

# How Far Have We Come?

## *How to Make an Ice Ring That Will Keep Your Punch Cool for Hours on End*

*Family and friends are coming over and you plan to serve a punch recipe. Now learn how to make an ice ring for punch that doubles as a pretty centerpiece. Layer fresh fruits, herbs, and even edible flowers to make a beautiful ring of ice. If you don't have time to freeze a whole ring, we've got ideas for ice cups and ice shards, too.*

*Better Homes and Gardens, April, 2021*

## **Discussion Questions for The Feminine Mystique by Betty Friedan (published in 1963)**

1. The image by which modern American women live also leaves something out... This image is created by women's magazines, advertisements, televisions, movies. Betty Friedan first published these words in 1963 when the media's picture of a woman as wife and mother was certainly leaving somethings out. Today the media is still projecting an image of women that "mirrors their dreams". What has changed from the image of thirty years ago and what has not? What is today's image leaving out? Do you think this image will ever truly reflect the needs and aspirations of women?
2. Maizie Hirono, US Senator from Hawaii writes in her autobiography *Heart of Fire: An Immigrant Daughter's Story* that "It was during this period (1973) that I happened to pick up and begin reading *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan. It was a light bulb of searing arguments to shatter my regressive notions of womanhood. Why should we wait for a man to come and take care of us, she challenged? Why couldn't we take care of ourselves? As I waded deeper into the book, it dawned on me that I now actually felt no driving desire to be a wife and mother." Did you read *The Feminine Mystique* when it first came out? If so, in what ways was your response similar and/or different from hers. If you didn't read it then, what do you think your response would have been? What is your response now?
3. "What surprised me most about re-reading the *Feminine Mystique* was the experience of traveling back through a wormhole: looking back at the complaints of a previous generation and seeing what sounds dated and what sounds new." In your reading, what do you think sounds dated and what sounds new?
4. How would you define feminism? What were some of the traditional roles and stereotypes about women those feminists were working to challenge in the 1960's and 1970's? Did you identify as a feminist in the 1970's? Today? Why or why not?
5. Friedan argues that women were choosing marriage in order to avoid their fears about establishing their own identify and handling the fear and uncertainty that comes with being alone. Do you agree with her assessment? Do you see any evidence that women today marry for any of the same reasons? Why do women choose to marry today?

6. How did Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine Mystique* inspire women across the country to organize for equal rights? What were some of the rights that women began campaigning for after the book was published?
7. What were some of the reasons given by opponents to the women's rights movement? Are those the same or different arguments that opponents of women's equal rights use today?
8. Most of the text concerns the experiences of middle-class women. How were things different at the time for other socio-economic groups? Do you think middle-class women today do not feel bound to be housewives and do pursue their own education and careers? Is this true for all women?
9. Now that women have gained several rights equal to men, do you think that girls are treated equally to boys today? Why or why not? Are there ways that girls are treated differently from boys today? If so, how? Discuss.
10. Texas has a predominately male state government. The 2021 legislature chambers had 132 men and 48 women. If the legislatures accurately reflected TX it would be 90 men and 90 women. Since Texas became a state in 1845 5,444 men were elected and 179 women were elected. How do you think a male dominated government has affected laws and concerns for women in Texas?

FYI: The Equal Rights Amendment never got the needed votes from the states to be added to the Constitution

*Discussion questions were extrapolated from publishers Questions, Questions from the Anti-Defamation League 2006, bookrags.com, enotes.com and goodnotes.com*