] do not get what they want or are accused of men hating they get angry, this is not what feminism is.”* In conclusion, most of the people come to an agreement that it is not possible to describe feminism with only one word and that it is really difficult to generalize about all feminists and feminist movements. In some given explanation of the question is stated that *“there are many feminist ideologies and movements, some moderate, some not, some reasonable, some not,”* and *“feminism has a bit of everything.”*

The following table shows the number of respondents evaluating each of eight proposed features individually and then the average mark for each of the characteristics.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average mark
Moderate	5	2	0	2	1	5	4	7	1	3	5.93
Reasonable	4	1	1	2	7	1	2	5	1	6	6.03
Intellectual	3	2	0	0	3	4	7	1	1	9	6.73
Excessive	4	3	2	3	3	1	2	6	0	6	5.70
Justified	5	1	1	1	3	2	2	4	0	11	6.56
Men-haters	9	3	1	4	2	1	2	2	1	5	4.63
Radical	3	1	2	5	3	3	5	3	2	3	5.70
Militant	8	3	3	3	3	4	2	3	0	1	4.07

Table 11 – Nowadays feminism

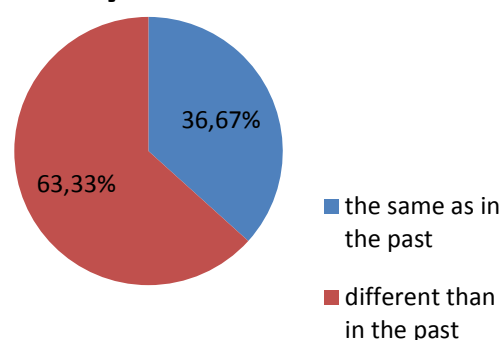
6.1 Question no. 11 – Feminism today vs. in the past

An unabridged version of the question: “*I think that the nowadays form of feminism is ...*” In previous question we found out the typical characteristics of nowadays feminism and this question aims to show how people perceive the differences between current waves of feminism and the feminism in the past. About 37% of respondents claim that both are the same. The rest of them, i.e. about 63% think that the form today is in some ways different.

Today's feminism is...	Percentage	Number
the same as in the past	36,67%	11
different than in the past	63,33%	19

Table 12- Feminism today vs. in the past

Today's feminism is...



Graph 7 – Feminism today vs. in the past

Again, I use fragments of responded answers to sum up the differences. Nowadays feminism differs mostly in opting for different means of propagation and in “*mediums used (internet, television, etc.)*” and also some respondents claim that the movement certainly evolved and has different aims; much progress has been made “*a hyper-sexualised culture and globalised society has changed things*”. But initially feminism was based on the idea of being “*as good as men*” now “*they [women] just want their own rights*”, people have also noted that feminism is less radical than it used to be “*it is too moderate now*”; the whole movement is now running on a more informed and sophisticated base; it is “*more appreciative of men, more intellectually rigorous.*” It is said to be also more “*high-principled*”, “*versions/factions*” and sometimes boosted by “*inflammatory rhetoric.*” Four female respondents also concur that “*nowadays feminism is more inclusive*” and more about “*recognition of the impact of identities*”; feminists of those days recognize more different displays of discrimination and adopt different politics based on “*the impact of identities on the experience of the individual.*” One 37 year male respondent claims that current feminism “*is a propoganda with no ethics*” and only one 18 year old British female respondent finds modern feminism “*more about man-hating*” than the feminism in the past. To sum up the most repeated answers, current form of feminism mostly differs in way of spreading ideas, it

is now more intellectually based and open to new identities, to men and furthermore, demands of feminists have changed over time too.

6.2 Question no. 12 - Feminism in literature

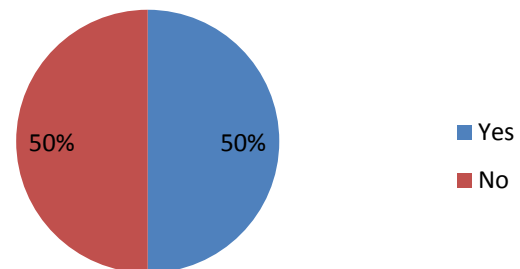
An unabridged version of the question: *“Have you ever read a book where feminism is reflected? If so, explain in what way feminism is reflected there“.*

Fifty percent of surveyed people have never read a book reflecting feminism. This fact proves that books concerning feminism itself are not so much spread among people and they are not included in standard- read literature. This reflects the fact that only three surveyed people out of thirty stated that they know feminism thanks to literature. On the other hand, almost all of the respondents claiming that have already read a book in which feminism is reflected, to be more precise a half of all, have listed the books profoundly specialized in the feminist field.

Feminism in literature		
	Percentage	Number
No	50%	15
Yes *	50%	15

Table 13 - Feminism in literature

Feminism in literature



Graph 8 – Feminism in literature

As already mentioned, fifteen respondents indicated the name of the book and the way feminism is mirrored there. From the responses below we can deduce that respondents are well aware of the issue, read a lot about both feminism and women’s rights and obviously are interested in the issue. Most of the stated books are nonfictional prose and concern directly the issue of feminism. It might be caused by the fact that the survey was sent directly to feminist and women’s right web pages and social networks. Some books support the idea of women’s liberation, some criticize behaviour of nowadays feminist and attitudes towards men.

1) *“Cautionary Tales from the Strange World of Women’s Studies, Letters from a War Zone - about feminism ideology in a plain English“*

- 2) "*Feminine Mystique, Second Sex, Mary Wollstonecraft's book, the Dollhouse* by Ibsen etc.– about women who are equal to men, and their lives, health, and potential are stunted by oppressive and demeaning views that depict women as inferior to men“
- 3)“*Beauty and Misogyny, Beyond God The Father, Sister Outsider* about a liberatory politics including all women which challenges patriarchal practices, male violence, racism, femininity”
- 4)“*Transforming a Rape Culture, Against Our Will, I Never Called It Rape, Women Who Rape Men* – about how feminism mistakenly believes that women do not commit sex crimes against men, and that, therefore, hatred of men is justified”
- 5) “*Female Chauvinist Pigs, Women, Race and Class*, etc. - these books are just discussions of how feminism works in modern society or examinations of issues through a feminist perspective”
- 6) “*The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir, being an absolute must, shows how men are normal, women the ‘other’
- 7) “Books of Bell Hooks talk about white supremacist capitalist patriarchy and all of these systems of oppression are interconnected. We must stop all of them in order to have true freedom, peace and equality among all human beings (race, class, gender)”
- 8) “*The Female Eunuch, Fat is a Feminist Issue* - revelatory to me in the 60's, Germain Greer writes clearly about what it is like to be a woman without power in the world”
- 9) “Mary Daly's *GynEcology* - about radical feminism”
- 10) “Many teen novels with female protagonists - the female protagonists are treated with respect and are expected to do the same thing as the men in the stories. There is equality between sexes not classes”
- 11) “Many feminist theory and fiction books - direct reflection of feminism in text”
- 12) “*Delusions of Gender* - the author is arguing against the notion that the male and female brain are anatomically different and that this difference is the reason for the female gender "inferiority" in things that do not relate to emotional intelligence”

13) *“Seeing Like a Feminist. by N. Menon - the book applies feminism to the social dynamics of India”*

14) *“Feminist books, all kinds - they are about feminism, they explain it, its diversity, etc.”*

15) *“Maya Angelou – equality”*

6.3 Question no. 13 - British feminists

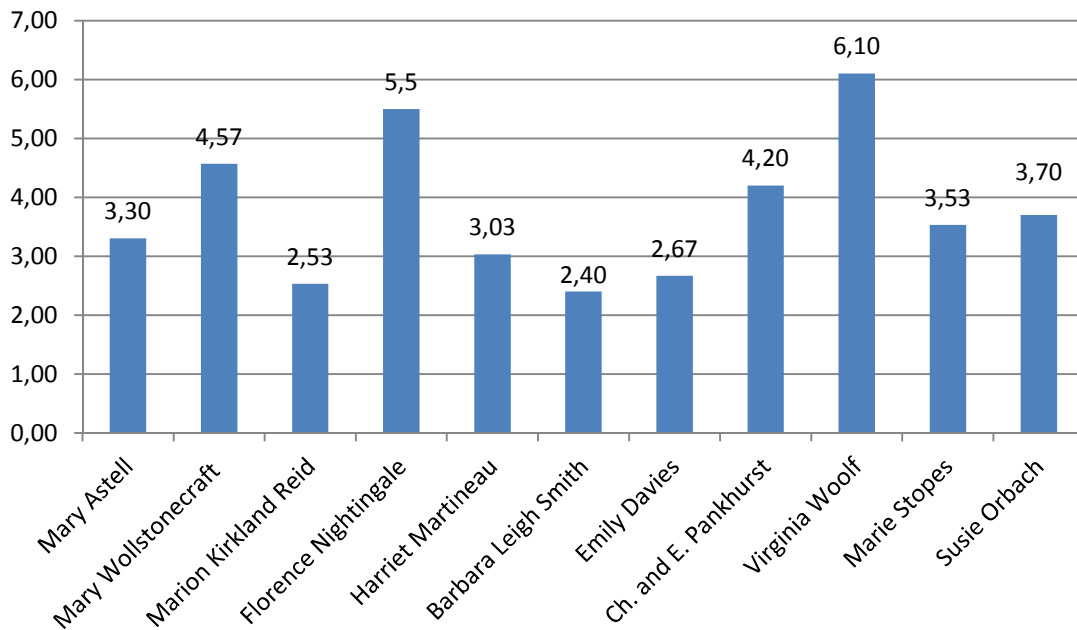
An unabridged version of the question: *“Rate, please, each of the following feminists according to how much they are familiar to you (1 means I know nothing about her, 10 - I know a lot about her)”*

The following table shows numbers of respondents who have opted for a mark (1-10) and average mark to make clear who of the British feminists the respondents are more aware of.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average mark
Mary Astell	19	0	2	1	2	1	1	1	0	3	3,30
Mary Wollstonecraft	14	0	2	0	1	2	1	1	5	4	4,57
Marion Kirkland Reid	19	0	4	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	2,53
Florence Nightingale	8	0	1	2	4	2	4	1	2	6	5,50
Harriet Martineau	18	0	4	0	0	2	3	1	0	2	3,03
Barbara Leigh Smith	20	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	2,40
Emily Davies	19	0	1	1	3	0	3	1	0	1	2,67
Ch. and E. Pankhurst	12	1	0	2	4	4	3	0	1	3	4,20
Virginia Woolf	5	0	2	0	5	4	3	2	4	5	6,10
Marie Stopes	18	0	1	0	1	1	4	2	0	3	3,53
Susie Orbach	15	0	2	0	6	0	2	1	2	2	3,70

Table 14 – Famous feminists

From the figures in the table above we can deduce that Virginia Woolf is by far the best known of all of the proposed feminists, listed in table above. The second place is held by Florence Nightingale who has probably become famous for her nursing work and book *Note for Nurses* as mentioned in chapter 5 – Feminism in British literature. The third most famous feminist is, according to my survey, Marry Wollstonecraft Shelley whose book became essential for the development of the movement as it is stated in my theoretical part of the thesis. Next positions are available to observe in the following graph.



Graph 9 – Famous feminists

Twenty-eight respondents answer that they know other feminists. The most repeated of them was “*Gloria Steinem*”, mentioned five times and then “*Bell Hooks*” and “*Andrea Dworkin*” stated four times. Feminists mentioned more than twice are “*Susan Brownell Anthony, Emma Watson*” and more than once are “*Robin Morgan, Christina Hoff Sommers, Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, Catherine MacKinnon, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Marilyn French, Mary Daly, Germaine Greer, Alice Walker, Audre Lorde and Maya Angelou.*” One of the things these feminists have in common is the fact that almost all of them come from the USA. This could denote that American feminists are more known than the British ones, they might be more distinctive, vociferous and probably more courageous to express their opinion and to impress themselves on people’s mind. Or simply the issue of feminism might be more discussed in the USA than in UK. As my survey shows, other less often mentioned feminists are: “*Zora Neale Hurston, Susan Griffin, William Moulton Marston, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Sheila Jeffreys, Julia Long, Audre Nawal El Saadawi, Maud Sulter, Cynthia Enloe, Amina Wadud, Esther Nelson, Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Asma Barlas, Fatima Merlisi, Leila Ahmed, Asra Nomani, Valerie Solanas, Beyonce, Najat Vallaud Belkacem, Anita Sarkeesian, Camille Paglia, Naomi Goldenberg, Hodee Edwards, Susan Brownmiller, Sally Miller Gearhart, Gloria Steinem, Anita Sarkeesian, Helene Cixous Janice Raymond, Valerie Solanus, Anne Oakley, Christina Hoff Sommers, Anne Summers, Naomi Wolf, Oprah Winfrey, Sandra Cisneros, Toni Morrisson, Angela Davis, Frida Kahlo, Zoe Fairbairns, Patricia Hill Collins,*

Ani DiFranco, Gloria Anzaldua Anita Sarkeesian, Taylor swift, Hanna Bakula, Kinga Dunin.”

6.4 Question no. 14 – Famous feminists and their works

An unabridged version of the question: “Which of the following works of famous feminists do you know?”

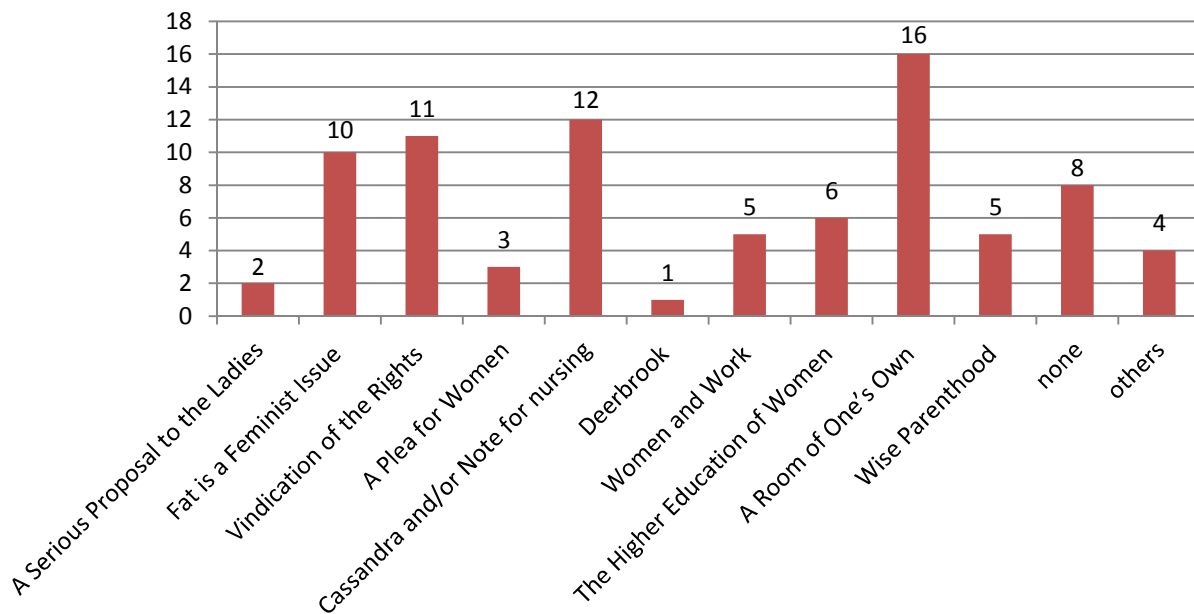
This question in direct relation to the previous one concerns the books written by the proposed feminists. Respondents could choose one or more possibilities from the following list of books “A Serious Proposal to the Ladies by Mary Astell, Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft, A Plea for Women by Marion Kirkland Reid, Cassandra or/and Note for nursing by Florence Nightingale, Deerbrook by Harriet Martineau, Women and Work by Barbara Leigh Smith, The Higher Education of Women by Emily Davies, A Room of One’s Own by Virginia Woolf, Wise Parenthood by Marie Stopes and Fat is a Feminist Issue by Susie Orbach”

Name of the book	Number
A Serious Proposal to the Ladies	2
Fat is a Feminist Issue	10
Vindication of the Rights	11
A Plea for Women	3
Cassandra and/or Note for nursing	12
Deerbrook	1
Women and Work	5
The Higher Education of Women	6
A Room of One’s Own	16
Wise Parenthood	5
none	8
others	4

Table 15 – Feminist book

According to the answers, the most read and best known book is *A Room of One’s Own* which corresponds with previous ascertainment of the respondent’s awareness of the British feminists. The second place, identically as in the previous question, is held by *Cassandra and/or Note for Nursing* written by Florence Nightingale. Next positions are available to observe in the following graph. Eight people stated that have never read or do not know any of the proposed feminist books and four respondents have met with another feminist book

such as “*To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf, Feminism is for Everybody by Bell Hooks, Feminist Mystique, We should all be Feminist, Ain't I a Woman?*” or “*Blood, Bread and Poetry by Adrienne Rich.*” These results might lead to the conclusion that the first five ranked feminists, namely V. Woolf, F. Nightingale, M. Wollstonecraft, S. Orbach and M. Stopes are equally well-known as feminists as well as authors of their books in contrast to the last three ranked feminists, to be more precise E. Davies, M. K. Reid and B. L. Smith whose book are far more popular and known than their personalities.



Graph 10 – Feministic book

6.5 Question no. 15 - Women’s emancipation

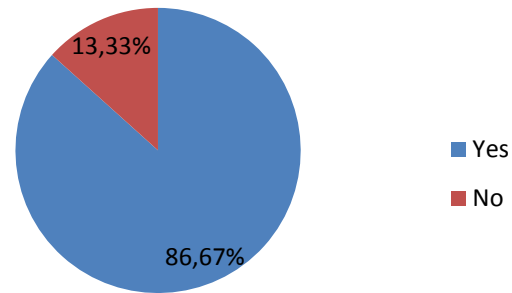
An unabridged version of the question: “*Do you think that women's emancipation is justified?*”

Women’s emancipation has changed its meaning over time according to achieved goals and fulfilled demands of women. In the past, women’s emancipation could mean women wearing trousers but nowadays the boundaries moved. For example, it might be the increasing number of women in political sphere or increasing number of women occupying high-level job positions. The aim of this question is to show respondent’s attitudes towards women’s emancipation.

Women's emancipation

Women's emancipation		
	Percentage	Number
No	13.30%	4
Yes *	86.70%	26

Table 16 – Women's emancipation



Graph 11 – Women's emancipation

As the table and graph above show, about 13% of all respondents find women's emancipation unwarranted. Only one of them is a woman. She justifies her answer as follows *"Emancipation implies that we are slaves. We are not. We do not have equality but we have rights that allow us so much more than slaves had. We do not require our male family members to give us permission to do things. Women's equality is justified."*

As far as the rest of the answers are concerned I again choose the fragments of the answers to sum up the comprehensive respondent's attitudes towards the justification of the women's emancipation. Three male respondents who do not find women's emancipation justified mainly give the reason for their choice by stating that the situation of the society is not as unfavourable as women often consider it, *"women neither want, nor need 'emancipation' from anything other than their own self-imposed roles in society which some consider limiting."* Moreover, men themselves seem to be oppressed too and seem to *"live in a gynocentric society which most people do not recognize."* One of them admits that women have been enslaved throughout history but *"no more or less than men"* and that double standards or any other hints of unequal treatment are caused mostly *"by the wealth and social standing of one's family in society, not gender."* On the other hand, there were 26 respondents finding women's emancipation justified. As the reasons for their choice they mostly stated that everyone has the right to be free *"women are human"* and *"equality is a basic human right."* The second most repeated reason is that women are still underrepresented in public institutions, even though they are sufficiently educated and that the situation still should be improving as women are *"human beings with intellect, reason, and the emotional and physical faculties of men."* Some of them think that women still often experience *"economic, physical, political, social or any other types of oppression."* In lots of societies *"women's rights are still abused"* and that is why emancipation is in need as women are programmed

from their birth to be inferior and that women’s emancipation “*would improve the lives of women and children.*” Two female respondents support emancipation just because its existence is “*obvious*” and because the world where people are not equal is the “*imbalanced*” one. To sum up, most of the respondents agree with the statement that women’s emancipation is justified and find its existence needed and natural. Only three respondents, all of them are men, find it unjustified as they think that women have already been enough emancipated.

6.6 Question no. 16 - Feminism as solely a women’s issue

An unabridged version of the question: “*Do you think that feminism is only women's issue?*”

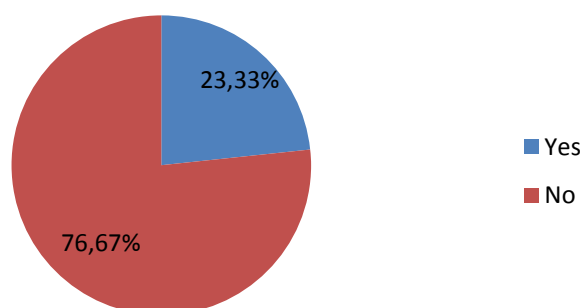
The aim of this question is to map the general attitudes of British respondents towards feminism as an issue and to find out whether they agree with the statement that feminism is solely a women’s issue.

According to the following table and graph, most of the respondents, i.e. about 77%, do not regard feminism as an only women’s issue. The rest of them have a completely opposite opinion about the issue.

Feminism as solely a women’s issue		
	Percentage	Number
No	76,67%	23
Yes	23,33%	7

Table 17 - Feminism as a women’s issue

Feminism as a women's issue



Graph 12 - Feminism as a women’s issue

The most repeated reason why respondents think that feminism concerns solely women is that “*feminism is an issue for feminists*” and real women fighting for their rights “*do not do feminism*”. Feminism only concerns “*hatred of men*”. Some male respondents do not support the feminist issue because feminists never care about the men’s rights and “*has routinely ignored or fought against men's issues*”. One of them does not regard feminism as a “*real human issue as it is based only on gender*”. Twenty-three respondents think that women’s issues should concern also men as “*it leads nowhere without all people concerned*”. The respondents come to an agreement that feminism is an issue of both women and men, “*it is a human issue*”. “*Patriarchy harms everyone, men as well as women*”, it is another reason for

the previous statement. Two female surveyed British people state that it is natural that both women and men care about the women's issue, "*men have a role to support women and to understand the problems*" and some of them also admit that "*there are some men involved in feminisms*" and "*they are trying to help women*". Another argument is that "*feminism is for people of all identities and involves all the sexes*" and that "*everybody should be a feminist*". From the beginning, feminism was and still is "*based on men*" as women want to be equal to men and to be regarded as strong as men are. Based on the answers, it can be concluded that respondents mostly concur in stating that feminism concerns also men because it is a human issue. Contrary to this, some respondents think that feminism is solely a women's issue because women neither care about men's issue nor about men's rights. Moreover, they think that nowadays feminism is no more about fighting for women's right but about hatred of men. In this question, the men's and women's opinions are not as significantly different as in previous ones and their attitudes are not so decided according to the gender.

6.7 Question no. 17 - Experience with women's rights abuse

An unabridged version of the question: "*Have you ever witnessed (personally) women's rights abuse?*"

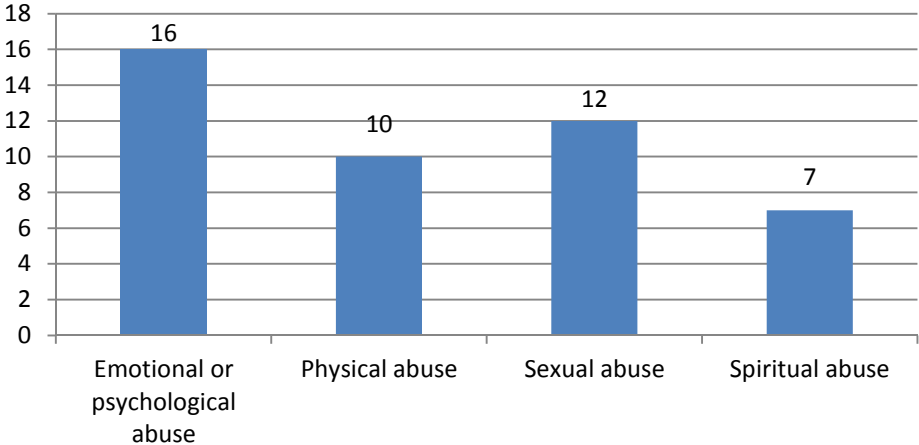
The following question concerns only women and it was proposed only to women. According to the gained responses quoted below, about 80% of all female respondents have already witnessed women's rights abuse. Respondents could choose one or more options concerning different ways of experienced right abusing. Namely, it is "*emotional or psychological abuse*" (as constant yelling, insults, screaming, threats, humiliation or criticism, threatening or harassing a woman/her children/family members/friends/pets, excessive jealousy or suspiciousness, isolating a woman from neighbours, friends/family or depriving a woman of love and affection, etc.), "*physical abuse*" (as assaults involving beating, burning, slapping, choking, kicking, pushing, biting or a weapon, physical neglect through denial of food or medication, inappropriate personal or medical care, rough handling, or confinement, etc.), "*sexual abuse*" (as rape/sexual assault, sexual harassment, unwanted sexual touching, sexual exploitation or forcing a woman to participate in any unwanted, unsafe, degrading or offensive sexual activity, denying or ridiculing a woman's sexuality or controlling her reproductive choices, etc.) or "*spiritual abuse*" (as preventing a woman from participating in

spiritual or religious practices, ridiculing her beliefs, or using spiritual beliefs to justify controlling her, etc.)

According to the gained answers, most of the female respondents who have experienced physical abuse were also abused sexually. All of the interviewed women (16) stating that they have once or more times in their life experienced some of the abusive behaviour and have witnessed emotional/psychological abuse. All female respondents of this survey stating that they have witnessed sexual abuse have some experience also with psychological violence. That shows how the violence against women is interconnected.

Kind of women's rights abuse	Number
Emotional or psychological abuse	16
Physical abuse	10
Sexual abuse	12
Spiritual abuse	7

Table 18 – Women’s rights abuse



Graph 10 – Women’s rights abuse

As the table and graph above show, there are sixteen female respondents stating that have already witnessed women’s right abuse. All of them were asked to indicate which type of abuse they had experienced and to give some more details. Not all of them were willing to talk more about their problems, in the following article there are some of the most repeated answers.

Six out of sixteen female respondents stated that have witnessed partner violence as “*abusive household, beating, sexual assault, controlling, etc.*” Women who witnessed abuse in public are second most numerous. It includes “*stroke, grope on buttocks, catcalls, sexual stares, rape (almost) etc.*” Some of the respondents have already met violence against women not

only personally but also through their work in women's organizations "*as a counsellor and alcohol support worker*" or through their close relatives or friends. "*I've friends who were sexually assaulted.*" When it comes to the spiritual abuse two interviewees stated that they have had to deal with "*using spiritual beliefs to control women.*"

6.8 Comparison of the surveys

For this part of the survey I chose three surveys to be compared. One of them is FRA's survey available on the web page: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>. It was made by European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights published in 2014 and comprising about 42,000 women across the 28 Member States of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Finland, France, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia, United Kingdom) including 1,510 British women, and asks about their experiences of physical, sexual and psychological violence. Interviews were conducted from April to September 2012. The second one is a questionnaire I made in 2014 including 28 female British respondents of different field of interests. It was spread via the Internet on the web page: <http://www.survio.com>. It asks about the experiences with women's rights abuse and other aspects of unequal treatment as problems caused by sex or lower work evaluation caused by gender differences. The answers of the respondents are available in appendix 1. And the last one is a survey of 2015 presented above on which my practical part of the thesis is based. This one was merely sent to the webpages concerning feminism or fights for human/girl's/women's rights. That might explain the diametrical differences between all the results.

When it comes to my survey of 2014 there were about 23% of all female respondents, i.e. one in four women who has witnessed women's rights abuse. While my second questionnaire of 2015 shows that only 20% of all female respondents have never had to deal with abuse of their rights. When we put both my surveys together, there are 47 female respondents: 23 out of them, one in two females interviewed, have already witnessed some kinds of women's rights abuse. It is about 48.9%.

6.8.1 Physical or/and sexual violence

All together there are 14 female respondents who experienced physical or/and sexual abuse, i.e. 73.7% of all female interviewees, according to my survey of 2015. In this survey sexual harassment is included in the question which concerns sexual abuse. While FRA's survey shows that one in three women (33%) has experienced physical and/or sexual violence and every second women (55%) has been confronted with sexual harassment. In the UK it is even more, 66%. In the United Kingdom, physical and/or sexual violence is about 44%; it reports the 5th highest number out of all the twenty-eight surveyed EU states. Separately, the FRA's survey's prevalence of physical violence is 24% and of sexual violence is 8-9%.¹¹⁸ According to my survey of 2015 it is respectively about 53% and 63%. Unlike the FRA's survey, my survey reveals that the number of respondents who have witnessed sexual violence is higher than those abused physically.

6.8.2 Psychological violence

As can be seen from the results of my survey of 2015, 84% of all surveyed women have experienced psychological violence. FRA's survey shows that overall, 43 % of women indicate that they have experienced it; in the United Kingdom it is 46% of respondents.¹¹⁹

6.8.3 Prevalence of violence and age

As far as the age is concerned, in both my surveys the women between years of 20-40 are most predisposed to be touched by gender inequalities. In the survey of 2015, these women were most numerous in stating that they have experienced all four proposed kinds of women's rights abuse. I cannot observe all four kinds of women's abuses separately as my survey is not wide enough to draw any conclusions. According to the FRA's survey, the highest prevalence of physical or/and sexual violence is recorded in the group of women who are 18–29 years old and the results show that this violence against women decreases with age and is lowest among women who are 60 and over. The prevalence of psychological violence is lowest in the oldest age of female respondents too.¹²⁰ My survey cannot prove this as there is only one woman over 60 who filled out my questionnaire and has witnessed physical, sexual and psychological violence. To sum up, all of the surveys show that women in the stage of young adulthood are

¹¹⁸ FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014 [online], pp. 21-68, 81-92

¹¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 71-79

¹²⁰ Ibid, 21-80

more predisposed to experience violence, which might be partly surprising as one might assume that older respondents would have accumulated more experiences of violence over time than the youngest ones. There may be more possible influencing factors, such as social background of women or different characteristics of perpetrators, etc.

6.8.4 Prevalence of violence and education

As for my survey of 2015 and the impact of women's education on the results, we can find out that 93% of women with tertiary education have experienced women's rights abuse compared with 75% of ones with secondary education. As for the women who achieved primary education, this cannot be concluded as there is only one female respondent. Again, I cannot observe all four kinds of women's abuses separately as my survey is not wide enough to draw any conclusions. According to the FRA's survey and the physical and/or sexual violence by partner, the prevalence decreases with achieved educational qualification. But when it comes to the physical and/or sexual violence by a non-partner, women with higher levels of education are more numerous. Nineteen per cent (19%) of women with primary education have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a non-partner, compared with 22% of women with secondary education and 27% with tertiary education. As for sexual harassment, women with higher education indicate violence more frequently than women with lower educational levels. The FRA's results also reveal that when it comes to emotional violence, there is no corresponding link with women's education.¹²¹ Thus, the prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence (only by a non-partner) and sexual harassment increases with achieved educational levels in the FRA's survey. As far as my survey of 2015 is concerned, the situation is quite similar even though I compare just the women's abuse in general. Nevertheless, it may be caused by the fact that women with higher education might be more capable to perceive the inequalities or aspects of discrimination as they are aware of their rights and of their current possible opportunities thanks to their achieved educational level.

6.8.5 Prevalence of violence and work position

According to my survey of 2015, when it comes to the link between employment and any kinds of women's rights abuse, there is no significant corresponding effect. However, women who are occupying the unskilled positions show the lowest rate of violence. To be more

¹²¹ FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014 [online], pp. 21-80

precise, two out of three (2/3) women have been victimised, but in comparison with women occupying skilled and highly skilled jobs they have experienced it less in terms of the proposed types of abuse (sexual, physical emotional, spiritual). We could indicate that the prevalence of abuse increases with responsibility and skills required by the work position. When students, retired and unemployed people are concerned, this group is also significantly touched by rights abuse. Six out of them (6/7) have experienced some kinds of proposed violence and indicate relatively high levels of abuse. As far as my second survey of 2014 is concerned there are only three types of women who have witnessed women's right abuse, i.e. two female unemployed respondents, two female students and three female white-collar workers. Most of them seem to be less evaluated than men holding the same work positions and most of them have achieved tertiary education. In the FRA's survey, similarly there is no clear pattern in terms of psychological violence against women, however, about 61% of women working in high-ranking positions with supervisory capacity have experienced psychological abuse, which is more than in other occupations. Results of the FRA's survey also reveals that physical and/or sexual violence is highest among women who are managers, directors or professionals, so highly skilled professions, 28-30 % of women in these positions have experienced this type of violence compared with 13-14 % of women who have never done paid work. As for sexual harassment, it is more commonly experienced by women with higher occupations, i.e. 74-75% of those who have experienced sexual harassment. In FRA's survey, there are 17% of retirees compared with 28% of unemployed people and 26% of students who have experienced physical and/or sexual abuse.¹²² Again, there is no link recorded between prevalence of this kind of violence among retired, unemployed people and students in my survey of 2015. Overall, from the results of the FRA's and my surveys, we can deduce that the prevalence of violence against women might increase with responsibility and abilities required by a work position. The other groups of women with high prevalence of women's right abuse are students, retired and unemployed.

There are no recorded UK results in the FRA's surveys concerning the impact of age, education or work position on prevalence of violence.

¹²² FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014 [online], pp. 21-80

7. Conclusion

To sum up the theoretical part, there were 3 main psychological factors which forced women to stay in a position of 'slave' and to give men the power over them. They were dualism, Androcentrism and treating someone as an object. All of these aspects together with religious custom formed the usual negative attitudes towards women which started to change at the end of 18th century. The launching button is not sure, according to Langton, it might have been an effort to understand the natural roots of women's oppression.¹²³ The first indication of feminism appeared in early history and was expressed and spread among people mostly by literary works. According to Nancy Cott, feminism is said to have been created with the support of a left-sided political party – the Labour Party. Nonetheless, it was the Conservatives and the Unionist Party which were the first parties who accepted the quotas concerning women's participation in politics. As Nancy Cott says, among the most influential factors which contributed to the development of feminism were Enlightenment rationalism, Protestant faith, Quakerism and Socialist criticism together with the fundamental principles of Christianity.¹²⁴ Women's attitudes have changed during the centuries according to cultural background as we can observe in Figure 1. While during the first feminist wave women demanded equal treatment based on the similarities of women and men, the attitudes of the second wave of feminists have changed and they required equality because of their differences. The third feminism wave was not so united, it fragmented into various feminist groups supporting still essential goals but with certain differences. At the beginning, feminism based on differentiation between women and men, over time it has started to emphasise also differences among women according to ethnicity, race and all human identities in general.

As for the survey, it aims to show the main streams of thinking of contemporary women, their position in society and experiences with unequal treatment as well. It tries to define the respondents who are predisposed the most to be confronted with women's rights abuse. According to the responses in the questionnaire, the risk of any violence against women increases with the achieved educational level and the responsibility required at work and it is at the highest level among women between 20-40 years. In the last chapter of my practical section we can compare the results of the three surveys, two of them are made by me (one in 2014 other in 2015) and the third one is the FRA's survey created by European Union Agency

¹²³ Langton, 2007, p. 254

¹²⁴ Cott, 1987, p. 15-17

for Fundamental Rights published in 2014. The FRA's survey includes a far greater number of respondents and sometimes shows slightly different results. In the respondent's point of view, the characteristics which depict feminism the most are *intellect* and *justification*, however most of the respondents come to an agreement that feminism is impossible to describe with only one word. It was mostly men who opted for predominantly negative features and women for the more positive ones. Among the British respondents, Virginia Woolf is by far the most famous feminist along with her work *A Room of One's Own*. When it comes to the other feminist authors, according to respondents, most of the stated writers come from the USA. It might show that feminism is widespread and probably more discussed in the USA than in UK. According to the results of the survey, some respondents supporting predominantly right wing political party consider women's emancipation less justified than supporters of predominantly left wing political parties. It might partly prove Nancy Cott's statement that women's issue was and still is an issue of the left political spectrum. The majority of respondents think that women's emancipation is justified and as the reasons for their statement they indicate that the movement helps women to be independent and to protect them, but there is also the other side of the coin: some male respondents consider feminism to be a useless movement full of men-haters. One fourth of all respondents find feminism as solely a women's issue as feminists are also concerned about women only. Thus it is not a human issue. As far as experiences with women's right abuse are concerned, all of the sixteen female respondents have had to deal with emotional/psychological abuse, 63% with physical and 75% with sexual abuse. As for the awareness of feminism I can assume that according to the gained answers, respondents are well aware of the movement. To the all of the surveyed people, one of the main sources of information about feminism and women's emancipation is the mass media such as newspapers, internet, television, social networks and blogs. As for the factors which had the greatest impact on shaping the women's movement into its contemporary form, my survey does not reveal enough accurate results to prove whether they still contribute to the continuation of feminism.

At present, feminism might be often associated with disproportionate, excessive and often militant actions. Contemporary feminists may be often regarded as man-haters demanding a world without men, but in fact, as my survey shows it is not definitely true. According to the respondents, current feminism is a more reasonable and intellectually based movement which helps to protect women. It was and still is a fully-fledged movement of thoughts which help to

improve human rights equality and only a few surveyed people regard the movement as it stereotypically has been.

Although I am well aware of several possibilities of how more explore the topic, the scope of the bachelor theses is quite limiting.

Explanatory notes

This notes aim to explain meaning of the specific technical terms mentioned in text.

- 1) **Enlightenment rationalism** – “*a philosophical theory during the Age of Reason (the Enlightenment) of the 17th century that basis of knowledge is reason*”¹²⁵
- 2) **Misandry** – “*the hatred or prejudice against men*”¹²⁶
- 3) **Protestant faith** - “*a Christian denomination which separated from the Roman Catholic Church based on theological or political differences during the Reformation (16th century)*”¹²⁷
- 4) **Protofeminism** – “*a philosophical tradition anticipating modern feminist concepts before their arrival*”¹²⁸
- 5) **Quakerism** – “*a Christian movement founded by George Fox circa 1650 and devoted to peaceful principles*”¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Rationalism, [online]

¹²⁶ Misandry, [online]

¹²⁷ Protestant, [online]

¹²⁸ Protofeminism, [online]

¹²⁹ Quaker, [online]

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Feminism and Women of Great Britain across Culture and Literature - Bachelor

Hello, May I have your attention for a couple of minutes, could you please fill in this questionnaire for me as conscientiously as possible. It's for my bachelor's thesis concerning the women's issues and development of the Feminism. Thank you so much, Kateřina K.

1) Nationality

2) Sex

- Female
 Male

3) Age

4) The name of supported political party

5) Are you a Christian?

- No
 Yes - which denomination

6) Highest education level achieved

- Primary education
 Secondary education
 Tertiary education

7) I work as ...

8) What do you think feminism is according to your point of view?

9) Have you ever heard about feminism as a term which concerns the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes?

No

Yes - where

10) In your opinion, the nowadays feminists are... (1 means I don't agree, 10 I totally agree)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
moderate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
reasonable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
intellectual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
excessive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
justified	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
men-haters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
radical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
militant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain your choice of previous question?

11) I think that the nowadays form of feminism is ...

- the same as feminism in the past
- different than in the past - please write down the differences

12) Have you ever read a book where feminism is reflected?

- No
- Yes - What book?

12a) Explain in what way feminism is reflected there.

13) Rate, please, each of the following feminists according to how much they are familiar to you (1 means I know nothing about her, 10 - I know a lot about her)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mary Astell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marion Kirkland Reid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Florence Nightingale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harriet Martineau	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Barbara Leigh Smith	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emily Davies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Christabel and Emmeline Pankhurst	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Virginia Woolf	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marie Stopes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Susie Orbach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you know any other famous feminists? If so, please write down the names and where you know them from.

14) Which of the following works of famous feminists do you know?

- A Serious Proposal to the Ladies by Mary Astell
- Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft
- A Plea for Women by Marion Kirkland Reid
- Cassandra and/or Note for nursing by Florence Nightingale
- Deerbrook by Harriet Martineau
- Women and Work by Barbara Leigh Smith
- The Higher Education of Women by Emily Davies
- A Room of One's Own by Virginia Woolf
- Wise Parenthood by Marie Stopes
- Fat is a Feminist Issue by Susie Orbach
- none
- other one - please note the name and the author of the work

15) Do you think that women's emancipation is justified?

- No
- Yes

15a) Please, explain your previous answer (why?)

16) Do you think that feminism is only women's issue?

- Yes
 No

16a) Explain your previous answer, please.

Following answers should be answered only by women.

17) Have you ever witnessed (personally) women's rights abuse?

- No
 Yes

17a) If so, what kind of women's rights abuses did you witness?

- EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE as constant yelling, insults, screaming, threats, humiliation or criticism, threatening or harassing a woman (or her children, family members, friends or pets), excessive jealousy or suspiciousness, isolating a woman from neighbours, friends or family, or depriving a woman of love and affection, etc...
- PHYSICAL ABUSE as assaults involving beating, burning, slapping, choking, kicking, pushing, biting or a weapon. It may also include physical neglect through denial of food or medication, inappropriate personal or medical care, rough handling, or confinement etc...
- SEXUAL ABUSE as rape (sexual assault), sexual harassment, unwanted sexual touching, sexual exploitation or forcing a woman to participate in any unwanted, unsafe, degrading or offensive sexual activity. Sexual abuse may also include denying or ridiculing a woman's sexuality or controlling her reproductive choices, etc...
- SPIRITUAL ABUSE as preventing a woman from participating in spiritual or religious practices, ridiculing her beliefs, or using spiritual beliefs to justify controlling her etc...

17b) Please, explain your previous choices - which type of women's rights abuses did you witness, where and in what way did you experience them?

Appendix 2 - The answers noted in survey of 2014

	Sex	Age	Political creed	Religion	Education	Work position	*	**	***	****	*****
1	Female	34	none	none	A-level	stay at home mum	no	no	no	no	yes
2	Female	40	dont vote	Atheism	A-level	care worker	no	no	no	no	no
3	Female	32	Cons. and Union. P.	Atheism	-	senior executive	no	no	no	no	yes
4	Female	42	Labour Party	C of E	Compulsory	full time mum	no	no	no	no	no
5	Female	32	Independ	Atheism	Bachelor's	senior executive	no	no	no	no	yes
6	Female	32	none	Christianity	A-level	unemployed	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
7	Female	35	none	my believe	NVQ3	white-collar workers	no	no	no	no	yes
8	Female	32	Independ	Atheism	Bachelor's	senior executive	no	no	no	no	no
9	Female	32	Liberal Democrats	Christianity	Bachelor's	white-collar workers	no	no	no	no	yes
10	Female	34	none	Christianity	Master's	white-collar workers	no	no	yes	yes	no
11	Female	42	not political	Atheism	A-level	white-collar workers	no	no	no	no	yes
12	Male	47	not for discussion	Christianity	Master's	manager	-	-	-	-	yes
13	Female	39	none	Atheism	Bachelor's	PA	no	no	no	yes	yes
14	Female	46	Cons. and Union. P.	Christianity	Higher diploma	manager	no	no	no	no	yes
15	Female	29	Cons. and Union. P.	Christianity	Bachelor's	finance	no	yes	no	no	yes
16	Female	57	Cons. and Union. P.	Christianity	A-level	white-collar workers	no	no	no	no	yes
17	Female	27	none	Christianity	Master's	white-collar workers	yes	no	yes	yes	no
18	Female	22	Labour Party	Agnostic	Bachelor's	student	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
19	Female	23	Labour Party	Atheism	Bachelor's	white-collar workers	no	no	yes	yes	yes
20	Male	27	none	Atheism	Compulsory	manager	-	-	-	-	yes
21	Female	30	Labour Party	Atheism	Master's	white-collar workers	no	yes	no	no	yes
22	Female	23	Labour Party	Budhism	Dpctprate	owner of a firm	no	no	no	yes	yes
23	Female	57	Cons. and Union. P.	Atheism	Master's	pensioner	no	no	no	no	yes
24	Male	31	Liberal Democrats	Atheism	Master's	white-collar workers	-	-	-	-	no
25	Male	18	Liberal Democrats	Atheism	A-level	student	-	-	-	-	no
26	Female	30	none	Atheism	Master's	student	no	no	no	no	no
27	Male	43	Cons. and Union. P.	Atheism	A-level	Blue-collar worker	-	-	-	-	no
28	Female	20	Liberal Democrats	Christianity	Bachelor's	student	no	no	no	no	yes
29	Male	39	Cons. and Union. P.	Christianity	Master's	white-collar workers	-	-	-	-	yes
30	Female	35	Liberal Democrats	Atheism	Master's	unemployed	yes	no	no	yes	yes
31	Female	21	Liberal Democrats	Atheism	A-level	student	no	no	no	no	no
32	Female	24	Liberal Democrats	Atheism	Bachelor's	student	no	no	no	yes	yes
33	Female	19	Liberal Democrats	Islam	Fashion design	student	no	yes	yes	yes	no
34	Male	21	Cons. and Union. P.	Atheism	Bachelor's	Barman	no	no	no	no	yes
35	Female	40	none	Christianity	Master's	white-collar workers	no	no	no	no	yes
36	Male	51	none	Naturalist	Master's	Educator	-	-	-	-	yes
37	Female	23	none	Atheism	under graduate d.	student	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
38	Female	40	none	Atheism	Master's	white-collar workers	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
39	Female	24	Independent Conserv.	Christianity	Bachelor's	white-collar workers	yes	yes	yes	no	yes

Table 16 - The answers noted in survey of 2014

* Have you ever witnessed (personally) women's right abuse?

**Have you ever been forced to inform yourself about your own rights (concerning your sex)?

*** Have you ever had to deal with problems because of your sex

**** Have you ever seemed to be evaluated less than man occupied the same job position?

*****Do you think that women's emancipation is justified?

Appendix 3 - Development of feminism, from Equity to Transversity

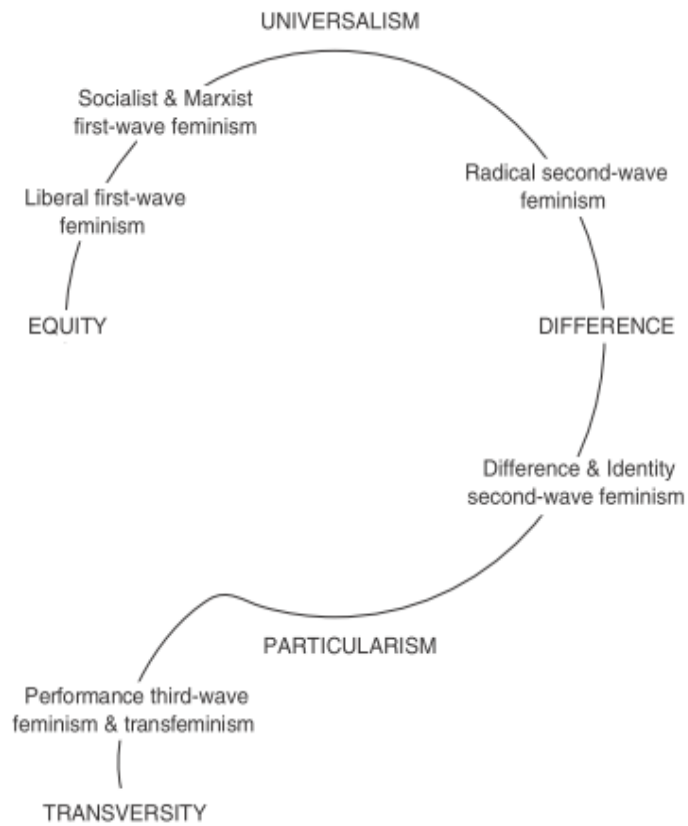


Figure 1 - Development of feminism, from Equity to Transversity, adapted from Kroløkke and Sørensen's book¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006, p.22

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