

is a social fact. We live in gendered societies. We live in such societies where males have lot of advantage over the second sex. To this we can also add the third sex.

- According to Simone de Beauvoir, women should not suffer just because they go through certain experiences, which males do not go through.
- Gender based inequalities are universal, present in all cultures including the western world. It is the universality of subordination that makes it appear to be normal.

2) Personal is political.

For feminist thinkers, Personal is political.

Meaning

1. Aristotle's view personal separate from political.
2. Personal sphere is without politics.
- 3.

Feminists are against the separation of personal & political as considered by the mainstream theorists.

This tradition started with Aristotle & is responsible for the continued exploitation of women. Susan Moller Okin in her book

'Gender, Justice & Family' suggests the 4 meanings associated with Personal is Political.

- Family life & personal relationships to be subjected to normative scrutiny.

- Family creates psychological conditions ~~with~~ which govern public life.

Karl Marx Economy
Feminist Patriarchy
Basic structure.

- It is a recognition that state must enter into the family to regulate marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc.
- It points towards the gendered division of labour.

(3) Patriarchy

Patriarchy is the system that puts male at advantage & females at disadvantage.

Patriarchy forms the basic structure of all societies with ~~may~~ maybe few exceptions.

All social institutions are patriarchal in nature.

Family is the most powerful core institution of patriarchy. Family is responsible for treating patriarchy as normal. According to P Simone de Beauvoir, there is a lot of difference the way girls are brought up & the boys.

Hence radical Feminist suggest destruction of family without which it is not possible to end patriarchy. Feminists suggest either single parent family [homosexual rather than heterosexual].

(4) Concept of citizenship

For them universal citizenship is colour blindness. They support differentiated citizenship, support affirmative action policies in favour of women.

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Feminist notion of equality

According to feminists "State should differentiate equalities to equalize the differences".

Schools of Feminism & Waves of Feminism

1st Wave

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Started with French Revolution (1789). (Liberal)

Mary Wollstonecraft is treated as "Mother of Feminism"

Book: "Vindication of the rights of women".

It is guided by liberal ideas.

Demanding equal civil & political rights.

It took the shape of Suffragates movement.

Most successful aspect of feminist movement.

With Russian Revolution Socialist Feminism

also started. Soviet state took many steps for empowerment of women under Lenin.

2nd Wave

vert. men

First wave demanded equality. 2nd wave started emphasising the differences from men.

& in many ways establishing superiority of women over men.

By this time independence of women from men became the agenda. Women to leave families, join public sphere & gain the charisma.

2nd wave of feminism is influenced by existentialism & is known as radical feminism.

◦ Why radical feminism is treated as true feminist theory?

Earlier theories of feminism like liberal / social were dependent on traditional paradigms whereas radical feminism is purely feminist perspective. They changed basic assumptions about politics, society & state.

Simone de Beauvoir

[Mother of Radical feminism]

Book: The Second Sex

◦ One is not born woman, one becomes woman.

Existentialism

Jean Paul Sartre

◦ Existence is prior to essence.

Simone de Beauvoir's ideas were influenced by existentialist philosophy of ~~Sartre~~ Sartre.

'One is not born woman but becomes woman' is based on Sartre's concept that 'existence is ~~ex~~ prior to essence'. It means essence of ~~ma~~ person's existence is given to person by others. Ex. In case of women it is the essence given to a child by others. According to Sartre, existence is prior to essence before others.

defining our essence, meaning & purpose of our life. Individual should be given freedom to understand his/her existence & explore his/her essence.

Thus she suggests that society deprives a person from determining the essence. She talks about the myths associated with essence of women. One universal myth is "Women enjoy motherhood. Motherhood is the essence of women. Reality may be different. Women may not be enjoying motherhood or may not be willing to treat motherhood as an essence. They may find more satisfaction in public sphere.

However they are unable to do so because of such myths. Such myths contribute to the domination of men over women.

According to her, myths are not coincidental but intentional & purposefully created. Her suggestion is women to develop true consciousness of their self. They should have more & more participation in public sphere. They should gain economic independence from men. If biology is responsible for their subordinate status, women can take the help of technology.

Meaning of second sex

Women are treated as secondary sex. This is happening since recorded history. Women are understood with reference to men rather than independently.

12/9/14

Betty Friedan

Book: The Feminine Mystique

She has interviewed American women belonging to well off families. She realised that despite all material comforts available to these women there was something missing from their life. Women were not able to identify the reason for their dissatisfaction. Friedan calls this state as "Problem without name". Thus she explores myths associated with women. Ex: By nature women are more suitable for domestic jobs, women should find satisfaction in being mothers & happy housewives. It has been systematically propagated that family & not career should be the priority of women. Friedan also believes that these myths are intentionally created to maintain the supremacy of men in a patriarchal society. She blames women magazines which often portray a happy housewife and portray career oriented women as facing lot of problems & not having the real satisfaction. Radical feminists suggest women should take up their responsibilities. They should gain economic independence. They should leave the comfort of patriarchy.

Kate Millett

Book: Sexual Politics

She suggests that politics is not limited to public sphere, politics to be understood in dynamic sense in terms of violence and domination. We need to talk about the politics between sexes. Similar ideas represented by Shualsmth Firestone. She talks about dialectics of sex [Book: Dialectics of sex].

She has also criticised patriarchal family & suggested to talk about dialectics of sex which is older than the dialectics of class.

Susan Brownmiller

Book: Against our will

She has analyzed phenomenon of Rape; considered it as a conscious institution of patriarchy. Objective of rape is to keep women in the state of fear all times. Even those men who do not commit such acts are benefited indirectly. The way media projects such events further results into perpetuation of dominance of men.

3rd Wave, / Contemporary Wave of feminism

First wave focussed on women demanding equal rights at par with men. Second wave under radical feminists dealt with the concern

of women as such.

3rd wave feminism make distinction among women both on the basis of consciousness as well as what will constitute women

liberation. They classify women into various

categories. Ex: Problems of white women are

different from that of black women, problems

of women in south (3rd world countries) are

different from women in North (advanced countries).