

Feminism = gender equality?

During the last few years, in Latin America and the world, women have been raising their voice, demanding gender equality between the woman and the man. But what do we know about feminism?

The struggles of women were first really noticed during the French revolution in 1790s due to the liberal and rational ideologies typical to that era, and the new, bad work conditions that the industrial revolution created for the working class. Nowadays the idea of feminism has grown to be rather misinterpreted. Ignorant and/or uninformed people with irrational hatred for women say that feminism doesn't exist or isn't needed; there's just gender equality. Feminism as a concept *is* about equality between men and women. It's trying to eradicate many everyday actions and events that are under society's camouflaged patriarchy, aspects ranging from catcalling on the street, division of baby pink and blue (that are supposed to "determine" the sex of the child), the fact that women get less salary than a men, gender roles... The list goes on and on.

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However, the most complex problem is violence. I would like to talk about a specific case in this article: in Latin America where machism – from the word "macho" – is practiced everyday abuse and assaults happen in both daylight and in the dark, regardless of the victim's age or social class. In Brazil 15 women die every day just because they're female. Argentina outran many other Latin American countries with 277 femicides in 2014; 88 women were killed by their partners or ex-partners in Colombia, 83 in Perú, 71 in Dominican Republic, 46 in El Salvador and 25 in Uruguay. This year 16 women have died from domestic violence in Chile. (*Statistics*

from <http://www.elobservador.com.uy>)

These numbers rise and rise and still the society is not taking the problem as seriously as it should. We women are still being silenced – they say we're "exaggerating", "violent" or "Feminazis" for demanding respect, for wanting an environment safe enough to walk freely in and without fear, for wanting to dress in whatever we want without being called whores. Society doesn't decide at the time to talk about our bodies, for when we say no, *the meaning is no*. We want to eliminate stereotypes and sayings that affect both men and women negatively, and above all the society, the people.

Women don't hate the male sex. We're not looking for superiority, we're looking for EQUALITY.

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