

FEMINISM: ROOTS AND SIGNIFICANCE IN MODERN LITERATURE.

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Abstract: The origins of feminist ideology can be found in the dawn 1830s abolitionist movement. Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady led the Seneca Falls Convention on human rights, which served as the impetus for the campaign for gender equivalence (Pateman & Grosz 2013). Men and women should have equal opportunity since they are equal, as stated by the sentiments that emerged from the convention. According to Gunew (2013, p. 83), "many feminists fought for the rights of women to initiate sexual relations regardless of their marital status" in Germany.

Key Words: Feminism, Equality, Gender, Women's movement and Chauvinism.

A word first used in an essay by British feminist Sarah Grand in 1894 to characterise an independent woman who aspires to success and self-fulfilment outside of marriage and the family. Grand claims that the New Woman "proscribed the remedy, and proclaimed for herself what was wrong with Home-is-the-Woman's-Sphere" (142). Grand's naming of this term struck a chord, giving a name to a new form of femininity that had already surfaced in Anglo-American culture at a time when women were starting to go to college, enter the workforce, and fight for political representation. The "New Woman" quickly gained transatlantic stereotype status; she was a self-sufficient, free-spirited young lady with "advanced," feminist beliefs. The archetypal New Woman was connected to a number of ideographic "props." Golf clubs, books, cigarettes, and glasses represented her embrace of pastimes and interests often associated with men; bicycles and latchkeys represented her ability to travel about public spaces. The New Woman was primarily a middle-class or upper-class character; her affluence and social standing allowed her to choose social privileges like a university degree above the financial security of marriage. Working-class women's situation was always precarious and a topic of discussion.

First of all, they experienced everyday hardship and had to deal with the dehumanising aspects of working as workers. They realised that this emancipation movement jeopardised their jobs, which is why they were wary of middle-class women's attempts to enter the workforce (hooks 98). As a result, their biggest struggles were getting paid fairly and avoiding complete prejudice. Simone de Beauvoir was a French writer and philosopher who also published articles, novels, memoirs, autobiographies, and monographs on politics, philosophy, and social concerns. Therefore, the main struggle for them was to get decently paid and to avoid total discrimination. Simone de Beauvoir was a French novelist and philosopher who also produced articles, autobiographies, biographies, novels, and monographs on politics, philosophy, and social concerns. Her philosophical books, such as *She Came to Stay* and *The Mandarins*, as well as her book *The Second Sex*, which offers a thorough examination of women's subjugation and serves as a pioneering statement on modern feminism, are currently her most well-known works. It was written in 1949 and released in English in 1953. It presents a feminist existentialism that calls for a revolution in morality. She agreed with Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialist theory that "one is not born a woman, but becomes one," according to which existence comes before essence. The social construction of woman as the "Other" is the main subject of her investigation. According to De Beauvoir, this is essential to the subjugation of women. She claims that historically, people have viewed women as strange and deviant and that Mary Wollstonecraft herself believed that men were the ideal that women should strive to be like. De Beauvoir contends that this mindset needs to change for feminism to advance. According to De Beauvoir, women have historically been treated like dolls. From an early age, they have been subjected to constant lectures from their family or society on appropriate behaviour and attire. Women end up objectifying themselves in the same way that

men do to them because they adore themselves in an attempt to please other guys. Beauvoir argues that the first step towards a woman breaking free from the patriarchal bonds she is in is realising that all of her traits as a woman are social constructs rather than who she truly is. Women, according to De Beauvoir, have always been treated like dolls. Since they were young children, their family and/or society have constantly lectured them on how to act and dress. To please other guys, they admire themselves, and as a result, women objectify themselves in the same way that men do to them. Beauvoir asserts that for a woman to break free from these patriarchal shackles, she must first acknowledge that all of her perceived femininity is a product of society rather than her genuine nature. A woman can only live a free life with full agency and not be treated as a man's accessory if she comprehends this. Women, according to De Beauvoir, have always been treated like dolls. Since they were young children, their family and/or society have constantly lectured them on how to act and dress. To please other guys, they admire themselves, and as a result, women objectify themselves in the same way that men do to them. Beauvoir asserts that for a woman to break free from these patriarchal shackles, she must first acknowledge that all of her perceived femininity is a product of society rather than her genuine nature. A woman can only live a free life with full agency and not be treated as a man's accessory if she comprehends this. The book "The Feminine Mystique" by Betty Friedan, released in 1963, recognised "the problem that has no name." Friedan had the guts to inquire, "Is this all there is?" among all the requests to make breakfast, chauffeur their kids to events, and host guests. "Is this really all a woman is capable of doing?" To put it briefly, the issue was that a lot of women did not enjoy the typical role that society had assigned them. Radical ladies crowned a live sheep as a form of protest outside the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City in 1968. There were "FREEDOM TRASH CANS" constructed where women could discard any and all representations of female subjugation, such as girdles, bras, hair curlers, fake eyelashes, and high-heeled shoes. Although no bras were destroyed, they were called "bra burners" by the media. The issue of violence and rape is one that radicals emphasise. It has never been easy to talk about this important problem. Before a few courageous activists started the public protest, women had never been willing to speak out about their horrific experiences or to stop domestic violence. It sparked a tsunami of controversy, and, remarkably, modern, civilised women can feel safe. Millions of women worldwide are given confidence and protection by the law. In several nations, citizens are not shielded from violence by the government. It occurs as a result of these societies' members' resistance to change. They may undervalue the characteristics of thriving societies, which leads to apathy.

The current state of modern feminism would not exist without the contributions of prior activists and leaders. Feminists were able to convey their ideas and opinions through literature, music, and other cultural mediums. Since second-wave feminism peaked during this time, most notable works regarding women's status in society were produced during this period. In addition to writers like Bell Hooks who addressed fundamental women's rights, other authors raised awareness of previously unexplored subjects. For instance, in her 1973 book "Fear of Flying," Erica Jong explored the issue of female sexuality. Though at the time a contentious topic, it was time for society to move past conservative viewpoints and acknowledge the phenomenon's natural causes. Numerous studies and discussions have focused on the disparities between genders' mental health in several academic fields. The literature on the sociocultural aspects of women's mental health in the US is analysed in this research. Inquiry into mental health has been approached from two angles by feminist scholars. The first, a social causation approach, examines the features of women's lives that enhance or undermine well-being. The social constructionist perspective involves critical analyses of methodology and conceptions of mental health and illness. There has been a lot of discussion lately about how postmodern thought has affected feminist politics and theory. Following the formation of "The Black Liberation Movement and Women's Liberation Movement," The divorce rate has skyrocketed globally, which has led to a rise in the suffering of divorced children as well as the global spread of HIV/AIDS and STDs. At this point, feminists acknowledge the new conundrum and start to reconsider how men and women interact. The majority of feminist categories advocate for the abolition of stereotypes, sexual injustices, limitations, and the oppression that women experience (Bryson, 2007). They have supported the feminist movement's efforts to defend women's interests and social rights while also challenging feminists who seek to undermine the conventional family unit (Fan, 2017). According to postmodern feminist theory, there are many different kinds of women and women's movements, each representing unique and conflicting interests. They oppose a comparatively simplistic explanation of patriarchal oppression and advocate for a broad spectrum of social structures and behaviours. The instability of what is deemed natural or normal with regard to gender is known as postmodern feminism (Alcoff, 1997). Social constructivist ideas, which contend that gender is a construct of language or discourse, provide the foundation of postmodern feminism (Sands & Nuccio, 1992). Postmodern feminists advocate for a multiplicity of knowing views, including essentialism, philosophy, and universal truths, while rejecting the conventional feminist stance (Hawkesworth, 1989). They hold that each woman may understand the truth in her own unique way and that knowledge is always relational, open-ended, and provisional (Wallin, 2001). Additionally, they wish to eradicate gender discrimination from the community. They concentrate on the ways that social discourse shapes societal norms regarding

the treatment of women. They have seen how language and culture influence sexual differentiation (Butler, 1999). They contend that reality is a product of individual communities, culture, and language rather than an absolute (Barrett, 1980). The modern feminist movement, in all of its varied manifestations—liberal, cultural/radical, black, womanist, materialist, and neo-Marxist, among others—remains committed to improving the lot of women around the globe. Feminism found radical expression in the arts outside of literature and literary theory. Examples include painting (Kiki Smith, Barbara Kruger), sculpture (Kate Mills' Naked Lady), and architecture (Sophia Hayden, the creator of Woman's Building

Conclusion: Today feminism has shaped modern women and is the only movement that is gaining momentum now and then. It has taken women in all spheres of life. The absorption of women in all spheres of life has taken center stage for modern women. The current age is the age of women and this has redefined the boundaries of chauvinism and has liberated women from early traditions this has directed modern women into free independent women who are capable of doing their work and making decisions for themselves. Women had freed themselves from patriarchy and liberated themselves from subjugation and slavery. Managed herself in all domains and performed multidimensional tasks.

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