

**WMST 2141 Discovering Feminist Thought
Feminist Theory & Activism Assignment**

This assignment directs students to the Rise Up! archive as a resource for learning about the relationship between feminist thought and activism. It was a part of a required second year course in Gender & Women's Studies called *Discovering Feminist Thought*. In this course, students learn about the evolution of feminist theory and explore links to feminist organizing and social change. Throughout the semester, we consider how feminist thinkers have explained social inequalities, imagined alternatives and strategized for greater social justice. Key learning outcomes in this course include the ability to understand connections between feminist theory and activism, and to apply course content to historical and current events.

My rationale for this assignment extended beyond these learning outcomes however. Undergraduate students often express a lack of confidence when learning about theory. Theory can seem inaccessible or irrelevant. My hope was that by exposing them to examples of feminist groups and activism, students would understand that feminist theory is fundamentally about envisioning and making social change.

For this assignment, students researched three feminist groups and drew out theoretical influences. Students were encouraged to think about how a group understood social inequality, and their ideas about social transformation. Students could select historical and/or contemporary groups for their assignment and the Rise Up! archive was provided as one possible resource for their research. Most students chose to look at a combination of historical and contemporary groups, and the majority of the class did access the Rise Up! archive.

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Feminist Theory & Activism Assignment Directions & Resources

Worth 20%

Assignment Description & Goals:

For this assignment, students will look at 3 current and/or historical feminist groups and consider their ***theoretical influences***. Students will provide a brief description of each group, including a discussion of how the group operates, their area of focus, and their vision of social change.

Assignments will make connections with ***course readings from a minimum of two weeks*** and reflect on how particular strands of feminist thought may have influenced the selected groups.

An important goal of this assignment is to provide students with an opportunity to link the theoretical concepts and frameworks they are learning in class with current and historical examples of feminist activism.

Assignment Format:

Assignments should be 4-5 pages double-spaced, excluding title page and references. Assignments should include an introduction and conclusion, as well as descriptions and analyses of the selected groups.

References should be formatted using APA citation style. Reference lists should contain all sources used in the assignment (ex. Online sources, academic sources).

Important Note:

This assignment requires internet research - students **should not** contact existing feminist groups to assist with their assignment.

Resources to assist with research on feminist groups:

Note: Groups that are not represented here may be included in your assignment.

Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)

<http://www.awid.org/member-profiles>

This umbrella organization links over 5000 individuals and women's groups from across the globe.

Rise Up: A Digital Archive of Feminist History

<https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/activism/organizations/>

This site contains archival materials collected from feminist groups in Canada which were active from the 1970s through to the 1990s.

Additional information will be provided in class.