

Significance of Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex

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The Second Sex is first authentic and sensational work of feminism which forced women to think about their own identity, need of self awareness and consciousness. The book is also a measure of Beauvoir's ambition as how she was plumbing the new significance in her life as a single and intellectual lady and human being. These were fragments of her own life that gave her the confidence to reject the established notions of femininity and to create a vision of wholeness in The Second Sex. Her alertness thrived in psychological realm, specializing in making normally unseen connections. Beauvoir says that from her childhood she was having a kind of self awareness of her inner self and there was always an intellectual quest against the shams and hypocrisies of the patriarchal world. In All Said and Done she says:

I hated what my sister and I used to call 'silliness' a way of smothering life and its joys under prejudice, set habits, pretence and empty phrases. I wanted to escape from that oppression, and I inwardly swore that I should expose it. (All Said and Done, 499)

After growing up when she got the chance to realise her real self she wrote, The Second Sex. Her relevance to the burning agendas of today in the middle of twentieth century can only be termed as her projective fundamentalism. Her fearless determination to think her way through the extreme, often polarized, psychological positions and ways of being and made it possible for her to give new meaning to the identity of women and discard the established myths of 'eternal woman'. Talking about the plan of The Second Sex she says in Force of Circumstance:

Wanting to talk about myself, I became aware that to do so I should first have to describe the condition of woman in general; first I considered the myths that men have forged about her through all their cosmologies, religions, superstitions, ideologies and literature... This assumption could of course be explained by historical circumstances, and Sartre told me I should also give some indication of the physiological groundwork....I

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