



SOUNDTRACKS

SONGS THAT DEFINED HISTORY

Second Wave: Women's Rights and Music in the 1960s

OVERVIEW

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What was second-wave feminism, and how did music contribute to the movement?

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will investigate second-wave feminism and the fight for women's liberation in the United States. Students will analyze the work of author Betty Friedan and singer Lesley Gore and their influence on women of the 1960s and 70s.



With men beginning to return home from the battlefields of World War II in 1945, many Americans were eager for a sense of normalcy. Post-war economic growth, a booming birth rate, and the development of suburban living appealed to many young families as the nation moved into the 1950s. But suburban life relied heavily on gender expectations and the idea of the nuclear family: where men were expected to be the breadwinner and provider, with women left at home to tend to the kids and all of the household duties such as cooking and cleaning. This expectation of domesticity was reflected in pop culture, as well as the emerging consumer culture that targeted suburbanites with items like new household appliances. While the suburban lifestyle became part of the definition of the “American Dream,” for many women who were seen as nothing but a housewife it was anything but a dream.

One housewife who had begun to question this “problem that had no name” was Betty Friedan. Influenced by French feminist Simone de Beauvoir and her 1949 book, *The Second Sex*, Friedan published her own work titled *The Feminine Mystique*, in 1963. The book centered on how unhappy American housewives were, and the need for women to be more than just a housewife and mother. *The Feminine Mystique* was a hit as much as it was controversial, with many accusing Friedan of attempting to destroy the American family and demonizing happy housewives. In spite of the backlash, the book went on to sell about one million copies in its first year and influence a generation of women determined to carve out paths for themselves beyond societal expectations and pressures.

The 1960s and 1970s saw women like Friedan becoming more vocal against societal norms that expected them to be obedient and domestic. One major event where this became apparent was the protest of the 1968 Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Over 200 women participated in the demonstration, carrying signs and banners criticizing the pageant’s focus on women’s bodies and beauty ideals. The protest helped launch the women’s liberation movement into the public as it was covered by several media outlets.

A few years prior to the demonstration, seventeen-year-old singer Lesley Gore recorded the song “You Don’t Own Me” in 1963. In the song, Gore emphasizes being independent and free to make choices as a young woman. It reached No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 in February 1964. While not intentionally written with the emerging feminists radicalized by Friedan’s work in mind, “You Don’t Own Me” soon became an unofficial anthem associated with second-wave feminism. The song has been covered by artists such as Joan Jett and Kristin Chenoweth.

Second-wave feminism didn’t only encourage women to aspire to break free from societal expectations for women and gender norms. It also mobilized women to fight for legislation that protected women and secured autonomy. For example, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination based on sex. The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) ruled that “unduly restrictive” state regulations on abortion are unconstitutional. Organizations also formed, such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1964, whose first president was none other than Betty Friedan. Second-wave feminism continued the work of first wave feminists, who were victorious in their fight for women’s suffrage in the early 20th century. It also laid the foundation for Third Wave Feminists of the early ‘90s who centered their work around diversity and sexuality.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will:

1. KNOW (KNOWLEDGE):

- The founding of second-wave feminism and its guiding principles
- Betty Friedan’s book *The Feminine Mystique* and the impact it had in the United States in the 1960s
- The Miss America protest in 1968
- The role music played in articulating the principles of the feminist movement

2. MASTERY OBJECTIVE:

- Students will be able to identify the principles and actions of the second-wave feminist movement by reading excerpts of Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique*, watching clips from the *CNN Soundtracks* series, and analyzing the song “You Don’t Own Me” by Lesley Gore.

ACTIVITIES

MOTIVATIONAL ACTIVITY

1. Inform students they will be watching a news clip from 1970. Play **Clip 1, ABC News Women’s Liberation Movement Segment**. Then ask students:
 - What is this news clip about?
 - How does the clip describe the Women’s Liberation Movement?
 - What were some of the demands made by the Women’s Liberation Movement?
 - What sort of strategies did the Women’s Liberation Movement use to make its demands?

- Do you see any connections between the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1970s and today?
- Inform students that in class they will be exploring Second Wave Feminism, a women's rights movement that developed in the 1960s and 1970s.

PROCEDURE

1. Distribute **Handout - Lesson Vocabulary** with students. Allow students time to review the vocabulary, and encourage them to look back at the vocabulary sheet throughout the lesson as needed.
2. Play **Clip 1, Betty Friedan and the "Feminine Mystique"**. Ask students:
 - Based on the commentary from the people interviewed in the clip, what were traditional expectations of women?
 - How did Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* attempt to challenge these traditional expectations?
3. Show students **Image 1, Book Cover of *The Feminine Mystique*** and pass out **Handout-Excerpt from *The Feminine Mystique***. (Differentiation Suggestion: use **Handout-Excerpt from *The Feminine Mystique* (Chunked Reading with Comprehension Questions)**). Then ask students:
 - According to the excerpt, what do you think is "the problem with no name"? Why would this problem have no name?
 - What might Betty Friedan be claiming in *The Feminine Mystique*?
 - Who do you think was Friedan's audience? What type or groups of women? Can you think of any groups of women excluded by Friedan's beliefs?
 - Why do you think the book was controversial? How do you think it would be received if it were published today?
4. Play **Clip 3, "A Cannon Shot"**. Then ask students:
 - According to the clip, What are the connections between second-wave feminism and the generations of women prior?
 - What are some events or earlier movements that may have inspired this generation of women to organize?
 - Based on the video, list some of the topics mainstream second-wave feminists are questioning.
5. Play **Clip 4, The Miss America Pageant Protests**. Then ask students:
 - Why might have the Miss America Pageant been chosen as a place for this demonstration?
 - This clip emphasizes how women organized together to protest the Miss America Pageant and the items that represented women's oppression. What do you think makes an effective protest?
 - What might the "freedom trash can" symbolize? What other items aside from the bra shown, do you think women might have thrown in the freedom trash can?

5. Have students watch **Clip 5, “You Don’t Own Me.”** After watching, display **Image 2, “You Don’t Own Me” Chorus** to the class. Ask students:

- What do you think Gore is singing about?
- Gore was 17 at the time of recording “You Don’t Own Me.” Why might this have appealed to teenage girls and young women at the time?

- Why might the song have become associated with second-wave feminism and the Women’s Liberation Movement? How do the messages of the song and the movement compare or relate?

SUMMARY ACTIVITY

1. Draw a 2-circle Venn diagram on the board, labeling one circle, “Women’s Issues in the 1960s” and one circle “Women’s Issues Today.” Based on what was discussed in class, ask the class to collectively fill out the diagram, and discuss the results.
2. Design either a protest poster that advocates for women’s rights or a magazine cover similar to Ms. Magazine (https://teachrock.org/wp-content/uploads/Ms._magazine_Cover_-_Spring_1972.jpg) that highlights a woman (past or present) you look up to or whose work you admire. Along with your poster or magazine cover, provide a written statement explaining your work and its connection to women’s rights. You may research any posters or magazine covers from the era of second-wave feminism for inspiration.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Discover how second-wave feminism developed with the TeachRock lesson **Third Wave: Women’s Rights and Music in the 1990s.**

STANDARDS

COLLEGE, CAREER, AND CIVIC LIFE (C3) SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

History

D2.His.3.9-12. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

D2.His.5.9-12. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

D2.His.16.9-12. Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

CALIFORNIA HISTORY—SOCIAL SCIENCE CONTENT STANDARDS

11.10 Students analyze the development of federal civil rights and voting rights.

7. Analyze the women's rights movement from the era of Elizabeth Stanton and Susan Anthony and the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the movement launched in the 1960s, including differing perspectives on the roles of women.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

Cold War to the New Millennium (1947-2001)

10. Analyze the women's rights movement launched in the 1960s, including differing perspectives on the roles of women, the National Organization of Women, and the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). (P, S)

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE FRAMEWORK STANDARDS

Topic 4: Defending democracy: the Cold War and civil rights at home [USH.T4]

8. Using primary and secondary sources, analyze the causes and course of one of the following social and political movements, including consideration of the role of protest, advocacy organizations, and active citizen participation.

- Women's rights, including the writings on feminism by Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem and others; the availability of the birth control pill; the activism of the National Organization for Women and opposition to the movement by conservative leaders such as Phyllis Schlafly; passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution (1972), and its failure to achieve sufficient ratification by states; Title IX of the 1972

Education Amendments to the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1973 Supreme Court decision, *Roe v. Wade*, the appointment of Sandra Day O'Connor as the first woman Justice of the Supreme Court in 1981, and increasing numbers of women in elected offices in national and state government.

SOCIAL STUDIES – NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS)

Theme 1: Culture

Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change

Theme 3: People, Place, and Environments

Theme 4: Individual Development and Identity

Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Theme 6: Power, Authority, and Governance

Theme 10: Civic Ideals and Practices

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

College and Career Readiness Reading Information Text Standards for Grades 11-12

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening for Grades 11-12

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.3 Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Language for Grades 11-12

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.6 Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

LEARNING FOR JUSTICE SOCIAL JUSTICE STANDARDS

Justice 15 JU.9-12.15. I can identify figures, groups, events and a variety of strategies and philosophies relevant to the history of social justice around the world.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION – NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MUSIC EDUCATION (NAFME)

Core Music Standard: Responding

Interpret: Support interpretations of musical works that reflect creators' and/or performers' expressive intent.

Evaluate: Support evaluations of musical works and performances based on analysis, interpretation, and established criteria.

Core Music Standard: Connecting

Connecting 11: Relate musical ideas and works to varied contexts and daily life to deepen understanding.



RESOURCES

VIDEO RESOURCES

- ABC News Women's Liberation Movement Segment
- *CNN Soundtracks*- "You Don't Own Me"
- *CNN Soundtracks*- A Cannon Shot Video
- *CNN Soundtracks*- The Miss American Pageant Protest
- *CNN Soundtracks*- Betty Friedan and The Feminine Mystique

HANDOUTS

- Handout- Excerpt from *The Feminine Mystique*.