



The Manifesto

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History

Founded in 2016, the Groningen Feminist Network (GFN) began as a community-led, intersectional feminist organization in Groningen. GFN started out as a free educational space for people interested in radical feminist thought to educate themselves. However, because of the political nature of feminism and the application of intersectionality, GFN quickly grew to be a very politicized organization, active in many spaces around the Groningen grassroots activist and political scene. We thus shifted our understanding of the emancipation of women to that of a broader anti-capitalist intersectional perspective, one in which we cannot achieve emancipation without the complete abolition of the capitalist system.

The Groningen Feminist Network was part of (and continues to be) active in organizing many movements in the city, with one such example being Queer Pride Groningen (QPG). GFN's sister organization was created in 2021 with the understanding that pride is a political event and a protest. Despite many claims made through Dutch media outlets and the municipality of Groningen, Queer Pride Groningen was the first pride with a pride march the same year of its creation. We believe QPG is still the only pride in Groningen.

The Groningen Feminist Network faced significant internal challenges despite its past accomplishments. Over time, the organization began to deteriorate due to its embrace of radical politics, heavily influenced by liberalism and anarchism. The decentralized structure, lack of clear communication, and absence of strategic direction left the network fragmented and ineffective.

Recognizing the need for a shift, we turned to an old revolutionary framework: Marxism. This renewed focus provided the guidance necessary to restructure the organization's political organs, creating cohesion and strategic goals. With this transformation, the GFN began a new revolutionary chapter to reassert itself within the political landscape of Groningen.

Structure

At GFN, we operate through a collaborative committee system that ensures a common direction with collective organizational decision-making.

Events Committee (EC)

This is the heart of GFN's internal political work. The Events Committee focuses on planning and organizing events that strengthen our community and reflect the network's values. These events include educational workshops, social gatherings, and internal discussions aimed at fostering political education and solidarity among members.

Actions Committee (AC)

This committee is responsible for GFN's external activities, such as demonstrations, protests, and other direct actions. The AC manages collaborations with external organizations and ensures GFN's active participation in the broader political landscape. By organizing and coordinating external events, the AC amplifies GFN's presence and influence in the feminist and activist community.

Central Committee (CC)

The primary decision-making body of the Groningen Feminist Network (GFN), responsible for overseeing all other committees and ensuring the organization stays on track with its goals. Composed of each committee and their representatives, the CC plays a crucial role in guiding GFN's overall direction. It facilitates communication between different committees, creates collective plans, and ensures that all actions align with the organization's mission.

All members of the Actions Committee and Events Committee are also part of the Central Committee, ensuring proper communication and shared responsibility. By

working together, we strive to be a space of unity and action—driving forward feminist revolution with a clear purpose.

Praxis

The GFN is a Marxist, post-capitalist organization. We believe capitalism is the main system upholding oppression for all people and recognize the destructive reality of the capitalist system. We understand patriarchy is closely intertwined with capitalism and is sustained by it. Capitalism dictates the economic realities of our world and shapes the ways of oppression and violence we and millions around the globe face on a daily basis. A system based on infinite growth and the exploitation of the majority of society is unjust and needs to be dismantled. Therefore, we advocate for a world of solidarity, shared responsibility and the abolition of capitalist exploitation, particularly of reproductive labor.

GFN currently serves as a space for feminists and those interested to come together and deepen their knowledge in Marxist-feminist theory and world politics in Groningen. We are not an institutional organization, using a bottom-up approach that emphasizes on local decision-making, community participation and grassroots mobilization/movements.

Spaces in which a community can come together and work on themselves and strengthen their bond through community events, whether social or theory night is important. Groningen as a city is overrun by white liberals and right-wing conservatives, who have created a hostile climate for people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals and internationals. Growing tension such as xenophobia and racism, inflation, rising unemployment rates and tuition fees can make people feel helpless, stressed and alone. By educating the public, GFN serves as a place where people can learn more about the world around them, strengthen their political stances so that they are better equipped to fight against imperialists, capitalists and liberal ideology. Knowledge is power and the more people are aware of how unjust the world is, the more they will be inclined to fight back against it. We not only offer a space where you can meet others, away from the bigots, but also a place to learn and grow, as

everyone has prejudices that they must unpack that was taught to them by a patriarchal society. White activists in particular ought to benefit from learning about their active role in imperialism and oppression so that they can better understand how they can use their privileges to benefit minority groups. People of color and queer people may also suffer from internalized biases that make them unable to fight against injustices adequately.

GFN fights back by offering space, education and opportunities to express themselves via protests and other actions. Of course, GFN cannot do this alone! The GFN is part of Stichting Inclusive Action North (SIAN). Our sibling projects include Asterisk and Queer Pride Groningen (QPG). We want active collaboration with other progressive projects and organizations in Groningen, and because of that we are part of activist coalitions and regularly give space for like-minded groups to share their knowledge and experience with us at our meetings. We collaborate with local groups outside of SIAN as well, such as Groningen for Palestine (GfP) and Let's Talk About Sex (LTAS), often inviting them to host talks or collaborating on organizing a protest.

Main Values

Intersectionality

The GFN understands intersectionality theory to be an important framework and radical black lesbian tradition to understand oppression. Because of this we believe that race, gender, class, and other identities intersect and shape the individuals' experiences of oppression and inequality. Before being coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, groups like the Combahee River Collective and individuals like Audre Lorde understood the reality of interconnectivity of struggles. Intersectionality is not a stand-in for diversity; we do not claim to be a group that is perfectly diverse at any given time. Instead, we desire to give an accountable, educational, and communal space for all like-minded individuals.

Marxist Feminism

Capitalism is an economic system where the means of production are privately owned, and wealth is distributed primarily through market mechanisms. Within this system, capitalists prioritize profit accumulation and capital hoarding, which perpetuates class inequality which deepens power disparities. Over time, capitalism has evolved into neoliberalism—an ideology that further exploits oppressed and working-class people by dismantling social protections, privatizing public goods, and concentrating wealth in the hands of a few.

We reject all oppressive structures that capitalist, Western-centric society enforces. These systems uphold exploitation, alienation, and inequality. We recognize the necessity of collective action to seize everything built by the working class and to dismantle capitalist structures through a socialist revolution, aiming for a society founded on equality, solidarity, and justice.

LGBTQIA+ Resistance

Transphobia is the discrimination/hatred of people based on their gender identity and expression, while queerphobia is a catch-all term which describes the discrimination of the LGBTQ+ community as a whole. Transphobia is a result of a rigid heteronormative and cisnormative society, where anyone who does not fit neatly into what is defined as “man” or “woman” are seen as abnormal. This rejection often manifests in the form of abuse, removal of rights and agency, misrepresentation and exclusion from society. Cis people insist that gender is decided by genitals and chromosomal profile, but the truth is, gender and roles assigned to these “genders” are much more cultural and social than it has ever been biological. We do not believe any of this is logical. For years, scientists have been debunking conservative ideas and yet transphobia continues to grow in places like the USA, the UK and the Netherlands, spouting that they are protecting the health of the people. This is because conservatives do not actually care about facts, they simply want to exert control and erase trans people from existence. Even if there was no science to debunk conservatives, trans people do not need any permission to exist, they should just be able to.

Queerphobia and transphobia results in queer people being disproportionately discriminated against, often being denied access to healthcare, job opportunities and housing. Trans and queer people have higher rates of being attacked, abused or murdered due to their identity, and those who cannot be out often struggle with feelings of being repressed, social alienation and shame. All these negative aspects are further exacerbated for queer people of color, in particular black trans women.

Individuals, especially cis het individuals, all have biases that they must analyze and work through when it comes to how they understand gender. Deconstructing heteronormative and cisnormative ideas are vital to creating accountable spaces for our trans community. We, as an organization, have a zero tolerance policy against transphobia and queerphobia, and we will always stand against transphobes and tackle harmful ideas that exist even within our own community. Being an ally or even being

a minority does not absolve you of transphobia, everyone must do the internal work to unlearn their biases.

LGBTQIA+ people are actively involved in the Groningen Feminist Network. We reject trans exclusionary feminism and embrace queer identities and struggle. The lives of Queer people matter, and transphobia and other forms of discrimination based on sexuality and gender identity need to be fought everywhere. The queer liberation movement was built on the legacy and actions of trans people of color and that reality should never be forgotten.

Stonewall was a riot!

Anti-racism

Racism is the discrimination against people based on race or ethnicity, believing that people of particular races are born with a certain level of intellect or morality that makes them inferior. For centuries, racism has been applied through political systems to create inequalities in healthcare, education, class and civil rights. At GFN, we are committed to anti-racism and denounce racism in all its forms. To be anti-racist is not just a matter of being “not racist”, one must actively be aware and critical of systemic and institutionalized racism and fight against them. A white person must acknowledge their privileges within a system built for them and work on their own personal biases. At GFN, we aim to make accountable spaces for people of color and challenge racism through theory, discussion and practice.

Anti-sexism & Anti-white feminism

Sexism is prejudice based on gender, rooted in a patriarchal society, and harmful to all genders. We live in a patriarchy, which infers a hierarchy between genders and traditional gender roles/ has gender inequality (the belief that men are more superior to women) at its roots. Sexism, patriarchy and misogyny (i.e. hatred towards women) perpetuate issues such as the gender pay gap, domestic violence, rape culture, femicide, and more. We reject all forms of sexism, patriarchy and misogynistic views.

By raising awareness and challenging harmful stereotypes, we strive to create a community that values and respects all genders equally.

Do we want to abolish gender (norms, behaviors, roles, traditions, stereotypes)? Gender is a social construct, which encompasses the norms, roles and behaviors of men and women. We believe gender as a social construct should be abolished. Sexism intersects with other forms of discrimination, such as racism, ableism, transphobia, and homophobia, compounding marginalization. We condemn sexism in all its intersections and are committed to an inclusive environment where everyone feels safe, valued, and empowered. Cultural diversity should never justify discrimination. Instead, it should be celebrated while challenging harmful norms. By recognizing that sexism is not inherent to any culture and working to dismantle it, we can create a more just and equitable society for all.

Despite being victims of misogyny and the patriarchy, white women can still exert their power over minority groups. White feminism ignores the privilege of white women and puts them at the forefront of feminist movements, not understanding that they, of all women, benefit most from a white patriarchal society, as they are seen as the most beautiful and fragile and thus their integrity must be protected. White feminism ignores intersectionality, focuses on the plight of white women rather than women of color. GFN fights back against this form of feminism, and we will always shut down any white feminist ideas.

Anti-Zionism

Zionism is an ideology advocating for the establishment and maintenance of a Jewish ethnostate. Since its creation, the Zionist movement has led to the Israeli settlers occupying Palestinian territories for 76 years, resulting in the ongoing oppression, persecution, and killing of Palestinian people. The displacement of Palestinians, the destruction of their homes, and the denial of their fundamental rights have been central to this occupation.

At GFN, we stand firmly for a one-state solution. A Palestine rooted in justice, equality, the right to self-determination and right to return for all Palestinian people. We reject any Zionist views or agendas that perpetuate colonization, apartheid, and systemic violence. Our commitment is to amplify Palestinian voices, support their struggle for liberation, and work towards a free Palestine from the river to the sea.

Anti-Imperialism

Imperialism is the act of extending a country's power through expansionism. Imperialism has been the motivation for western powers to invade, conquer and control other countries through brutal measures such as military occupation, exploitation and genocide. While countries like the USA, the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands become richer and benefit from their current and former colonies, these countries tend to be drained of their resources such as oil and minerals with no benefit in return. All money made from the exportation of resources belongs to foreign powers, who then transfer it out of the economy of the nation they are exploiting and into the economy of the western world, leaving nations sabotaged and its people at an economic disadvantage. One example would be Congo, where cobalt and lithium are mined for big tech companies such as Apple and Samsung. Congo is considered one of the world's poorest nations despite being the biggest exporter for these corporations that make a billion in revenue every single day. The people in Congo have suffered through several civil wars, starvation and desolation due to their corrupt government while the west continues to profit from their labor. There is also the French Colonial Tax, in which France forces its former colonies to abide by policies as a "payback" for their independence. This has only made French oligarchs richer as they can start businesses in these former colonies and escape taxes, while the actual citizens suffer the brunt of increasing taxes and little income.

As we presently reside within the imperialist core, we find it important to educate others on how our everyday lives, especially consumerism, can be complicit in the suffering of others through imperialism. We must hold western powers accountable

and violently fight back any imperialist measures, for the pain they continue to inflict on the global south. No one is free until we are all free.

Anti-Xenophobia

Xenophobia is the fear of or hostility towards people perceived as foreign or different. It has no place in our international and culturally diverse community. Through community engagement we aim to foster empathy, solidarity, and build bridges to connect different cultures. Our community should be one where we learn from each other and appreciate the beauty of diversity. Let us take a step forward towards understanding the unknown rather than retreating because of fear or a lack of understanding. Everything in this world is about knowing, learning, and understanding. Only through this can we effectively combat the issue of xenophobia.

We unequivocally reject xenophobia because it not only harms individuals, but also undermines the very fabric of our society. We believe it is crucial to educate ourselves and others about xenophobia, its origins, and its impact on our community. Combating xenophobia requires collaborative action.

Anti-Ableism

Ableism is the discrimination of people with physical, psychiatric and intellectual disabilities based on the belief that able-bodied people are superior. Ableism is rooted in the assumption that disabled people need to be ‘fixed’ in order to be deserving of equal rights, and defines people by their disability. Ableism is enforced through systemic institutions, politicians calling for eugenics, most jobs being made inaccessible to disabled people, inadequate care and support from the state, even down to public transportation and access is made hard for disabled people.

Nondisabled people in a social context also often enforce harmful, ableist ideas due to the way they were taught to think of disabilities. First, many have a tendency to medicalize disability, inherently seeing it as something “wrong”. This idea that something is wrong with someone already sets a dangerous precedent because it gives

room to the idea that they must be fixed. People with disabilities must often do or are forced to do anything to “cure” their disabilities so they can participate in “abled” society, making them victims of debt and poverty due to outrageous medical bills or unable to continue their job or education because of inadequate accommodations.

Another way that nondisabled people often fail disabled people is the language that they use with them. Oftentimes when stories of disabled people go viral, many people make comments on how “strong” and “inspirational” a disabled person is to live with their disabilities. These videos often showcase disabled people being forced to fit in a world that will not conform to their most vulnerable population, making them seem “strong” instead of the horror of these people not having access to tools that would make their life more simple. Fighting ableism is a fight for us all, and at GFN, we stand against ableism and work to dismantle prejudices against disabled people.

Anti-Fatphobia

Fatphobia is the phenomenon where fatness is equated to ugliness, inferiority and a moral failing. Fat people have long been victims of discrimination, ranging from being viciously mocked in the media to medical negligence that has resulted in the health deterioration or death of many fat people. Fatphobia occurs a lot in a social context, where many people may comment on people’s weight or promote diet culture, which causes fat people to feel excluded and unsafe. Fatphobia also disproportionately affects people of color, due to the idea of beauty and thinness being based on white people. At GFN, we have a zero tolerance policy against fatphobia.

Goals

What do we strive to accomplish?

First and foremost, we strive to work towards an abolitionist future by presently denouncing and rejecting any and all systems of oppression. Death to all imperialist, capitalist, racist, xenophobic, sexist, ableist, zionist, islamophobic, anti-semitic, homophobic and transphobic (global) entities. To bring liberation, justice and peace to any oppressed, marginalized and exploited group of people means the systematic and structural removal of power; death to their oppressor(s).

Fostering an activist, collective space

Secondly, we strive towards maintaining a sense of community as a center for a collective, intersectional activist space. Having a space in which people can come together, share experiences and knowledge, and feel like they belong is vital for a sustainable way of activism and coming together as a united entity. The fight for liberation is fought together, in solidarity and intersectionality.

Building a Base for a Post-Capitalist Society

Last but not least, we strive to build a collective, intersectional space where marginalized individuals can find camaraderie, to share knowledge and solidarity using Education as a Weapon. Creating a space that centers the interconnected struggles of all oppressed and working people of the world is essential for laying the groundwork towards a socialist revolution.

At the heart of these objectives are the members of our community, whom we fight for. However, the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself.

Community

The community provides us with a sense that we belong somewhere and support. It can expand your knowledge, sharpen your beliefs and help shape your identity. That's why it is important that we, the GFN, strive to be an accountable place where you can connect with others and expand your knowledge. With that being said, often it is more difficult for others (POC, LGBTQ, disabled people etc.) to find a community that truly offers them that support. So we create this space for these people to have a place where they can share their experience and use their knowledge as a Weapon to shape the future. We encourage you to report any situation where you or another individual may feel uncomfortable, so we can take the actions necessary to ensure that it continues to be a healthy environment for everyone.

In order to give the community a space, we host a variety of events and things to build the community. While it is important to realize a safe(r) space for people with marginalized identities, we can not always ensure such a space. Therefore, we aim to create an accountable space in which we highlight how important it is to hold accountability towards people and their actions. We host bi-weekly community events, divided between social events and theory night:

- Social events: we host social events based on integration, forming community and meeting new people - such as our candle making event or queer iftar organized in collaboration with Groningen for Palestine.
- Theory nights: We learn about an educational, political topic and have a discussion about it. These nights' purpose is to educate ourselves and have a critical understanding of our society and the capitalist system we currently live in. For example: Neoliberalism 101, Kurdish liberation, etc.

This is the first version of the GFN manifesto. Note that, in future, changes may be made. 2025.

