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          The Frontier on Feminism   
 America is the land of the free and the opportunity, however, not everyone is treated with the same equality as other people in the nation. A frontier is a specific area that continues over time. For centuries there have been uprisings of all kind of frontiers, there are groups that have fought and continue to fight for the equality and regarding race, sexuality, and gender. Some have had small successes while others are just now making a bigger splash in achieving equality. As an example, a few movements on the rise right now are Feminism, Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, #NoBanNoWall, Climate Change, and the LGBT movement. These are just a few examples that represent the small slice of the social change happening in the 21st century. Feminism is one movement in a pool of thousands but with the amount of people it is affecting the harder it is to ignore. People of the Feminist movement are screaming to be noticed, they are demanding a change to this corrupted world that exist.  
 Feminism is the political, economic, and social equality of the genders based on women's rights and interests. The world is not fair, money and greed is what makes the world go round, and these courportes are not going to stop to make sure everyone is treated fairly. The popular idea of how feminism started is with the 19th Amendment that was ratified in 1920. Contrary to this idea, Dan Morrison writes, “Organized feminism did not really kick off until the first Women's Conference held in Seneca Falls, America, in 1848. To begin with, the Women's Movement evolved out of social reform groups such as the Abolition of Slavery, the Social Purity and Temperance movements.” (Morrison) But for women to get their ideas across they had to start campaigning for things that actually affected them such as the guardianship of their infants, property rights, divorce, the ability to access higher education that could lead to the higher(medical) professions, equal pay and protective legislation for women workers. This is just a small insight of what they were fighting for, what they were being forced to fight for. Yet, it has still taken years for any change to come to light. Morrison writes, “It was not until 1928 that all women - not just those over 30 and of the right property qualifications - could legally vote. Despite arguments that women should accept merely local suffrage, or universal male suffrage, or limited suffrage, the suffragettes persevered.” (Morrison) Fighting for something you believe in is extremely hard in a world that is so rooted in their own corrupted opinion.

Barack Obama once said, “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.” (Sollosi) Everything has a beginning, a creator. The feminist movement has been led by amazing leaders such as Hélène Cixous, Simone De Beauvoir, Naomi Wolfe, Germaine Greer, Bell Hooks, Doris Lessing, Andrea Dworkin, Malala Yousafzai, Roxane Gay, Rosie The Riveter, Maya Angelou, and so many more. The women who is credited with being the founder of the feminist movement is Gloria Steinem. These women worked so hard to get their voices heard. Some of the means through which they communicated and shared their ideas was through literature, protesting, and so many other things. However, one voice can change a room, an opinion, and a life. These women did just that, some even risked their lives just so that other women, children, and even men could have a better future, a better life. The world was flipped upside down in 2016, the Gay Rights movement was on the rise and feminism wasn’t far behind. Accompanying these movements were the  #Black lives matter and #NoBanNoWall was very much a topic in the news. All of the movements were antagonized even more when Donald Trump was inaugurated as president. President Trump made a reputation for himself as a sexist, racist, and uneducated. This allowed for more women to stand up for themselves, and other women and take a stand for feminism. Emma Watson, Beyoncé, Kristen Bell, Lena Dunham, Amy Schumer, and many other women have taken the rolls of discussing important matters and fighting for them. They have started marches, they have started legal prosecutions, and have already made a bigger voice for women in the future.   
 People have spent many years in the dark not being aware of what is going on in society or just turning a blind eye to the issues, which contradicts some of America's core values, as being the land of opportunity and the free. America is not a nation meant to fear the death of children being killed at school, or families being torn apart for months and months. America is not a nation that is supposed to bow down to tyrants. Yet so many people are simply brainwashed into believing these notorious crimes are the acceptable actions for our society. Marianne Schnall writes in an article for CNN, “Women everywhere are rising up, taking the women's movement into the mainstream. Women are protesting, marching, organizing and building power. From the millions who joined the Women's March to the survivors who have bravely come forward with their stories of sexual harassment and assault, to the millions participating in the #MeToo movement, it's become clear that women are not going to stay silent anymore.” (Schnall)  Nothing is to small and nothing is to big as long as there is the determination and the resources to accomplish it. Women are knocking down barriers left and right, they are running for offices and funding other campaigns, however, the key to true success is to stay humble to your roots, to be knowledgeable about the past while being mature enough to grow from it.   
 Women have a long history of being unappreciated and not valued as a human being. The book “Death Comes for the Archbishop” by Willa Cather gives us two examples of how women didn’t really have the opportunity or capability  to fight for themselves. The first example is of a woman named Magdalena Valdez and her husband Buck Scales. Cather provides an example of his brutality to her in the book it writes, “Magdalena had born three children since her marriage, and her husband had killed each of them a few days after birth, by ways so horrible that she could not relate to it.” (Carther p.72) Women didn’t have many rights in 1848, their expectations were to get married, to have children, and to do the heavy housework. Even though Magdalena had the great unfortunate chance of being married to Buck Scales she still fought hard to survive, help others, to be a kind person. She had to watch her children be murdered, saw innocent young travellers murdered for their supplies, and she was constantly beaten . She had to go through the constant pain of having her spirit broken, her hope stolen. And even though she had all of these terrible things happen to her she had the ability to show kindness to strangers, and the ability to take a chance to save someone. Cather writes, “Instantly that stupid face became intense, prophetic, and full of awful meaning. With her fingers she pointed them away, away!- two quick thrusts into the air. Then, with a look of horror beyond anything language could convey, she threw her head back and drew the edge of her palm quickly across her distended throat and vanished.” (Cather p.68)  Feminism is about fighting for equality, and even though Magdalena did not have the chance to be equal to any of these men in her story she had the chance to save someone's life and that's what feminism is, it’s the chance to sacrifice yourself to allow others to have a better future.  
 The second example that Willa Cather gave in the book is about an older Hispanic women named Soda, she was a slave to an American family called the Smiths. Slavery and Feminism have many qualities that go hand in hand and when it comes to Magdalena and Soda, they had to go through slavery and the lack of feminism in their lives. They had to go through a time period where there was no one to fight for them and no one to care for them. That’s what these movements are for, they are to fight for the people who couldn't fight for themselves, to give justice to the past and the present but to secure the future. Soda went through a lot with the Smiths family, she was stripped of her choice to have a religious aspect in her life, of having any contact with her priest her church but also to have any access with anybody. The Smiths would not even give her the proper clothing to survive winter, Cather writes, “He saw that she had no stockings under her shoes, the cast-off rawhides of her master, - and beneath her frayed black shawl was only a thin calico dress, covered with patches.” (Cather p.212)  To live a life with no comfort and no love is a rough life to live, but that is what creates strong character. If Soda spoke out, if she tried to escape the life she had she would've been punished severely and most likely would have died, but in the 21st century women have the chance to speak out, to punish the evil.   
 America would not be the land of opportunity if there was no opportunity to begin with. There is always a beginning to everything, meaning it is on the frontier of greatness. Feminism has been around for a very long time but like anything it needed a little push and the year 2016 was that little push. But most people like to forget the past, but the past keeps us strong, it is a reminder of what happened and what can happen again. The women that suffered from the societal norms of the past, such as Soda and Magdalena, are to be learned from and their qualities and demonstrations of strength and humility should be used as inspirations in the change and reminders of the past. Women must vote, protest, and work to change societal norms so that the suffering that those women in the past endured has meaning. So much progress has already been made and continues to be made so that women of this nation and other nations never have to face the previous oppression they faced in the past again.

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