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Women/Gender Issues, Protest Politics

Key Words :

Women/Gender Issues, Protest Politics, Feminism, Social Movements, Inequality, Civil Rights

Description:

This issue will focus on the various social movements and political protests women have created and supported in order to eradicate the alarming amount of social, economic, and political inequalities they have endured since the inception of this nation. It will examine the political and social impact of Feminism and how it has become a useful agent in promoting gender equality. Finally, this brief will concentrate on contemporary Women/Gender inequalities such as gender discrimination in the workforce and how women are retaliating to these types of inequalities.

Key Points:

- Women have consistently struggled to erase the social, economic, and political inequalities that unfortunately have stood in their way. From the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 to the Civil Rights era, women have fought ardently to promote and achieve equal rights. When women weren't allowed the right to vote, they protested and participated in numerous political rallies in order to demonstrate their desire for equality. Because of their hard work, women were finally able to witness in the 1920s, the passage of the nineteenth amendment which allowed women the right to vote. Some researchers speculate that the passage of the 19th amendment paved the way for the birth of Feminism.
- Feminism played a crucial role in opening the eyes of Americans on gender inequality. It educated males and females about the civil rights women legally deserved. Moreover, it captivated the nation since the movement allowed Americans to realize the potential women had in the workforce, in the education sector.
- Though social movements pertaining solely to women's rights have declined, there are still various issues that need to be addressed. For example, the economic and social discrimination women experience within the workforce is still present. In addition, women who advocate for same-sex marriages are also at a disadvantage due to the laws banning these types of marriages.

Brief:

Since the American government banned females the ability to vote, women have engaged aggressively in a plethora of protest and social movements. The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 proved to be a milestone for women in the United States since it allowed them to focus on ways to promote equality. For example, at the convention the "Declaration of Sentiments" was signed in which was a document signed by men and women that listed the rights women should be entitled to receive. This influential reunion also sparked women's social movements such as the creation of various parties and organization concentrating on equal rights. Before the enactment of the 19th amendment, women across the nation were gathering enough political

support to voice their concerns. For the right of political representation, women formed the National Woman's Party and the National American Woman Suffrage Association in order to encourage political change. They fundamentally declared their right to vote and would form rallies and protests outside public places to fundamentally express their sentiments.

Feminism can be defined as an ideology that supports the advancement and equal rights of women. Its main concern is to erase any inequalities between genders—whether they are in political, social, or even economic differences. Well into the Civil Rights Movement of 1964, many women supported this ideology and focused on fixing the inequalities they still felt shouldn't exist. These issues concerned an array of civil rights such as equality in the education sector, the workplace, and even sexuality. Women participated in an array of protests in an attempt to show their nation that they are entitled to equal civil rights. In addition to protests and rallies, women took over jobs that men would stereotypically have. However, because of World War II, a shortage of men in fields such as construction desperately needed replacement workers. Women took advantage of this and proved to be just as competent as a male in the field of construction. This massive wave of women crossing over to jobs stereotypically performed by men, built a stronger case for gender equality. Due to their strong manifestations, women were able to close a massive chunk of the American gender inequality gap.

After the Civil Rights, women continued to fight for gender inequality. One issue that has consistently been a problem is violence against women. In 1994, women were finally relieved to hear that the Violence Against Women Act had been passed. This piece of legislation states that any "illegitimate dominance over women" could potentially become punishable by law. This act pushed for improved investigation of any individual who committed any violent crime against women. This would include but not be limited to: sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, rape, and etc. This act proved to be another successful achievement of feminism and women's rights. One of the main goals women had in post-civil rights was to equalize male and female social rights as much as possible. By engaging in social movements, creating political interest groups, and educating the public, women have come drastically closer into reaching gender equality.

Although it may seem women have drastically closed the gender inequality gaps, it appears that there are still various social issues that need to be addressed to close it even more. Indeed, there has been a substantial decline of political and social movements concerning women's rights. However, problems such as discrimination within the workforce as well as limited same-sex marriage rights have not yet been fully addressed. For example, researchers suggest that the "glass ceiling" in which refers to the imaginary career barriers that "oppresses" women does not exist anymore since women are owning an enormous amount of U.S. businesses. Approximately, 7.8 million females own non farming U.S. businesses according to the Department of Labor statistics 2007. Though these data seem that women are overcoming social barriers, there is still an increase amount of complaints of gender discrimination and inequality in the hiring process of a job and in the workforce. In addition, women who support same sex marriage are being denied this civil right. This controversial issue has already sparked protests across the entire nation from both sides of the continuum. Same sex marriage has already been legalized in certain jurisdictions. However, it has not yet reached the national level. Though this issue may not be entirely focused on women's rights, the issue still has enough potential to make a massive political impact if enough support is gathered.

Suggestions:

(Should I include information on reproduction right? E.g. Roe vs. Wade)

Also, should I add more statistics or stay away from the history lesson?