

# WHO NEEDS FEMINISM?

## CAMPAIGN START-UP GUIDE

### Why start a campaign?

Identify yourself as a feminist today and many people will immediately assume you are a man-hating, bra-burning, whiny liberal. Perhaps a certain charming radio talk show host will label you as a "Feminazi" or "slut." Even among more moderate crowds, feminism is still seen as too radical, too uncomfortable or simply unnecessary. Feminism is both misunderstood and denigrated regularly. This is what we're out to change.

**Contact us to let us know you're thinking of starting a campaign.** E-mail us at

[whoneedsfeminism@gmail.com](mailto:whoneedsfeminism@gmail.com). This will help us get you connected to other folks who might have contacted us from your school or organization. We can provide logistical support and advice along the way and want to keep track of how your growing this incredible movement.

**Think about outreach.** Decide who you're targeting. Your school? Co-workers? Family? Friend group? It could be a combination. Make a list of what networks and existing organizations you can tap into to reach a wide array of people. Women's Centers and Gender Studies departments are good places to start.

**Build your base.** Reach out to key figures from each of the networks you previously identified. Explain why starting a Who Needs Feminism campaign can be an invaluable conversation-starter that moves people to action. Ask them if they'd like to be involved in bringing this campaign to life. People put more energy into projects where their opinions and ideas are valued.

**Decide how you'll share the images you'll collect.** All Who Needs Feminism campaigns are shared digitally via Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Pinterest but actually getting posters printed to post around your campus, workplace, town, etc. is a great way to reach a wider range of people who might not be on social networking sites.

We need YOU to ask your campus, your friends, your co-workers, your family:

### WHO NEEDS FEMINISM? WE THINK EVERYONE DOES

**Pool your resources.** Create a budget that outlines what you'll need to launch an awesome campaign. Consider costs associated with securing space to have your photo shoot, accessing photography equipment and printing posters. Once you've got a fundraising goal in mind, tap into your networks and reach out to school administrators.

**Plan your photo shoot!** Pick a date (or multiple days to give folks options) and a location. Make a Facebook event. Consider creating a flyer or writing an op-ed in your local paper. Refer back to your initial list of groups to reach out to. At this point you're looking for people willing to have their picture taken, not help with planning, so it'll be a little easier.

**Share with the world (literally!).** Prep your images with the WNF logo. Submit your album to us via Dropbox. Put up your posters. Tag your friends in their pictures. Encourage participants to use their image as their profile pic and share their statements and others through social media. Write an op-ed about your experience and the importance of WNF.

**Do the f-up (follow-up!).** You've just built an incredible network of people who stood together to make a statement about why we still need feminism. Collaborate with other organizations to connect gender to their work. Host a panel discussion to continue the conversation. Move your campaign from awareness to action!

# WHO NEEDS FEMINISM? OUR MISSION

## STATEMENT

We, the 16 women of Professor Rachel Seidman's Women in the Public Sphere course at Duke University, have decided to fight back against the popular misconceptions surrounding the feminist movement. Our class was disturbed by what we perceive to be an overwhelmingly widespread belief that today's society no longer needs feminism. In order to change this perception, we have launched a PR campaign for feminism. We aim to challenge existing stereotypes surrounding feminists and assert the importance of feminism today. We feel that until the denigration surrounding feminism and women's issues is alleviated, it will be hard to achieve total gender equality, both statistically and socially.

## WHAT IS FEMINISM?

WhoNeedsFeminism has decided not to release a single, "official" definition of feminism. The goal of our project is to decrease negative associations with the word that would keep anyone from identifying with the movement. However, we encourage you all to keep defining it yourselves...you have given better answers than we could have ever imagined! However, just to get your wheels churning, we've compiled a list of some resources that lay out different conceptions of feminism. It's a little short for now, but we'll continue to build on it over time. If you have suggestions, send us a note!

[Feminism is for Everybody](#) - Bell Hooks

## IDENTIFYING ALLIES

In thinking about what feminism is and who needs it, you'll find that feminism can and should be appealing to a wide-range of individuals of various gender identities, sexual orientations, cultural backgrounds, and socioeconomic status. Use this understanding to connect with existing institutions and organizations in your community that might be supportive of the WNF message. These allies can be helpful in recruiting people to submit and image, in planning a photo shoot, sharing the campaign with their own connections, and even in securing funding. Find out if there is a Gender Studies department, a women's center, an LGBTQ center, or gender and sexuality rights student groups but don't limit yourself to these obvious allies.

# FUNDRAISING

If you can gather the funds, print the pictures on posters and hang the posters around your campus, community center, or town. Hanging posters helps to attract the attention of people who would not normally visit our Facebook page or seek out your posters online. We printed ours at Kinkos on 11x17 poster paper for 75 cents plus tax per print but rates may vary by location. Before our photo shoot, we e-mailed various organizations and offices on campus to see if anyone would be willing to provide us with funds. We suggest that you send emails to groups like the Office of Student Affairs, the Women's Center, the Women's Studies Department, the LGBT Center and any other student groups or people on campus who might be interested in promoting your message. In our emails we provided potential donors with our mission statement and goals so that they could have an understanding of the project. We were able to raise \$600 and that was more than necessary. If your school does not have a ton of public space for posters, you may want to consider turning your campaign into an exhibit in a central location on campus.

## DURING THE PHOTO SHOOT: SAMPLE SUBMISSIONS

You should encourage your participants to come up with their own statements but be there to help with the crafting of powerful statements. You may want to come prepared with a few examples to help people in the brainstorming process. Here are a couple that we've taken from past submissions:

- I need feminism because people still think jokes about raping someone are funny.
- I need feminism because "being a man" shouldn't mean belittling women.
- I need feminism because using a slang term for my genitals to insult the strength/masculinity of someone is BS.
- I need feminism because neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim.
- I need feminism because the most women-hating people I've ever met are other women.
- I need feminism because it gives me hope that we can change our reality.
- We need feminism because we're all-male...but power shouldn't be (all-male a capella group).

You can also have available albums that have been previously submitted by students at other universities to help people brainstorm:

- [Original Who Needs Feminism? Campaign at Duke](#)
- [Who Needs Feminism? at UNC](#)
- [Who Needs Feminism? in New Zealand](#)
- [Who Needs Feminism? at the University of Cincinnati](#)
- [Who Needs Feminism? at Fullerton College](#)

# AFTER THE PHOTO SHOOT: PREPARING YOUR IMAGES TO SHARE

We encourage you to put the Who Needs Feminism logo on your pictures along with a link to the campaign site ([whoneedsfeminism.com](http://whoneedsfeminism.com)) for people who are interested in learning more. You can download the font for free at [FontSquirrel](http://FontSquirrel) or download our logo from Dropbox by following [this link](#). It can say Who Needs Feminism? at [your school/organization/etc.].

# BUILD THE MOVEMENT: SUBMITTING YOUR IMAGES TO THE CAMPAIGN

After your photo shoot and preparing your images, submit them to Who Needs Feminism! Every picture, every album in our collection strengthens the movement by adding new perspectives and reasons for why we all need feminism. To do that upload your images to a Dropbox account (they're really easy to make at <http://www.dropbox.com>) and put them in a Who Needs Feminism at [your school/organization/etc.] folder. Once you've uploaded your images, select the folder and right-mouse click to hit "get link." Copy and paste the link that Dropbox generates and e-mail it to us at [whoneedsfeminism@gmail.com](mailto:whoneedsfeminism@gmail.com). If you have any trouble with the technical stuff, first check out [Dropbox's help section](#) on this topic, then get in touch with us and we can figure out another way to get the pictures.

# GETTING THE WORD OUT: WRITE AN OP-ED

In order to gather attention for your photos it is helpful to write an op-ed illustrating what provoked you to create these photos. This will give you an outlet to challenge the culture of your campus or organization that provoked your desire to make these posters. After reading the piece, seeing the poster around will only reinforce the argument you've laid out. We made sure to hang up our posters the night before the article got published. You can read our [original op-ed](#) published in the Duke Chronicle.

[The Op-Ed Project](#) is a social venture started with the goal of increasing women's voices in key commentary forums, which feed all other media. They have a wealth of writing resources available including guiding questions to ensure that your piece is both accessible and effective.

## SOCIAL MEDIA



Use your personal social media pages to spread the word about your campaign! You can make a Facebook event for your photo shoot and share a link to your album when we post it on the national page. You can tweet or make a Facebook status to share a link to the op-ed if it's published online. The possibilities are endless! Sharing it with your social networks will help to quickly create a buzz around your campaign. Make sure to tag the people in the picture so that it reaches their social networks. You could also encourage people to use the @Who Needs Feminism tag to post the link to your album or interesting articles about relevant current events. The article might draw someone in where an image might not have.

If you are featured in any campus or local news outlets, you should use Twitter and Facebook to spread the word. Tweet them at us (@ineedfeminism) so we can retweet them to our followers, but also tweet to women's organizations to let them know about the awesome work you've been doing. If you need ideas about specific organizations, sift through our "following" list on Twitter.

## TRADITIONAL NEWS MEDIA

Reach out to campus and local news outlets. See if your school's newspaper or student broadcast wants to run a segment on the campaign once it has launched. Does your school have a communications or public relations office? See if they would share your campaign with their network or connect you with other news outlets. You can also contact local newspapers and radio stations for article submissions or interviews.

Here are some examples of press coverage that our campaign has received (click to see the actual piece). They might give you some ideas of what types of news organizations to reach out to and how to pitch its relevance and newsworthiness. They can also be shared to explain to potential participants what this campaign is all about.



# PREPARING FOR AND DEALING WITH BACKLASH

**A sign you're doing it right:** Since you're taking a stand and challenging the status quo, you should be prepared to face some backlash from fellow students, administrators, and even your own friends and family. Don't let this discourage you! Backlash is a sign that you're doing something right and you'll generally find that the backlash itself emphasizes exactly why we need feminism.

**Social media moderation:** If you're posting the photos on your group's own Facebook page, you may also encounter backlash from internet trolls. In order to promote healthy dialogue and ensure that the page remains a safe space, you can post a comment policy. We use the following comment policy on our national Facebook page:

The purpose of this Facebook page is to inspire dialogue about feminism and its importance in our everyday lives. We love seeing genuine and insightful conversations take place. This is a page for people to share why they need feminism; take a moment to consider the thoughts and views of others before sharing your own.

Please consider that this page is intended to be a safe space for discussion. We will remove any comments that are intended to harass, intimidate, belittle, attack, or ridicule, for they will be considered harmful to the positive and safe community that we hope to create.

If you choose to express an opposing viewpoint, please do so without resorting to personal attacks, sexist remarks, petty insults, or lewd commentary. We hope that your power of persuasion is above resorting to these tactics. Challenge yourself to debate in a constructive and open-minded manner.

**Reflection:** After you've launched your campaign, it's important to plan time to reflect with your group and check in with the people who appear in your posters. Talk about what are common arguments against your campaign. Distinguish between what is meant to be constructive criticism and what is meant to shame people into silence. We're always available to talk about dealing with backlash so feel free to reach out.

# FROM CONVERSATION TO ACTION

Running a Who Needs Feminism campaign can be a powerful way to start conversations about gender but the work shouldn't stop there. Feminists all over the world have to take action on every level. From bringing up gender in everyday conversation to challenging unequal pay at work and engaging in political discussions that inevitably shape our experiences. The influence of gender can be analyzed in pretty much any context, so there are reasons to collaborate with just about anyone. The more creative you are, the stronger your message about everybody needing feminism will be.

- You could partner with the Women's Center or your Women's Studies department to host a **follow-up discussion** on the impact of the campaign.
- Inviting **guest speakers** who are knowledgeable about women's issues can be another great way to engage more people.
- You could also **collaborate with other organizations** with obvious (or not-so-obvious) connections to feminism.
- At Duke, we're working alongside the Theater Studies Department who is putting on a play that introduces themes about women using sexuality to get power, female mentoring relationships, and the way societal structures influence individual behavior. The play was not necessarily written as a feminist one, but we're collaborating to create an audience discussion guide to help people consider the role of gender in the play and setting up a WNF photo shoot on special production nights.
- Lastly, you could consider **mobilizing people around specific political or policy issues** that seem important to people based on their "I need feminism" statements. You could investigate on your own what sorts of issues relating to women are being debated at all level of government or partner with an existing political organization who might already know.