

## Words of a Breast Cancer Survivor

By Olivia Martin-Johnson

Breast cancer is a disease that affects close to one in eight women in the United States, estimating around 280,000 cases of invasive breast cancer on an annual basis. In this month of October, we recognize the strength of the women who must endure this painful disease, commemorate those who have not made it, and pray for those who are on their speedy recovery. This month, we spoke to breast cancer survivor Yaremi Acree to hear about her physical and emotional experience with breast cancer.

Ms. Acree was diagnosed with stage II breast cancer towards the end of 2018. (When diagnosed with cancer, your doctor will usually tell you what stage your cancer is in; this is to describe the size and how far the cancer has spread. Typically it is labeled in stages from I to IV, with IV being the most metastasized and spread all over the body. Stages II and III mean the cancer is large and may have grown into nearby tissues or lymph nodes.)

Ms. Acree was given the news at her annual mammogram appointment, where she was then sent to do multiple tests to confirm and locate the cancer. Eventually Ms. Acree, in order to avoid the risk of the cancer returning, underwent a bilateral mastectomy where both of her breasts were removed. Once on her recovery journey, she was then diagnosed with cancer in her lymph nodes and underwent surgery to

remove those as well. In April of 2019, after a year of chemotherapy and radiation, Ms. Acree is now in remission.

Ms. Acree explained at that moment she became worried about treatment and what it meant for her life. Ms. Acree tells me that her mother had cancer and became very ill, especially from the chemotherapy. Her mom died from cancer November of 2012 and because of this, Ms. Acree is scared about her future. For her, cancer is the reason she thinks about death and wonders how much more time she has to live. Post surgery, Ms. Acree saw a sudden shift in her physical abilities. On top of not working, she realized that her cognitive abilities were not as strong as they once were. She saw herself as more forgetful and 'zoned out'. She also was not able to focus and found herself having to re-read information in order to understand. Currently she finds herself more tired than ever, and at times not wanting to get out of bed or work around the house.

During the hardest times of her life Ms. Acree always looks to her faith for support as she believes that everything happens for a reason. Although she still recalls her emotional rollercoaster of anxiety and stress, she mostly remembers the happiness of having her family around her. Due to her illness, Ms. Acree stopped working and moved closer to her family for support, resulting in spending more time with her daugh-

ter and her granddaughters. Ms. Acree believes that many positives came out of her journey; she started to paint, she began to babysit her granddaughters and

**BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**



**1 IN 8 US WOMEN DEVELOP INVASIVE BREAST CANCER**

Source: Breastcancer.org

**85% OF BREAST CANCER OCCURS IN WOMEN WITH NO FAMILY HISTORY OF IT**

Source: Breastcancer.org



**BREAST CANCER DEATHS ARE SECOND ONLY TO LUNG CANCER IN THE US**

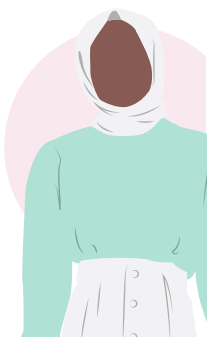
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

### RESOURCES

Find a Mammography Facility Near You:  
<https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfMQSA/mqsa.cfm>

National Cancer Institute:  
<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer>

The American Cancer Society:  
<https://www.cancer.org/>



# Myths vs Facts:

## Debunking Misconceptions About Feminism

By the Feminism Explained Staff

“If you stand for equality, you’re a feminist,” said British actress and women’s rights activist Emma Watson [in 2015](#). “Sorry to tell you.”

Watson’s memorable quote rings true across the feminist movement. However, most of us can remember times when the word “feminism” was used, only to bring about an array of reactions ranging from eye-rolls to groans to complaints about “feminazis” and “man-haters.”

This is due to a massive spread of misinformation about the majority of feminists and what they stand for; this stigma against feminists is the reason why so many people hesitate to voice their support for the movement. Of course, there are extremists within every movement (we can’t deny that there could be some real man-haters out there,) but the ideals behind the modern feminist movement itself are not radical, nor are they hateful or dangerous. It’s time for the new wave of the movement to redefine feminism and put an end to this misinformation. As we define it in our mission statement, feminism is simply the desire for equality amongst the sexes. To counter further expansion of these myths, it is crucial that we educate ourselves on what is really true.

Here are seven common misconceptions about feminism, and the facts that make them untrue. Hyperlinks to the sources used are provided throughout the article.

**Myth: Feminists want women to have more power than men.**

There is no exact, globally accepted definition for the word “feminism.” It can refer to various political wom-

en’s rights movements, or to the general idea that women in society inherently face more challenges than men. In other words, specific definitions of feminism will vary among those within the movement, but they all connect to the [core philosophy](#) that women and men should be treated equally in society. What we know for sure is that the belief that gender inequality struggles should be reversed is part of no feminist’s definition. Feminists do not believe that women are somehow “better” than men, nor do they support blaming men for all their problems (this is ridiculous!). The movement is all about allowing women to be strong, independent, and have equal rights and opportunities to men.

**Myth: Feminists cannot be religious.**

Some critics might claim that feminism is becoming a religion in and of itself, but this is completely untrue. Feminism is about political and human rights, and *extremists do not dictate the morals and pursuits of the movement as a whole*. The feminist movement [goes across a wide range of faiths](#).

Some of our government’s most famous feminists — take First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Representative Ilhan Omar, for example — are practicing Christians, Jews, and Muslims. While the structure of some religions may appear anti-feminist, many the core beliefs guiding these faiths, such as equality, peace, respect, and compassion, actually align with the feminist movement in modern-day America.

**Myth: Feminists oppose housewives and traditional stay-at-home motherhood.**

While many feminists do encourage women to challenge traditional gender roles, pursue their passions, and be ambitious in their careers, stay-at-home

mothers are not excluded from the movement. It’s clear that it’s not 1950 anymore; [according to The Washington Post](#), 63% of American moms in 2016 earned money for their families, in stark contrast to less than a quarter fifty years ago. Additionally, the concept of the “housewife” is considered problematic by many feminists today. However, putting other women down for choosing to be stay-at-home mothers goes against feminist values; feminism is all about supporting other women and giving them equal opportunities to men, as well as freedom to make their own decisions. There is nothing wrong with being a stay-at-home mother, the same way there is nothing wrong with being a stay-at-home father. You don’t have to be single or have a successful career to be a feminist — all you need is to feel passionate about the idea that women and men should be equal in society.

**Myth: All women are feminists.**

Unfortunately, this is also untrue. Not all women are in support of the feminist movement. Some beliefs vary among different feminists, such as being pro-life or pro-choice. In fact, there is an entire organization called [Women Against Feminism](#) (it has mostly gone out of fashion now, but trended in the early 2010s) and a matching hashtag that goes along with it. There are also many far-right groups that openly oppose feminism. We believe that everyone should be a feminist, but like we said, widespread misconceptions

and an anti-feminist stigma prevent many people from joining the movement. There are also some women who genuinely do not support equal rights. It is important to consider all perspectives, instead of ramming feminist theory down people's throats.

**Myth: Men cannot be feminists.**

False. Let's put it this way: the more men that are feminists, the better! In our last issue, we even featured a profile of a male feminist, business teacher Kamal James. The support of men is a crucial ingredient to making the changes necessary to promote equality. This goes to show that feminism is not anti-male, but pro-female.

**Myth: Conservatives cannot be feminists.**

While some of the common political positions among feminists (such as pro-choice, social equality, and LGBTQ rights) tend to lean to the left, feminism is a global movement not limited to Democrats, and there are actually many [conservative feminists](#). It is true that lots of feminists do consider the statement oxymoronic, but feminism is not affiliated with any political party, nor is it a political party itself: it is a progressive movement where everyone is invited.

**Myth: Women and men have the same rights now, so there's no need for feminism in 2020.**

Feminism comes in waves and takes many forms: it's not just about voting or reproductive rights! Consider the [#MeToo](#) movement, the [Women's March](#), or the quest to challenge gender inequality in politics, the workplace, and everyday life. Sexual assault, disrespect of women, female representation in politics, unequal pay, problematic pop culture, and more are raging issues in American society today. Additionally, feminism is a global movement of women everywhere, and women and men have certainly not achieved equal rights in many nations outside the United States. We are currently part of what is known as "Third Wave Feminism," and there is much need for feminism and female empowerment in 2020. We are nowhere near finished!



By: Olivia Martin-Johnson

The image above is an advertisement of an American fast-food restaurant called Hardee's back in the 1940's. The sexist content of this advertisement is obvious from the title, which is "Women Don't Leave the Kitchen!" The title references the common role that women played (or were supposed to be playing) in society. Women were generalized and pressured to be the "perfect housewife" by cooking for their

husbands. In addition to the title of the advertisement, the small text below it further recognizes the way that women were viewed in society at that time. Phrases such as "a little miss" were used to refer to the social position of women in the family, implying inferiority.

The ad is telling the audience, the average American, that women are the only ones that are meant to be in the kitchen and men should be the ones working. The ad places people into categories based on gender, rather than merits.

O.M.G.  
this  
used  
to be  
okay?

[Breast Cancer cont. from page 1] rather than worrying about household chores she focused on spending time with her family. She explained how she used to be obsessed about taking care of her household chores and how that all dramatically changed. Now she believes the housework can be put aside and that it is more important to cherish the moment one is in. She believes one has to appreciate the smaller things in life such as a beautiful sunrise or sunset or a butterfly and when people ask her, "what happened to the perfectionist

inside you?" she just simply replies, "cancer happened to me." Ms. Acree added, "I actually thank cancer for making me a stronger woman and appreciate more the things around me."

She is grateful that she got through the journey and is now more focused on her physical and spiritual wellbeing. She believes her message is a simple one, of hope, faith, and strength.

# Young Jane Young Review

By Juliana Vair

Throughout *Young Jane Young*, I frequently found myself glaring at the title. Young—perhaps the most important part of Jane’s story. Jane Young, however, is not that young, though she once was. This may sound confusing, but it really isn’t.

Gabrielle Zevin’s novel is a book by a woman, about women, and based on women. One woman in particular, actually: Monica Lewinsky, the subject of Bill Clinton’s sex scandal. This is a different sort of story, one far less linear and far more 3D. It revolves around five women and one event, which has affected all of them. We first have Aviva and Rachel Grossman, the sex (scandalized?) intern who got caught with a Congressman and her mother, respectively (both are incredibly entertaining.) They live in Florida, along with Embeth Levin, the Congressman’s wife. We next have Ruby and Jane Young, the investigative young girl and her mother, respectively.

Zevin separates her novel into five chunks: Rachel, Jane, Ruby, Embeth, and Aviva (the last notable for its second-person point of view.) In each of the first four parts, we get a snippet of a perspective, a brief glance at one side of the story. It’s unclear whether we should be rooting for someone here. Rather, we’re watching the events unfold, one rippling wave after another.

And then we’re not watching anymore. We’re experiencing it. The second person point of view that Zevin shoves upon us is jarring and uncomfortable. We’re given a force-your-own-adventure formatting, skipping from page to page without a choice. We suddenly understand that we are Aviva, and we are so, so young. We’ve never been in love before, and we’ve got no idea what’s coming towards us. It’s so easy to judge when we know the ending of a story, but suddenly, we’re not able to anymore.

I highly recommend *Young Jane Young* to anyone who wants a good laugh, and a good lesson along the way.



## On Ignorance

By Juliana Vair  
You do not know what  
A feminist is, but you  
Are sure it is bad

## THIS MONTH IN GENDER EQUALITY

October 2020



### Latina Pay Gap Day

On October 29, Latinas recognized this day to mark the ethnic and gender pay gap that divides them from white men.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, Hispanic women have to work nearly **11 months** more on average than white men to earn the same amount of money.



### Domestic Violence Awareness Month

According to the CDC, about 1 in 4 women and nearly 1 in 10 men experience physical or sexual violence or stalking during their lifetimes.

**FL Department of Children and Families Hotline:**

1-800-500-1119

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:**  
1-800-799-7233



### 860,000+ Women Leaving the Workforce Since the Pandemic

With over 1 million unemployed people due to the pandemic, more and more women are staying at home rather than returning to the workforce for family and economic reasons.



### Female in Focus Photography Awards

A photography award started in 2019 by 1854 Media highlights gender equality by awarding outstanding contemporary female photographers.

Even though 80% of photography graduates are women, 15% of professional photographers are women and make about **40% less** money than men.



### Know Your Value

NBC News has created a website titled "Know Your Value" as a resource for women to learn about business culture, career growth, health, and a plethora of other engaging and relevant topics.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/know-your-value>

Sources:

Economic Policy Institute  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Florida Department of Children and Families Hotline  
National Domestic Violence Hotline  
NPR The Indicator from Planet Money  
British Journal of Photography  
Female in Focus  
NBC News [Know Your Value]

# Diversity in Healthcare: A Doctor's Perspective

By Elizabeth Rivabem

“Medicine is a demanding mistress,” declared urologist Dr. Barbara Montford. “But if you love it, you will never regret it. You will always wake up happy to do it.” Dr. Montford, a Johns-Hopkins University graduate, stresses that the healthcare industry is not for the faint-hearted or the greedy. “Don’t do it because you want money. This is the worst field to go into for money.”

As a doctor, she is passionate about science and its precision, but most importantly, she loves people. She believes it is a privilege to be able to take care of patients. “Someone who doesn’t know you is willing to put their life in your hands... that is truly huge,” says Dr. Montford. However, patient care has a long way to go. “In order [for humankind] to get the best medical care, you have to have people who can relate to specific patients, so there

is room for women doctors, men doctors, African-American doctors because all of these are patients who do best when they have someone who can identify with them.” That is not to say that she believes that only females can treat other women, but “people need to have something where they feel they have a great degree of comfort in what the physician is saying.”

When asked if there is enough diversity in the field, Dr. Montfort responded with a firm “definitely not.”

“There are not enough women in medicine, there are not enough African-Americans in medicine, not in the United States,” she continued. She believes that the struggles that minorities and women face in life are modeled in the medical environment. As a black woman, Dr. Montfort says that “you’re always needing to prove that you’re supposed to be at the table. If I’m in a room and I don’t have my white coat on, and I just happen to have

on scrubs, it’s not unusual for the patient to say, ‘can you clean that?’” This is not just a rare mistake; the doctor says this happens on almost a daily basis.

Despite the obstacles in her profession, Dr. Montford maintains a positive attitude that she attributes to her family. “I’ve never let someone else’s opinion define me. I know who I am.” She is grateful to her parents for instilling her with confidence in both her personal life and her job. “I love being who I am,” she says. Her optimism and conviction serve as an inspiration for women and aspiring healthcare professionals to make progress not just for themselves, but for others, too.

## About Feminism Explained

Feminism Explained (F.E.) is a monthly newsletter. Its intent is addressing the negative connotations associated with the word ‘feminism’. In today’s society, it is somewhat common to hear people say they do not believe in feminism due to its “radical ideology.” As feminists, we know this not to be true. Feminism is not radical, nor is it dangerous. Feminism is simply the desire for equality amongst the genders.

What you can expect: F.E. Monthly newsletter will include interviews with women in high power positions. These women will be speaking about obstacles they faced, if any, to get to their positions. They will share the hardships they endured and how their present position continues to demonstrate the ongoing struggles many women must face to have influential places in society. F.E. will include statistics, providing facts and examples of gender inequality locally, nationally, and internationally. F.E. will also feature historical events, reminding us how our ancestors fought to allow modern women to function as we do today. Our newsletter will highlight initiatives taken on by women and the positive difference we can make in the world.

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