What was Third-wave feminism, why did it occur, and how did musicians address some of the movement’s demands?

In this lesson, you will:

• Examine the Anita Hill testimony and identify its continued significance

• Explore the development, goals, and tactics of Third-wave feminism in the early 1990s

• Explain how the music of Bikini Kill, Salt-N-Pepa, and Selena reflected the Women’s Rights issues characteristic of Third-wave feminism

• Trace Third-wave feminism’s goals, ideals, and attitudes by examining the work of women musicians in three musical scenes in the 1990s: Riot Grrrl, Hip Hop, and Tejano music
Examine this definition of feminism and consider the questions on the following slide.

Feminism - 1: the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes; 2: organized activity on behalf of women's rights and interests
Consider or ask a friend:

• What kinds of equality does the theory of feminism advance? And for whom?

• What type of action does feminism promote? And for whom?

• How might both parts of the definition be linked together?

• What types of action may need to be taken in order for equality to be achieved?

• Can you think of any events in recent history that may be examples of feminism? If so, what are they?
Create a list with two separate columns. On the left column, list accomplishments that you believe women have made in the past 150 years (entries could include governmental leaders, the right to vote, female access to top corporate positions, etc.). On the right column, list issues women face today (for example: pay equity discrimination, negative body image, sexual harassment and abuse, etc.)

Consider if your entries apply to all women when we consider age, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, etc.

If possible, share your table with a friend, family member, or classmate(s).
Examine **this image** and consider the questions on the following slide.
Consider or ask a friend:

• What do you notice in this image?

• How are the people in the image arranged?

• What do you notice about their body positions and facial expressions?

• What do you notice about the room where this photograph was taken? Where might the location of this photograph be?

• What is occurring in this photograph?

• Do you know what historic event is being captured in this photograph?
Watch this video of Anita Hill’s testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee.
Consider or ask a friend:

• What was at issue in the Anita Hill hearings?
• Why was she brought to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee?
• In what ways did some see the Anita Hill testimony as inherently unfair?
• What was the result of the Anita Hill hearings?
Examine this image that British-American illustrator Sue Coe created in response to Anita Hill’s testimony before the Senate committee and then consider the questions on the following slide.
Consider or ask a friend:

• How is Anita Hill being portrayed in this image?

• What statement might Coe be making in portraying Hill in this way?

• How are the senators portrayed in the image?

• How is the media portrayed in the image?

• What else do you notice about this image?

• Based on what you learned in the video, how might this art piece represent the feelings some Americans had about the Anita Hill hearings?
Examine this handout with an article by American writer, feminist, and activist Rebecca Walker in which she coins the term “Third-wave feminism” and consider the questions on the following slide.
Consider or ask a friend:

• According to Walker, what message did Clarence Thomas’ promotion to the Supreme Court send, and what sort of issues do women continue to confront?

• The phrase “the personal is political” was commonly used during the feminist movement in the 1960s and 70s. How does Rebecca Walker mix the personal with the political in this article?

• In the video clip, Robin Morgan states that many women involved in Third-wave feminism felt the accomplishments of past feminist movements were not “filtering into their lives,” which made them “angry.” Do you think Rebecca Walker’s essay reflects this argument? Why or why not?
Watch **this video** and examine **this handout** about the music group Bikini Kill and the Riot Grrrl scene, an underground feminist Punk movement the Bikini Kill helped found. Take brief notes from the video and handout about how the group and scene featured reflected issues related to Third-wave feminism, or Women’s Rights issues in general.
Watch **this video** and examine **this handout** about the music group Salt-N-Pepa and how their work influenced Hip Hop and related to Third-wave feminism. Take brief notes from the video and handout about how the group featured reflected issues related to Third-wave feminism, or Women’s Right issues in general.
Watch *this video* and examine *this handout* about the music artist Selena and how her work transformed Tejano and related to Third-wave feminism. Take brief notes from the video and handout about how the artist featured reflected issues related to Third-wave feminism, or Women’s Right issues in general.
If possible, pair with a friend, family member, or classmate(s) to share in total how the various groups/artists and scenes/genres featured reflected issues related to Third-wave feminism, or Women’s Right issues in general. Also, consider:

• What were the similarities of experience and expression that the groups/artists and scenes/genres share?

• What were the differences of experience and expression between the groups/artists and scenes/genres?
SUMMARY

- Third-wave feminism is one of the four phases, or “waves,” of the feminist movement in the United States that began in the early 1990s
- Anita Hill’s testimony regarding the Supreme Court confirmation of Justice Clarence Thomas before the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1991 is a landmark event of Third-wave feminism and contemporary American history
- Bikini Kill, Salt-N-Pepa, and Selena are all musicians associate with Women’s Rights issues and movements of the 1990s
Read Laina Dawes’ “Why I Was Never A Riot Grrrl.” Having learned about Third-wave feminism’s pitfalls, write a concise one-page essay about the ways you see change in the women’s rights protest movement today and what other changes still need to happen?

Share your essay with your class via an audio recording reading or a video presentation.
Create a ten-song playlist that exemplifies many of the beliefs associated with Third-Wave Feminism. Share your playlist with your class.
CONNECT

Share it with us! Either you or an adult in your life can share your work with TeachRock on Instagram or Facebook, email to info@teachrock.org, or Tweet it to @TeachRock
Visit us at teachrock.org for hundreds of other free arts-rich resources for every age range and classroom.

Please check back to teachrock.org/distancelearning frequently as we will update the material weekly!