**[What are men afraid of…?](https://nation.com.pk/10-Mar-2020/what-are-men-afraid-of" \t "_new)**

Gharidah Farooqi March 10, 2020

Women were marching on the streets for their rights, all charged up, excited, scenes were exhilarating, slogans were fiery, faces electrified, each rising step, each raising hand and fist was eager to inch closer towards the destination. All was peaceful until all of a sudden, a mob of furious men attacks the peaceful procession from nowhere, hurling abuses, mocking women. Some incidents of stone throwing at the marchers were reported too.

The month was March. The date was 8th. The year was 1909 – the march was procession of suffragettes. Place, USA.

Repeat.

Women were marching on the streets for their rights, all charged up, excited, scenes were exhilarating, slogans were fiery, faces electrified, each rising step, each raising hand and fist was eager to inch closer towards the destination. Suddenly a mob of furious men attacks the peaceful procession from nowhere, hurling abuses, mocking and ridiculing women, jostling them. Some women were tripped. Many assaulted. Police acted as the silent spectator, indifferent to the innocent marchers at the hands of assaulters.

The month was March. The date was 8th. The year was 1913 – the march was parade of suffragettes. Place again was USA – this time, Washington DC.

More than a century and a few decades later. Repeat.

Women were marching on the streets for their rights, all charged up, excited, scenes were exhilarating, slogans were fiery, faces electrified, each rising step, each raising hand and fist was eager to inch closer towards the destination. Suddenly a mob of furious men attacks the peaceful procession from nowhere, hurling abuses, mocking and ridiculing women, jostling them. Stones were thrown at the marchers. A few were hit and injured. Yet the march for the women rights went on. This time, thankfully, the police was a little responsive to control the situation quickly.

The month was, nonetheless, March. The date was 8th. The year, 2020. Aurat March. Place, Islamabad, Pakistan.

If it proves only one thing, it is that the movement for rights has never been and will never be an easy, smooth road for women. If it happened in a great country as USA more than a century ago, the repetition was seen just yesterday in capital city of Pakistan. It was men attacking women then, it was them even yesterday. So what exactly are men afraid of, then? Of power over the social, societal, structural, systemic, economic, religious and ideological dominance slipping away…? Well, that is bound to happen – sooner than later. It is imperative for men to understand what women want in this new, dynamic, digital age of 2020. For this, one has to both loosen up and broaden the perspective lens. Defining the roles for women, determining what is good or bad for them, trying to control their lives and independence, even clamouring to alter women rights demand to what is ‘more socially acceptable’ is something which is not going to work for long in this modern age.

“Nobody in the world, nobody in history, has ever gotten their freedom by appealing to the moral sense of the people who were oppressing them” – Assata Shakur

Ask us not to change the slogans. Change your mind. Ask us no to alter the route to liberty. Alter your perspective. Ask us not to be polite. Raise voice with us. Ask us not to follow the societal norms. For we are exactly here to break these chains, in the first place. This era’s can be rightfully regarded as the fourth wave of feminism. The first starting in 1848 lasting till 1920 struggled about the “religious, social and civil conditioning of women”. The second starting in 1960, booming in 1970 demanding for greater equality and improved role of women in society. The third began in 1990, expanding the horizon of feminism to personal level of women along with bringing in broader legal and structural changes. What we see today is rightfully the fourth wave of feminism – fierce, aggressive, blunt, no-compromise type, all-achieving, woke in the age of social media.

This fourth wave seems not to be going away or fading away soon till it achieves the ultimate objectives. Youth is an integral part of this current wave of feminism and let this be very clear [which has several a times been made clear] – neither feminism, nor Aurat March is against men at all. The demand is equal life, equal opportunities and if that means men have to give up long-held reign over women lives, they must be happily and amicably returned. An equal space at religious, social, economic level is the ultimate goal of this wave/movement – let it take its natural course. Neither disrupt it, nor disturb or dictate it. Movements will take their natural course, if are rooted deeper in public sentiment and well being, do nothing but to improve and develop the society. And if otherwise, they die up automatically during their natural course. So, what are you afraid of, men!? Man up!