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WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY

Yu. S. Zadornova

University of California, Sacramento, USA, yulia-zadornova@mail.ru

The article discusses the content and the history of modern women's movement in the USA. The review of the American sociological literature was conducted to make a definition of the term "women's movement". The article provides a comprehensive analysis of the main periods in the development of the women's movement that are referred to by the American researchers as waves. The review of the history of the women's movement identified and characterized three waves of the women's movement in the United States based on their goals, scale of activity, methods and results of the struggle for the gender equity in the American society. The author analyzed the large-scale network of American women's organizations and formulated their typology based on their goals and functions. The article outlines the perspectives of the American modern women's movement further development.

Key words: women's movement, feminist movement, feminist waves, MeToo movement, women's organizations, gender discrimination, gender equality.

СОВРЕМЕННОЕ ЖЕНСКОЕ ДВИЖЕНИЕ В США

Ю. С. Задорнова

Калифорнийский университет, г. Сакраменто, США, yulia-zadornova@mail.ru

Статья посвящена характеристике содержания современного женского движения в США и истории его развития. На основании изучения американской социологической литературы сформулировано определение понятия «женское движение». Представлен комплексный анализ основных этапов развития женского движения в США, при описании которых американские исследователи используют аналогию с волнами. Анализ позволил выделить и охарактеризовать три волны этого движения в соответствии с целями, масштабом деятельности, методами и результатами борьбы их участниц за гендерное равенство в американском обществе. Рассмотрена масштабная национальная сеть американских женских организаций и сформулирована их типология на основе целей и выполняемых функций. По мнению автора, перед современным женским движением в США стоят актуальные нерешенные задачи — ратификация Декларации ООН о ликвидации всех форм дискриминации в отношении женщин, лоббирование принятия поправки

к Конституции о равных правах женщин и мужчин в обществе, защита репродуктивных прав женщин, сокращение гендерного разрыва в политической сфере и оплате труда. Сделан вывод о том, что если женское движение в США сможет отказаться от внутренних дискуссий, консолидироваться и сосредоточить свои усилия на борьбе с институциональными причинами гендерного неравенства, то оно имеет все основания стать весомой конструктивной силой, способной оказывать влияние на общество в мировом масштабе и способствовать установлению гендерного равноправия.

Ключевые слова: женское движение, феминистское движение, волны феминизма, движение *MeToo*, женские организации, гендерная дискриминация, гендерное равенство.

The history of the women's movement in the United States extends back more than one hundred years. American women have covered a long road of the fight for their rights and against the discrimination based on the grounds of gender in political, economical and educational areas.

According to the "Global Gender Gap" annual report prepared for the International Economic Forum in 2019, the United States ranks 53rd out of 153 countries in overcoming gender inequity having lost two points compared to 2018. The biggest gap is in the political empowerment. Even with a significant increase in the number of women in the legislature and in the cabinet positions compared to the previous years, congresswomen are just 23,6 % of the available seats, and female secretaries are only 21,7 % of the cabinet. In addition, as we know, there has never been a woman president to date. Similarly, women are under-represented in the very top business positions: only 21,7 % of corporate managing board members are women [The Global Gender Gap Report... , 2020].

Furthermore, the USA is one of only seven countries that had not ratified the United Nations Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the American Constitution does not have an article prescribing equal rights for women and men in the society.

Therefore, despite the long history of the women's movement in the USA we can not state that the country has achieved complete and ultimate gender equity.

Nevertheless, the women's movement in modern United States has a significant societal force. It articulates new values of popular consciousness, has an assertive activist nature and becomes an active participant of the social and political processes in the country.

The American sociological literature equates the terms of women's movement and feminist movement (the term of women's liberation movement or simply feminism are also used synonymously) [Heywood, 2006; Evans, 2004; Backhouse, Flaherty, 1992].

Whereas the goal of any women's movement has always been achieving gender equity in various spheres of societal life, what is the basic idea of feminism too, I consider it justified to use synonymously the notions of feminist movement and women's movement.

Women's (feminist) movement is described as a type of social and political movement that aims to establish equal rights and legal protections for women. The feminist movement is a conjunction of various women's organizations, individual representatives of the general public — activists, who act with the purpose of ensuring gender equity in various spheres of societal life, satisfying political and social interests,

and in professional and personal fulfillment. Women's movement advocates and fights for body integrity; abortion and reproductive rights, including contraception and prenatal care; protection from domestic violence, sexual harassment, and rape; workplace rights, including maternity leave and equal pay. It stands against all forms of discrimination that women encounter [Dicker, 2008].

Analyzing the history of the women's movement in America, researchers usually draw an analogy with the waves. It is widely agreed that there have been three waves of the feminist movement in the history of women's struggle for their rights [Humm, 1990; Dicker, Piepmeier, 2003; Aikau et al., 2007].

The wave metaphor helps to analyze feminist movement according to historical approach. It describes and distinguishes conceptual orientation of the feminist movement according to a specific historic period and reflects various value orientations of their representatives within the specific time frame.

Each wave has its specifics: goal-setting and strategies for achieving goals, level of organization and cohesion of the members and their social composition, as well as the scale and effectiveness.

The first wave occurred in the XIX and early XX c. It was mainly concerned with women's right to vote. The second wave, at its height in the 1960s and 1970s, refers to the women's liberation movement for equal legal and social rights. The third wave started in the 1990s and continues nowadays as a reaction to the achievements of the second wave [Aikau et al., 2007].

The last several years saw a pronounced spike in the activities of the women's movement in the United States. It is demonstrated by the large-scale MeToo movement against the sexual harassment; the Women's March against anti-feminist politics of the Trump administration; numerous rallies across the nation for the women's reproductive rights after several states enacted anti-abortion legislation.

As the result, some researches point to the possible emerging of the fourth wave of the feminist movement in America [Rampton, 2015].

Brief history of women's movement in the United States

The first wave of the feminist movement is also known as a suffrage movement because it mainly focused on gaining women's right to vote. The first-wave feminism also promoted equal contract and property rights for women and opposed ownership of married women by their husbands.

The first wave basically began with the Seneca Falls convention of 1848 in New York where the "Declaration of Sentiments" was signed. The document expanded on the women's right to education, equality in marriage and the right to property. During these years the legislature of New York state passed the "Married Women's Property Act" that gave women the right to own their earnings, to have equal with the husband right for the custody of children, and provided property rights of the widows [Dicker, 2008].

During the first wave two suffrage organizations were formed: American Equal Rights Association in 1866 and American Woman Suffrage Association in 1869. They merged in 1890 to create the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Their main goal was guaranteeing equal suffrage rights for women.

The first wave feminism in the United States came to the end in 1920 with the enactment of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution that granted voting

rights to white women. The 19th Amendment was the greatest achievement of the first wave. Although individual groups continued their struggles — for reproductive freedom, for equality in education and employment, for voting rights for black women — the movement as a whole began to splinter. It no longer had a unified goal with the strong cultural momentum behind it, and it would not find another until the second wave began in the 1960s [ibid.].

The second wave of the feminist movement brought a new and wider range of issues compared to the first wave. The second wave raised the issues of women's sexuality, family, inequality at the workplace and the labor market. Feminists of the United States targeted the agenda of domestic violence and marital rape, the establishment of rape crisis and shelters for abused women [ibid.].

During the second wave there appeared the first scientific studies and works that criticized patriarchal culture and discrimination of women in politics, economics, and family relations.

Betty Friedan, the feminist writer and activist was one of the most prominent figures of the second wave feminist movement. In her book “*The Feminine Mystique*”, which came out in 1963, Friedan criticized the concept that women could find fulfillment only through childbearing and homemaking. Friedan hypothesizes that women are victims of false beliefs that require them to find identity in their lives through husbands and children as a wife and a mother. This causes women to lose their identities in the family [Friedan, 1963]. Her book ignited the women's movement and as a result permanently transformed the social fabric of the United States and the countries around the world.

As its slogan, the second wave adopted the name of Carol Hanisch's book “*Personal is political*”. It reflects the understanding that discrimination of women in private sphere is the result of the existing sexist patriarchal culture of the society. Hanisch argued that there is no real distinction between “political” and “personal”, with the latter allegedly being free from the social control since all the aspects of private sphere are the object of much bigger control than any of the aspects of “political”. At the same time, the patriarchal culture considers political problems of women as a class to be just the issues of individual women; and these political issues should be resolved by the political actions, which begin with unification of women and raising of class consciousness [Hanisch, 1969].

The realization of the need of consolidation in standing up for the rights and in the fight for equity lead to creation of big number of women's organizations in the 1970s. Below is the list of some of them.

National Organization for Women (NOW) was founded in 1966; it focused heavily on passing the Equal Rights Amendment. The purpose of NOW was to bring women into the equal partnership with men, which meant supporting of a number of legal and social changes.

Women's Action Alliance was founded in 1971. It helped to open the first shelters for battered women. *National Abortion Rights Action League* (NARAL) was focused narrowly on the issue of abortions and reproductive rights for women.

National Women's Political Caucus was founded in 1972 to increase women's participation in public life as voters, party convention delegates, party officials and officeholders at the local, state and national levels.

National Association for Female Executives (NAFE) was founded in 1972 to help women succeed in business. It focused on education and networking as well as on some public advocacy.

National Congress of Neighborhood Women (NCNW) was founded in 1974 to help poor and working-class women through educational programs. It promoted educational opportunities, apprenticeship programs and leadership skills for women with the purpose of strengthening neighborhoods.

ERAmerica was created in 1974 to fundraise and to direct the funds to the ratification efforts in the states, which had not yet ratified the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). *ERAmerica* created branches in those states with the purpose of lobbying, educating, distributing information, fundraising and organizing publicity.

Coalition of Labor Union Women was founded in 1974 to increase women's involvement in the unions and to make union organizations better serve the needs of women members. *Women Employed* was founded in 1973 and worked to serve working women, especially non-union women in the offices, to gain economic equality and workplace respect.

Combahee River Collective, *National Black Feminist Organization* (NBFO or BFO), *National Council of Negro Women* (NCNW) promoted equity and opportunity for African American women [Lewis, 2019].

The vigorous activities of the women's organizations of the second wave resulted in significant success in achieving of gender equity in various areas of the society.

The biggest effort of the women's movement in those years was the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution. It was the second attempt to introduce such legislation since 1923. Even though the bill was approved by both chambers of the US Congress, the amendment was obstructed and eventually was not ratified in the required by law number of states due to the efforts of anti-feminists. It still is not a part of the Constitution of the United States [Patterson, 1996].

In 1960, the US Food and Drug Administration approved the combined oral contraceptive pill providing women with a better birth control tool, which allowed women to plan their careers [Farber, 2004].

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy established the Presidential Commission of the Status of Women. The commission had an advisory role and investigated issues of women's equality in education and workplace. The commission documented and reviewed systemic discrimination against women in the workplace, specifically in hours and wages, in legal representation of women, and in many taxation issues. The commission's final report, "American Woman", showed that in the early 1960s a full time female employee was paid less than 60 percent than her male counterpart. Based on the commission's recommendations, in 1963 President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act. In the first 10 years after the enactment of the law 171,000 female employees received back pay that amounted 84 million dollars [ibid.].

In 1968, women's organization National Organization for Women successfully lobbied the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to pass an amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prevented discrimination based on sex in the workplace [Patterson, 1996].

The second wave representatives worked on getting women the right to have credit cards in their names and to apply for mortgages. They worked to outlaw marital

rape, to raise awareness about domestic violence and to build shelters for women fleeing rape and domestic violence [Farber, 2004].

During the second wave the radical feminism emerged. Radical feminism considers society as fundamentally patriarchal in which men dominate and oppress women; it demands fundamental changes of the social structure and abolishing of male dominance.

One of the best known campaigns of the radical feminists of the second wave is the 1968 protests against the Miss America pageant and its demeaning, patriarchal treatment of women. As part of the protest, participants ceremoniously destroyed objects that they considered to be symbols of women's objectification, including bras and copies of Playboy [ibid.].

The radical manifestations of the second wave started discrediting the women's movement. The consequences of this discrediting still affect the negative perception of feminism by some representatives of the society. Additionally, the second wave is criticized because the women's movement was primarily centered on protection of the rights of the upper middle-class white women [Henry, 2004].

The *third wave* feminist movement began in the early 1990s responding to the failures of the second wave and as the reaction to its initiatives and achievements. The feministic ideology of the third wave challenges the definitions of femininity that grew out of the ideas of the second wave. Furthermore, the third wave contended that the race, ethnicity, class, religion, gender, and nationality were significant factors in the discussion of feminism [Baumgardner, Richards, 2000; Dicker, Piepmeier, 2003; Heywood, 2006].

The beginning of the third wave was marked by two events: the Anita Hill case of 1991, and the emergence of the riot grrrl music groups in early 1990s.

In 1991, Anita Hill testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee that Clarence Thomas, a Supreme Court nominee, had sexually harassed her at work. Although Thomas was eventually elected to the Supreme Court, this case drew attention to the issue of sexual harassment and abuse of power in the professional world [Walker, 1992].

This process was very similar to the case of Harvey Weinstein where the statement of one woman led to numerous sexual harassment accusations all over the country.

Culturally, the third wave is deeply influenced by the rise of the riot grrrls — the girl groups who epitomized feminism of the 1990s. The word *girl* here points to one of the major differences between second and third wave feminism. Second-wavers fought to be called *women* rather than *girls*. They weren't children, they were fully grown adults, and they demanded to be treated with according respect. In contrast to this, the third wave feminists preferred identification with the word *girl*. They wanted to make it empowering, even threatening — hence the new word *grrrl* [Darms, 2013].

The ideological foundation of the third wave activism was laid by the work of theorists Kimberle Crenshaw, a scholar of gender and critical race theory who coined the term *intersectionality* that describes the ways of intersection of different forms of oppression; and Judith Butler, who argued that gender and sex are separate, and that gender is performative. The works of Crenshaw and Butler's became the foundation of the third wave and paved the way for intersectional feminism [Crenshaw, 2017; Butler, 2004].

Researches identify the following characteristic features of the third wave. First, demanding the revision of the category of "women", the third wave accentuates

personal narratives that illustrate an intersectional and multiperspectival version of feminism. Second, the third wavers give preferences to multivocality over synthesis and to action over theoretical justification. And third, the feminism of the third wave shifts away from the strict contraposition of man and woman as representatives of “the oppressor” and “the oppressed” and attempts to find ways for constructive dialogue, asserting that the patriarchal culture is harmful for both, women and men [Snyder, 2008].

Characteristic features of the women’s movement in modern US

Current women’s movement in the USA is notable for high social and political activity level. The third wave slogan “Being feminist, doing feminism” stresses the need for active efforts in achieving gender equity [Heywood, Drake, 1997].

A great number of publications are dedicated to conceptualization and comprehension of the third wave of the women’s movement. Among them are: Leslie L. Heywood who has put together a two-volume set “The Women’s Movement Today. An Encyclopedia of Third-Wave Feminism”; Barbara Findlen with “Listen Up. Voices from the Next Feminist Generation”; Marcelle Karp and Debbie Stoller with “The Bust Guide to the New Girl Order” [Karp, Stoller, 1999]; Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards with “Manifesta. Young Women, Feminism, and the Future”; Daisy Hernandez and Bushra Rehman with “Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today’s Feminism”; Rory Dicker and Alison Piepmeier with “Catching a Wave. Reclaiming Feminism for the 21st Century”; and Vivien Labaton and Dawn Lundy Martin with “The Fire This Time. Young Activists and the New Feminism” [Labaton, Martin, 2004].

All these works are hard to systemize, mainly because many of these texts are autobiographical narratives written from the first-person. Furthermore, these volumes demonstrate that whereas the third wave embraces a multiplicity of aspects of gender, sexual, race identities they largely avoid a unifying agenda. And for these reasons the women’s movement of the third wave is hard to standardize and unify.

The third wavers emphasize that they are a new generation and that they have their own distinctive version of feminism [Findlen, 2001].

They claim that their version of feminism is more inclusive and racially diverse than the second wave. One of the known researchers of the third wave Leslie Heywood defines the third wave feminism as “a form of inclusiveness” [Heywood, Drake, 1997].

The third wave feminism acknowledges not only the differences between women based on race [Thompson, 2002], social class [Tea, 2004], ethnicity and religion [Hernandez, 2002], but it also emphasizes different identities within a single person: bisexuality [Stuckey, 2015], and transgenderism [Wilchins, 2014].

Consequently, as multiple identities rather than gender identity are added into the modern feminist agenda, the systemizing of the modern women’s movement gets more complicated.

However, there is a number of specific features of the women’s movement typical of the modern development of American society.

With the development of the information and online technologies, one of the main characteristic features of the modern women’s movement in the United States and globally is the switch of the activism activities to the Internet.

Online is where feminist activists communicate and have their campaigns. Sometimes women's activism exists only online (posts in Twitter and Facebook) and sometimes activism moves onto the streets as was the case with the Women's March. But the popularization of feministic ideas and discussion of the pressing problems of the women's movement is happening mostly online [Gay, 2014].

Being shaped online and moving into the real world the women's movement can become a powerful social force. A good example is the MeToo movement created in the social media by activist Tarana Burke in 2006 who suggested online posting of sexual harassment stories with the hashtag MeToo to create the community of like-minded people who had been the victims of sexual abuse. Since 2017, after the Harvey Weinstein's case, it became a powerful force of women in their fight against discrimination and abuse all over the world.

On the one hand, the World Wide Web is uniting the likeminded women and allows each voice to be heard, and on the other hand, it creates the ideological disconnectedness and deprives the women's movement of the unified opinion on the contemporary gender issues.

The women's movement in the United States is distinguished by the lack of consolidation and coordination. There is still an ideological debate as for which wave is right and effective in achieving equity. Therefore, today we cannot talk about the women's movement as a unified social and political movement that reflects common goals and performs similar functions.

Furthermore, the movement has no unified social and demographic support base since different branches of feminism attract huge numbers of supporters of various ages, professions, and areas of residence.

Black feminism clearly stands out of Black Lives Matter, the largest scale movement today in the United States. Its representatives insist that black women are the most oppressed social group and their experience demands a thorough thought.

The second wavers widely criticize the third wavers arguing that the latter frequently overstate their distinctiveness while showing little knowledge of their own history. Second wave supporters declare that the third wave feminism comes down to the rebellion of young women against their mothers and that the new generation desires to have a feminism of their own, even though their political agenda — if they have one — remains quite similar to that of the second wave [Henry, 2004].

Another criticism of the women's movement of the third wave comes from the fact that while focusing on the individual experience related to the identity, sexual orientation and ethnicity, it moves away from the classic understanding of feminism as the fight against gender inequality and for the change of the patriarchal structure in favor of the gender equity in every area of the society. As they concentrate on the issues of specific social groups, modern feminists do not suggest solutions of reforming of the social and political system of the society as their predecessors of the first and second waves did [Crispin, 2017].

Since the third wave represents a diffuse movement without a clearly defined central goal, there's no single piece of legislation or major political change that could be the achievement of the third wave, in the way that the 19th Amendment belongs to the first wave.

Despite the lack of consolidation among the representatives of the third wave, the United States has an organized and active large scale national network of more than 100 women's organizations that have branches and offices in all the states. All of them play an important role in establishing of gender equity and in protection of women's rights.

Additionally, there are regional and local women's organizations in every state and in many counties. They are mostly shelters and hotlines for female victims of domestic violence.

The study of the information sources made it possible to compartmentalize the national women's organizations by their goals and functions.

Feminist organizations directly engaged in empowering women through service and defending women's rights, promoting equity in various spheres of society.

One of the largest feminist organizations founded in 1966 is *National Organization for Women* (www.now.org). It plays the most important role on the national level. The organization has 550 chapters in 50 US states and in Washington, DC. Its goal is to bring women into full participation in the American society exercising privileges and responsibilities in truly equal partnership with men. The six core issues that NOW addresses are: abortion and reproductive health services access; violence against women; constitutional equity; promoting diversity and ending racism; lesbian rights; and economic justice. To achieve its goals, the organization conducts lobbying, rallies, marches, and conferences.

Zonta International (www.zonta.org) is another organization with the important role in women's empowering process. It provides opportunities for women through a number of educational programs and awards.

Feminists for Life (www.feministsforlife.org) aims at achieving the core feminist values of justice, non-discrimination, and non-violence.

Feminist Majority Foundation (www.feminist.org) focuses on advancing legal, social and political equity of women and men; it recruits and trains young feminists to encourage future leadership for the feminist movement in the United States.

National Woman's Party (www.nationalwomansparty.org) advocates women's rights and educates the public about the social importance of the women's rights movement.

A very significant spot among the women's organizations in the USA is held by **non-government political organizations**. Many of them were formed in the years of the first wave and the suffrage movement. Today women's non-government political organizations unite adherents of both, democratic and republican parties. They provide assistance to campaigns of female candidates who run for the US Congress and Senate, and fight for compliance with the equal rights legislation.

EMILY's List (www.emilyslist.org) advocates for larger leadership roles for pro-choice Democratic women in the legislative bodies and executive seats.

National Federation of Republican Women (www.nfrw.org) empowers women in the political process and provides a forum for women to serve as leaders in the political, government, and civic areas; informs the public through political and legislative education, training and activity; and recruits, trains and elects Republican women candidates.

League of Women Voters (www.lwv.org) assists political leaders, shapes public policy, and promotes informed citizen participation at all levels of government.

Equal Rights Advocates (www.equalrights.org) fights for social justice to protect the rights and opportunities for women, girls, and transgender people through the legislative process.

Ladies of Liberty Alliance (LOLA) (www.ladiesofliberty.org) empowers female leaders and creates the network of libertarian women leaders who actively engage in public discourse, and draws new audiences to the political and societal changes needed to secure opportunities for women.

National Women's Political Caucus (www.nwpc.org) promotes increasing women's participation in the political process. It recruits, trains and supports pro-choice women candidates for elected and appointed offices at all levels of government.

Among the variety of the women's organizations we should note **professional women's organizations**, which are organized and operate to support women of the same or similar professions. Such organizations in the USA unite women radiologists (*American Association for Women Radiologists* — AAWR; www.aawr.org), women in journalism and PR (*Association for Women in Communications*; www.womcom.org), women in art (*Women's Caucus for Art*; www.nationalwca.org), and women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) (*Association for Women in Science* — AWIS; www.awis.org).

National Association of Professional Women (NAPW) (www.iawomen.com) is the largest business network for professional women in the United States, spanning virtually every industry and profession, with over 850,000 members from diverse backgrounds. It provides online and in-person network, presents speakers from various fields of expertise who are leaders in their industry.

Professional organization *National Association for Women in Education* (www.newg.org) organizes continuous education of its members, develops professional contacts, conducts scientific research, and promotes women in science and education.

The main goals of another professional women's organization, *Business and Professional Women's Foundation* (www.bpwfoundation.org) are development of women's entrepreneurship, continuous training and creation of successful workplaces for women.

American Association of University Women (www.aauw.org) fights to remove the barriers and biases that stand in the way of gender equity, trains women to negotiate for pay and benefits and to pursue leadership roles, advocates for federal, state and local laws and policies that would ensure equity and the end of the discrimination.

Women Employed (www.womenemployed.org) relentlessly pursues equity for women in the workforce by fighting for policy change, expanding access to educational opportunities, and advocating for fair and inclusive workplaces.

Youth organizations for girls have a special place in the women's movement. They aim at empowering, inspiring and supporting girls in education, sports, and at promotion of healthy lifestyles.

Big Sisters (www.bbbs.org) creates programs to prevent risky behavior, builds role models for young girls, and supports them in education and hobbies.

Girls on the Run (www.girlsontherun.org) has various programs to develop personal potential, emotional intelligence and leadership skills of young women, helps fight bullying, and empowers girls to build healthy physical and mental habits that last long beyond the program.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America (www.girlscouts.org) is a leadership organization that provides girls with the opportunities to develop personal potential, to prepare them for a lifetime of leadership.

Girls Who Code (www.girlswhocode.com) works to encourage girls to master computer science and to choose STEM careers.

A special spot among women's organizations belongs to **religious organizations for women** that unify women on the basis of faith values. They provide religious education and mentorship, advocate and support victims of domestic violence. One of the oldest and largest religious women's organizations is *Young Women's Christian Association USA* (YWCA) (www.ywca.org). It serves more than 2 million women, girls and their families. Each year YWCA helps more than 500,000 women with safety services, including sexual assault survivor support programs, emergency shelters for survivors of domestic violence, crisis hotlines, counseling and court assistance. The organization also serves more than 260,000 women and girls with economic empowerment programs.

Catholic Daughters of the Americas (www.catholicdaughters.org) promotes the principle of faith in promotion of justice, equity and advancement of human rights and human dignity for all.

Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) (www.wmystore.com) is the largest Protestant missionary organization for women in the world with a membership of approximately 1 million. It unites more than 30 women's religious organization in the nation. It offers an array of resources including conferences, ministry ideas and models, volunteer opportunities, and leadership training.

Concerned Women for America (www.concernedwomen.org) protects and promotes Biblical values and Constitutional principles of equality of all people and sanctity of human life through various missionary and education programs.

A special place in the women's movement is held by the **African American women's organizations**. They have various goals like fighting for and achieving of equal rights and equal opportunities for black women in education and professional development (*Association of Black Women Historians*, *Collegium of Black Women Philosophers*), protection of reproductive rights and freedoms (*African-American Women for Reproductive Freedom*), etc.

The two largest organizations of black women in the United States are the *National Coalition of 100 Black Women* and the *National Council of Negro Women*. The first organization is a united voice for more than 20 million black women in the United States throughout 60 chapters in 28 states. The organization provides the communication network for black women in their personal and professional development. The second organization advocates for women of African descent, their families and communities; promotes education with a special focus on STEM; encourages entrepreneurship, financial literacy and economic stability; educates women about good health and HIV/AIDS; promotes civic engagement of black women in social life.

This is only a small enumeration of the women's organizations that work on the US national level. The list can go without end because a huge number of organizations work on the state and local levels.

As we can see, the modern network of women's organizations manifests and advocates the interests of women in various spheres of the society. Since women's

organizations represent various social groups, ages, professions and interests, they cannot be unified based on socio-demographic profiles.

However, we have all grounds to state that the women's organizations in the USA are an important and integral component of the civic society. They consolidate large social groups in achieving of their goals and are capable of significant impact on the political processes and of being affluent participants of legislative process.

Summarizing the results of the research we can conclude that the women's movement in the United States has a long and rich history that dates back more than hundred years and at the same time it is still in the making. We can witness the emerging and development of the fourth wave of the women's movement represented by a new generation of Z. We can not but agree with a number of researches that in all likelihood the majority of the feminist activism will move into the Web and will be developing based on Internet platforms.

As the analysis shows, the modern women's movement lacks cohesion and common idea that could consolidate various social groups as was seen in the periods of the first and the second waves. At the same time, as evidenced by the recent events (MeToo movement, the Women's March), the modern American women's movement creates new concepts and sets the modern feminist agenda, becomes a powerful social and political force capable of making changes to the existing patriarchal structure of the society.

The modern American women's movement faces some vital unresolved challenges — ratification of the United Nations Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, lobbying of Equal Rights Amendment on equal rights of men and women in the society, securing women's reproductive rights, narrowing the gender gap in political sphere and in labor compensation.

In this context, it is fair to assume that if the women's movement of the United States is able to withdraw from internal debates, to consolidate and to concentrates on fighting institutional causes of gender inequity, it has every reason to become a powerful and constructive force capable of having impact on the society globally and of hastening the establishment of gender equity not only in the USA but worldwide.

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Information about the author / Информация об авторе

Zadvornova Yuliya — PhD in Social Science, attendee, University of California, Sacramento, USA, yulia-zadvornova@mail.ru (кандидат социологических наук, слушательница, Калифорнийский университет, г. Сакраменто, США).