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Defining 4th Wave Feminism

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DEFINING
4TH WAVE
FEMINISM

JULIA CASTANIER





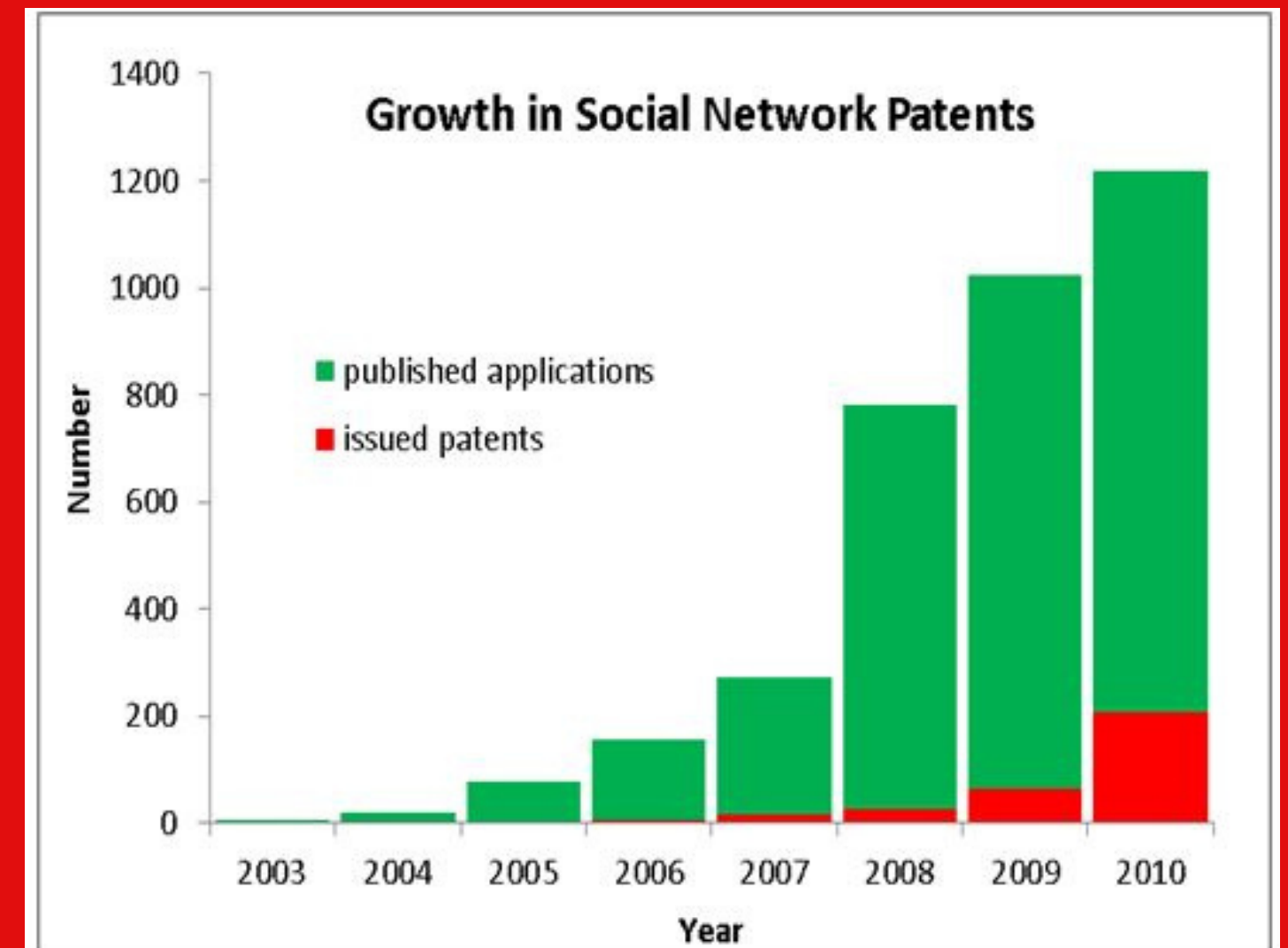
What is the 4th wave?

The 4th wave of feminism began around 2010 and is challenging to define. Born from the first three waves of feminism, some people say that it is simply an extension of the 3rd wave. It does share several similarities such as a focus on women's empowerment, intersectional experiences, and LGBTQ+ rights. However, it also advocates for trans-inclusivity and body positivity. The biggest difference between the 4th wave and its predecessors is the development of social media and its use in activism. The following slides discuss some of the 4th waves' key issues, events, and concepts.

Rise of Social Media

As mentioned, the 4th wave of feminism is identified by its use of technology. The graph to the right depicts the increase in social network patents issued in the years leading up to the 4th wave. Facebook arrived in 2004, followed by Twitter in 2006, and Instagram in 2010. This social media explosion led to “hashtag activism” which gave the feminist movement a powerful new medium for amplifying key issues and gaining support to enact social change.

"Social media is something women didn't have 10 years ago, and that's a big aspect in feminism today." -Emily Ratajkowski





Tarana Burke

Me Too Founder

Burke coined the "Me Too" phrase in 2006 to raise awareness for about sexual violence towards women.

It was a way for women who have experienced sexual abuse or harrassment to let other women know they were not alone.

#MeToo Movement



Alyssa Milano 
@Alyssa_Milano

If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet.



Actress Alyssa Milano amplified Burke's campaign in 2017 when she tweeted to encourage people who have experienced sexual violence and harassment to share their stories. The movement went viral with women all over the world responding about being abused on all the major social media platforms. The movement ultimately exposed many high profile people for their abuse of women they worked with. It also highlighted how patriarchal beliefs and misogynistic attitudes toward women and other vulnerable groups have been institutionalized in our culture.



#TIMESUP

Born from the #MeToo unveiling of systemic sexism, the #TIMESUP movement was started by 300+ Hollywood celebrities. The campaign's goal was to bring attention to the wider cultural problem of power imbalance between men and women in professional settings. It promoted equity, safety, and fairness in the workplace by covering issues such as equality in pay and work opportunities, particularly for women of color. They also created the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund to support people who want to fight discrimination and misconduct in the workplace. The social media movement was responsible for the most successful GoFundMe campaign ever raising over 21 billion dollars.

Women's March

In response to several anti-women statements made by Donald Trump before and during his presidential campaign, several protests were held globally the day after his inauguration. 7 million+ people gathered to protest for reproductive rights, LGBTQ rights, gender and racial inequities, workers' rights, immigration reform, healthcare reform, religious discrimination, and environmental issues. The march was the largest ever in history due to organization and promotion on social media.



Body Positivity

It's no secret to anyone that there are societal beauty ideals delivered to us in all forms of media. Women should aspire to be light skinned, light haired, straight haired, no haired, and above all else, thin. Men are not exempt from beauty ideals either with messages conveyed that they need to be tall and muscular. These unattainable beauty standards have caused widespread body dissatisfaction which is the most common factor associated eating pathology. 4th wave feminism has responded to this with body positivity hashtags on social media. A search on any social media platform using hashtags related to body positivity yields countless photos about body acceptance regarding everything from shape and fat level to trans and disabled bodies. The message is clear and effective - #all bodies are beautiful.

#radicalselflove



@thebodyoptimist



@mygeneration

#thebodyisnotanapology

Intersectionality

#intersectionality
#intersectionalitymatters
#intersectionalfeminism
#feministforall

*"If you're feminism isn't
intersectional, it isn't feminism."
- Feminist Instagram account*



Intersectionality, a term coined in the 90s by Kimberlé Crenshaw, focuses on the experiences of individuals with layered identities that are not considered the norm or default in the wider culture. For example, a woman of color who is homosexual and disabled will have a different experience in our culture than a white, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied man. The main idea is to identify specific burdens that people face due to those intersections. This concept has birthed multiple hashtag efforts on social media platforms to bring awareness and advocate for several issues. For example, on the "Feminist" page on Instagram, many of its posts discuss intersectionality in the context of trans-inclusivity and people of color. This is particularly relevant due to the anti-trans political efforts happening currently in several U.S states and all over the world. Modern feminists consider feminism without intersectionality to be outdated and non-inclusive.

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Fourth-wave feminism. (n.d). Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth-wave_feminism

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This entry provided info on what the women's march was responding to and what the key issues protestors were focused on. I also used the photo.