

Opinion: Feminism in the outdoors

By Jennifer Chambers, Women's Adventure

Feminism, as defined by Webster dictionary, is "the theory of the political, economic and social equality of the sexes". For two centuries, women and men have interpreted and debated this definition and many others within the social constructs of various cultures, whether it be women's sameness to men or an interpretation of differences between the sexes with equal freedoms, choices and opportunities (Offen, 1988).

These definitions and the constructs with which they existed (and continue to) have given the word "feminist" and owning that word gave women a negative rap.

Many women of the baby boomer generation owned that word and wore it like a lapel pin. Gen Xer's and millennial, however, have been more reserved about the feminist label because the fight has been fought and won and feminism has been construed as radical. Even though it is rare to hear a woman today call herself a feminist, women and men have publicly and privately continued the dialogue about equalizing the playing field between the sexes in the context of a wide range of issues.

While the outdoor recreation industry and its participants don't use the word feminism to discuss equality in the outdoors, this issue is present in the minds of and discussed between people working and recreating in the outdoors. I posit though that feminism is not a radical word but an ideology that provides women and girls the freedom of choice and opportunity without social constructs.

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