

Hedwig Dohm



Hedwig Dohm was born on the 20th of September 1831 in Berlin.

She was a German feminist and author.

She was one of the first feminist thinkers to see gender roles as a result of socialization and not biological determinism.

Hedwig Dohm was born in Berlin to Jewish parents, as a daughter of [Wilhelmine Jülich](#) and of a tobacco-maker Gustav Adolph Schleh. She visited school until she was 15 years old.

At 22 she became a wife of an editor and actor [Ernst Dohm](#). They had 5 children.

Hedwig and Ernst Dohm moved in intellectual circles in Berlin. In 1867 Hedwig Dohm devoted herself to her first publication: „Spanish National Literature in its historical progress“. As all women at that time, she was not allowed to visit university, so she taught herself how to write essays. Later she started to write novels.

In the first half of the 1870-ies Hedwig Dohm published 4 books on feminism, in which she demanded social, civil and economic rights for women and full equality between men and women. In 1873 Hedwig Dohm was among the first women in Germany who fought for women's rights to vote. She also demanded equal education for girls and boys.

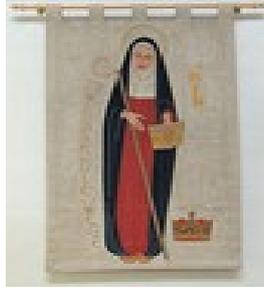
She said that financial independence was the only way for women. They should not depend on their husbands money and see the marriage like a prison. They should have a right to work and gain their own money and decide themselves for or against an equal partnership with a man.

During the First World War, Dohm was one of the few people, who spoke openly against the war and the cheering mood of false patriotism.

Her grandson, Klaus Pringsheim, was a renown musician, and her granddaughter Katja Pringsheim became the wife of the famous writer Thomas Mann.

Hedwig Dohm died in Berlin on the first of June, 1919.

Hildegard von Bingen



Hildegard von Bingen was born in 1098.

She was a German Benedictine abbess, writer, composer, philosopher, Christian mystic, visionary, healer and polymath.

She is considered the founder of scientific natural history in Germany.

Hildegard von Bingen was brought up and educated in a Benedictine monastery and became a nun. At 38 she was elected magistra by her fellow nuns.

She founded two monasteries: of Rupertsberg in 1150 and Eibingen in 1165.

She was one of just a few women who were officially allowed to write texts and music pieces. She gained this right when she convinced the clergy of having Visions of God who spoke to her and taught her in her visions and ordered her to write it down.

She wrote theological, botanical, and medical texts, as well as letters, religious hymns, and poems.

(One of her works as a composer, the *Ordo Virtutum*, is an early example of liturgical drama and the oldest surviving morality play.)

She experimented with herbs and their medical power, developed herbs medicine, helped sick people and wrote down over 200 recipes /r'eseepis/ which are still in use by the natural health doctors.

Centuries after her death on the 17th of September 1179, she was recognized as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church. In 2012, Pope Benedict XVI /the sixteenth/ named her a Doctor of the Church.

Martin Luther



Martin Luther was born on the 10th of November 1483 in Eisleben, Saxony. He was a German friar, priest and professor of theology and was an important figure in the Protestant Reformation.

At first, Luther became an Augustinian friar, but later rejected some teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

The friars at that time made a lot of money from selling indulgence letters. These letters promised people that God would forgive their sins. Martin Luther fought against the claim that you can avoid God's punishment for your sins by purchasing a letter with money, because it was not true and was not written in the Bible.

In 1517 he wrote *Ninety-Five Theses* and nailed them demonstratively to the door of a Castle Church. With this he openly confronted Johann Tetzel, a [Dominican friar](#) who sold indulgence letters. His Theses led later to Reformation of the Catholic Church in Germany.

Martin Luther taught that Bible was the only source which contained the religious teachings directly from God and with this challenged the authority of the Pope in Rome. The problem was, that at that time the Bible was written in Latin and people could not understand it.

The Church didn't like Luther's activity. In 1520, Pope Leo X /the tenth/ and the [Holy Roman Emperor Charles V](#) /the fifth/ ordered him to take back his writings. Martin Luther refused to do so. As a result, the Pope ordered his excommunication and the Emperor condemned him as an outlaw.

But he was saved from the execution and lived disguised at Wartburg Castle. During this time he [translated the Bible](#) from Latin into German, which had a great impact on the church and on German culture.

He died on the 18th of February 1546 in Eisleben. The city of Wittenberg where he lived and taught was named after him Lutherstadt Wittenberg.

Robert Blum



Robert Blum was born on the 10th of November 1807

He was a German democratic politician /politisch/, publicist, poet, publisher, revolutionist and a member of the National Assembly of 1848. He was a gifted orator and organizer. He was a thinker and a revolutionary.

At that time Germany was a federation of 38 independent states, which had each their own monarch and an absolutist form of government.

Robert Blum was a pioneer of democracy. He fought against the Absolutism. He had a strong belief that people should not be ruled by a Kaiser or princes.

In 1848, Blum was a key player during the March revolution in Saxony. He managed to get the Kaiser to replace his government with a more liberal set of ministers.

Blum became then a member of the first German Parliament in Frankfurt. He fought for civil rights and freedom of speech and the press, and for the German Confederation. But in the Frankfurt Parliament Liberals and Democrats began to argue. Blum criticized the Liberals of being too soft with the monarchs and princes. But the Liberals won.

When, in 1848, revolution broke out in Vienna, Blum travelled there and joined the revolutionary forces. He fought among the opposition on the barricades until he was arrested and taken into prison. He was condemned to death without trial and his privileges as a member of parliament were ignored.

He was executed on the 9th of November 1848 by shooting to death.

His death became a symbol of all that the Revolution of 1848 failed to achieve – democracy, unification and a national parliament.