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Literary Analysis of Female Representation in the Characters of the  
Literary Work: The Second sex written by Simone de Beauvoir  
Through a Feminist Approach

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the bachelor in English

**Student: Andrea Juárez Alpízar**

**Thesis Mentor: Licda. Kattia mora rivera**

**SEDE ARANJUEZ**

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## Dedication

First, I want to dedicate this investigation to my sister, Sharon Juárez who taught me through her courage and strength to always fight for your dreams.

Second, to my mother, Bernarda Alpízar, who taught me that education is the biggest gift a parent can give to their children.

Last, for all those people who love me and help me through this process, this journey would not have been possible without you.

*“Change your life today. Don't gamble on the future, act now, without delay.”*

Simone de Beauvoir

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In addition, I want to thank all my professors who I was lucky enough to share a class with; I admire and respect you deeply. Thanks for spreading your knowledge and for always encourage us to continue learning and to be better.

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this investigation titled “Literary analysis of the “The Second Sex” written by Simone de Beauvoir through a feminist approach”, is to analyze feminism from a feminist approach, the most significant contribution of Simone de Beauvoir to the feminism movement before and now and what means to be a woman for the author.

The researcher studied what argues “The Second Sex” from a social and philosophical approach and its relationship with the feminism movement. Additionally, the researcher will identify the role of the women in a social during the XX century, follow by the author’s points of view and her influences and finally the importance and contributions of the book “The second Sex” for the feminism’s movement, all this from a qualitative research method.

For the completion of this thesis, feminism theories were taken into consideration to supplement the specific object on which the whole work is based upon. The investigation concludes by creating a triangulation among the passages of this essay, the researcher’s opinions and the approach presented in the essay.

## **Resumen**

El propósito de este título de investigación "Análisis literario de" El segundo sexo "escrito por Simone de Beauvoir a través de un enfoque feminista", es analizar el feminismo desde un enfoque feminista, la contribución más significativa de Simone de Beauvoir al movimiento feminista antes y ahora y qué significa ser mujer para el autor.

El investigador estudió "El segundo sexo" desde un enfoque social y filosófico y su relación con el movimiento feminista. Además, la investigadora identificará el papel de las mujeres en la sociedad durante el siglo XX, seguirá los puntos de vista de la autora y sus influencias y, finalmente, la importancia y las contribuciones del libro "El segundo sexo" para el movimiento del feminismo. Esto a partir de un método de investigación cualitativo.

Para completar esta tesis, las teorías feministas se tomaron en consideración para complementar el objeto específico en el que se basa todo el trabajo. La investigación concluye creando una triangulación entre los pasajes de este ensayo, las opiniones del investigador y el enfoque presentado en el ensayo.



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Andrea Juárez Alpízar

1-1431-0108



## Chapter I

### Introductory Framework

*The second Sex* written by Simone de Beauvoir is a masterpiece of feminist criticism and philosophy that marked the beginning of a new phase of feminism. There has been a lot of confusion about what the word feminism means; for instance, it can be said that it is “The belief that women should be allowed the same rights, power, and opportunities as men and be treated in the same way, or the set of activities intended to achieve this state” (FEMINISM | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.(2019) Dictionary.cambridge.org. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/feminism>). In other words, it is about levelling the playing field between genders and ensuring that women and girls have the same opportunities in life.

*The Second Sex* initiated as something unexpected, as the author pointed out. The book has become the center of her work and not only the most read, but also the one with the greater impact and influence, and whose significant and importance are difficult to measure. This research paper presents themes such as: the married woman, the mother, the prostitutes, the woman in love, and the independent woman from the biology, psychoanalysis, and historical materialism point-of view.

#### 1.1. Problem Statement

Why is it relevant to speak today of Simone de Beauvoir and her most important work, if we have modern authors who specialize in gender and feminism issues? For a long time, society set roles for males and females, and Simone de Beauvoir through her book *The Second Sex* has changed the way feminism was seen; that is why the story of her life has spread, and Beauvoir is still alive with her existentialist becoming one of the biggest referents for the

feminist movement. With her most celebrated phrase “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman,” she truly defines the feminist belief that gender is a social construct and how and why a woman identifies herself as a woman in front of society.

The objective of the present investigation lies on making known the connection of the author and feminism throughout her book. Also, this analysis attempts to find different aspects written in the book that can explain the different point of views of the author from a social and philosophical approach. However, it is important to understand first the background of the author in order to get familiar with her philosophy. Therefore, the research question of this project is: What is the most significant contribution of Simone de Beauvoir to the feminist movement before and now? What does it mean to be a woman according to de Beauvoir?

### **Objectives of the Investigation**

The main point of this investigation is to analyze *The Second Sex* written by Simone de Beauvoir from a feminist approach. The investigation is going to examine the different elements presented in her book, such as the physiological and social ways found in the feminist movement, which may affect the reader’s insight in a positive or negative way in regard to the reading of the book.

### **General Objective**

Analyze what *The Second Sex* proposes from a social and philosophical approach and its relationship with the feminist movement

### **Specific Objectives**

- a. Identify the role of women in the social context of that time
- b. Determinate the author’s points of view and her influences

- c. Identify-importance and contributions of the book *The second Sex* for the feminist movement

### **Justification**

Becoming a feminist writer did not come out easy during 1949, and especially in France. However, Simone de Beauvoir achieved this recognition after she published her most important book, *The Second Sex*, that gives us a new vision into the reasons behind the subordination of women and teaches us the contribution of book to the feminist movement. De Beauvoir's voice and ideas are carried forward through this book in the present world and that is why the researcher is going to study, in this project, some of her main philosophies and thoughts.

This investigation has the purpose of using the Feminist Approach to analyze the book *The Second Sex*, as every person who reads get benefited from it. In particular, the research will be reviewing the way that femininity has a cultural and social impact, and the masculine image of women is known as the "other." This will be shown through the author's theories, analysis, and the opinions of some philosophers that Simone mentions in the book. Concepts such as role gender and sex are also evaluated in the present book, as well as the conception of the otherness, the critic to the biology, the psychoanalysis and materialism, the historical evolution of women until the connection with the present.

The audience who reads this investigation can find more than explanations, facts, and references because the reader will be able to understand the author's point of view and get knowledge from the project through essay explanations and examples. That means, the reader can learn from different scenarios which are presented in the investigation, through textual analysis. Besides, the reader is going to be familiar with some new concepts that may be

applied in their lifetime, and how the philosophical approach can be analyzed. Simone was severely criticized by many people because of her book. In France, it was polemical and not accepted, “Communist and right-wing circles—proponents of a traditional morality—proved the most aggressive in their criticism of the book, while progressive Christians and the non-communist left supported all or part of de Beauvoir’s arguments (The reception of *The Second Sex* in Europe, n.d.). Despite of the controversy, the book sold more than 22,000 copies in France and a million copies in less than 40 years in the rest of Europe. It has been considered a landmark feminist philosophical work.

### **Antecedents**

In the following section of the investigation, the researcher is going to analyze investigations and works from other people that have a relationship with the approach under study, which is feminism.

The first antecedent used in this investigation is *Simone de Beauvoir y la historia de las mujeres. Notas sobre El Segundo Sexo* written by Rosa María CID López (2009). In this investigation, López wanted to emphasize the role of Simone de Beauvoir and her work in *The Second Sex* with the beginning of the studies in the History of Women. In particular, López valued all the theoretical reflections on the construction of femininity as a cultural and social fact, or the masculine image of women as the "other," and the one that ended up marking the history of feminist.

It is mentioned that Simone wrote this book when she was young and that in reality her initial preoccupation is based more on the field of existentialist philosophy. In fact, this book did not influence the historical studies on women neither feminists in general. (2009) explained that people say that it was not until the sixties of the last century, when it began to

be read and assumed by women and not only for feminists. But also, the book received severe criticism that provoked in some conservative areas, like the Catholic Church, a prohibited publication.

In this study, López (2009) pointed out that Simone finished with all the bad reputation that women had related to the lower position of women, as well as the importance of psychology and of the criticism of historical materialism. She questioned the privileges of men in society by explaining different stages of women, such as in childhood, youth, analyzes of the prototype of the lesbian, the different situations of mother or prostitute, among others, without forgetting the feminine models from the narcissist to the mystic.

On the other hand, López (2009) investigations were based on historical studies of women, for example, the influence of biological, psychological, or literary discourses, which help to understand how women have been "imagined" without denying the fact that one thing is the "women" and other, the "feminine. For this reason, Simone de Beauvoir said that it was not female inferiority that had determined the historical insignificance of women, but their "insignificance historical" that had served to determine their inferiority in society.

López (2009) her analysis referring to the topic of how women are seen as "the other" and she mentioned that in a historical meaning, Simone clearly perceived that it was men who had defined the women as the "Others" and that it was never thought in terms of equality, but of submission. For Simone de Beauvoir, the woman has always been submitted, because women were born installed with "the way of being" from their anatomical and biological differences and they were seen as a weak and dependent being. Without historical hesitation, it had been a "second sex" in front of men. The Second Sex has helped the history of women in the importance that this book has had in social and political movements, such as feminism and

how it is still important to continue the thought on women and even more to continue in the defense of their rights at any time.

The second antecedent is called *Mujeres que se bifurcan* and it was written by María del Mar Obando. The article starts indicating that “Although they were separated eight thousand kilometers away and eight years old, Simone de Beauvoir and Yolanda Oreamuno contain coincidences of life and work that force us to suspect that the ideas sprout similar in free-spirited minds. It is known that they did not know each other neither person nor by text” (Obando, 2013).

The article mentions the similarities that they share even if they have a different age, both developed a textual reproduction at the same time. The two writers received a prize for the second novel that they published, " La Ruta de su Evasión" and “The mandarins" by de Beauvoir. While Simone’s work was considered the most relevant documentary novel about the French post-war period, Oreamuno’s work produced a change in Costa Rican literature, as it gave away to the modern novel and it was represented in all the female living characters of the author.

Obando (2013) described that they both have in common the historical context, because both countries, France and Costa Rica, were suffering from social reforms. They also had great education and they expressed what they were feeling through their works. Yolanda Oreamuno mentioned,

I said that a woman does not develop her own ambition and, as a consequence, neither does her personality. Ambition, which essentially embraces two paths - the

economic and the intellectual - is dead at birth. The social plot described has committed abortion.

The personality deviates fundamentally towards the mask that is today the denial of all true femininity. This is, the "interesting." Many years ago, when our grandmothers wore crinoline, appeared a prim woman, blushing and neat, who fainted as a weakness and did not want to know anything about anything: in a single term, the "modesita." Today, with cars, planes, and new rights, that "interesting" one comes out. So false the one as the other. So, lying as before as now. Two sides of the same coin of ignorance and incapacity. A duo of environment excrescences; One affected not knowing anything, the other pretended to know everything. Both ignore their ignorance (...). (Oreamuno,1938).

This article concludes saying that while they present their books to the world, they received a lot of critics. Both writers also shared the same ideology for feminism and with approaches regarding to feminism that would take strength and validity in the following years. They both changed the way of thinking of many women and they are important figures in the social movement.

The third antecedent written by Jacob Chambers (s.f.) mentions in *The Second Sex; Woman as Other* that Simone de Beauvoir changed the world's perception of the feminism and existentialist philosophy. The author points out that a man does not question anything about himself, even if we talk about a historical context that proves the role of a man in society. He said that,

It has been possible for man to create “his right to power” through destiny, historical and mythological context. As Simone describes it Man has been “bestowed” with the right of holding. the “positive and neuter” polarity while woman represents the negative. (Simone) It is from this tripartite position that Man has evolved his “right by virtue of being man” and therefore woman is wrong. (Chambers s.f. p.2)

Two important quotes are mentioned in this project. The first one is what is a woman? which is determined from a biological way because Simone made a distinction of sex organs. The conclusion of this is that a woman is the one that is the most necessary since she carries life, while not a single male is able to produce an egg. The other question is What is a man? and as before, it gives man the power to control women and as per Simone’s thoughts, they are always seen as the strongest and the one that have all the right over society and even more over the woman (Simone de Beauvoir, 1949).

Chambers (s.f.) refers to the context of history when he points out that a “Woman has been the ultimate undermining because the suppositions made, have relegated her to the “domestic and or animalistic” sphere. Her roles and abilities are encapsulated as a means of oppression or a bird cage of oppression. As the author points out, control has been the essence of the patriarchal society for decades and this has belonged to men, while women are considered as the object of his reality. He states that,

Man has used his knowledge and experience in dealing with the natural world and has thusly applied it to what he considers to be worth protecting within society, mainly woman. It is from his experiences that woman’s “purpose” is best administered by being “domestic” be it because of her biology, physicality, or for

socio reasons and that in doing so he ensures that woman is subordinate to him which furthers his goal of transcendence and the promotion on the species.

(Chambers, s.f.)

Based on de Beauvoir's ideas, Chambers (s.f.) said that women have become oppressed from the structure of how man used tools in order to be the human being in charge to protect the rest. Instead, women have the role in physical labor, procreation and domestic labor, which all afford put them in a position of necessity within society. He concludes by saying that even if man is the person in charge of protection, which gives him the right to dominate and control. However, he mentions that without a woman, a man is not able to acquire the role of protector and that is why men and women have to create a working relationship.

### **Scope**

For many women, *The Second Sex* was an impulse to take control of their lives. As still happens today to many women, de Beauvoir wanted to be objective and neutral, away from ideas that ended up with the same things, and writing this book was a relief for her because the book was used as a tool for anyone fighting oppression and domination all over the world. At the time *The Second Sex* was written, feminism evidently had neither the scope nor the power and support that it has today.

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It also lacked the success that we have now, with women marching in the streets and more important, having a voice. This investigation will study the fundamental points of feminism of Simone de Beauvoir that appears in *The Second Sex* and how it has influenced France at that time and its influences for feminism, nowadays. This study will focus also on

the influences that guided Simone de Beauvoir. The idea is that humans exist first and then each individual spends a lifetime changing their essence or nature. It also focuses on the question of human existence, and the feeling that there is no purpose or explanation of existence by itself. It holds that, as there is no God or any other superior force, the only way to counter this nonexistence is by embracing existence.

## Chapter II

### Theoretical Framework

This chapter will develop the theoretical framework and it will set the path for this investigation. The chapter provides the necessary knowledge for a better understanding of *The Second Sex*. First, literary definitions and explanations are going to be presented since they are crucial for the literary analysis. Additionally, aspects such as how to make a literary analysis, the feminist approach, and themes will be reviewed in order to provide a better understanding for the reader.

#### 2.1 Meaning of literature

Literature captures the essence of how an author feels and sees the world, it comes in different types which go from novel, to poetry, essays, and more. Literature is also considered by the Royal Spanish Academy as an artistic expression based on the use of language, basically in a written document. It is also the science that studies literary works and a subject that is taught in colleges or universities. Literature is a discipline that uses language in an esthetic way. The term comes from the Latin word *litterae*, which refers to the accumulation of knowledge that guides us to the correct way of writing and reading. Literature is also considered as the set of books that talk about a specific topic, the books are from a specific time or a particular genre.

The concept has also a close relationship with the art of grammar, rhetoric and poetry. It is considering an art because it exposes the vision of the author, who is the one who uses the word from an aesthetic perspective. It is also characterized, mainly, by the ability that the author has to describe and expose real or fictitious facts full of sensations, emotions, characters, spaces, images, among others. De Beauvoir uses their creativity to use words,

grammatical resources and rhetorical figures as part of the work tools to make his or her narrative or poetry a unique and unrepeatable work, regardless of whether they start from universal themes such as love, war, envy, family, friendship, among others.

Literature provides us with an alternate reality. It can be said that this is its purpose and that literature give us perspective. A person can learn many things from studying great works of literature, but the biggest lesson is the freedom that the writer and the reader earn. Whether in the form of an escape, an adventure, a devastating heartbreak, a philosophical pondering or an argument, the mind of the person is transported through the words of the author.

### **Meaning of theory**

Theory is a term that comes from the Greek *theoria*, which in the historical context meant observing, contemplating or studying and referring rather to a speculative thought. Generally, theory is a word that is used to refer to a set of abstract ideas or when a person wants to explain an event and make predictions based on it that. It is also used to describe something difficult to achieve in practice, for example, ideas to improve the country's situation. Theory is not knowledge, it allows knowledge; it is not a solution, it is the possibility of dealing with a problem.

Nowadays, a theory is understood as a logical system that is established from observations, axioms and postulates, and it stated conditions and certain assumptions that will be carried out during the investigation. In addition, the theory seeks to convey a general view of some aspects of reality. In order to do this, a logical explanation is used as a point of reference so that predictions can be developed. Based on these theories, it is possible to deduce or postulate other facts by means of certain rules and reasoning.

There are two categories of ideas that can lead to theories:

- **Conjecture:** when an assumption is not supported by observations
- **Hypothesis:** supported by verifiable observations. Despite of this, a hypothesis may turn out to be false. When this occurs, the hypothesis must be modified to adapt to the observation.

In many circumstances, theory is seen as a model of reality. A theory has to be somehow confirmable. Many scientists argue that religious beliefs are not verifiable and, therefore, they are not theories only matters of faith. Theories exist not only in sciences but also in fields of academic studies, philosophy, literature and social science.

### **Literary theory**

Literature also deals with theories since they represent a way of understanding the problems and struggles the characters go through according to de Beauvoir's historical reality and their own view of life. Literary theories walk hand-in-hand with literary criticism, in order to understand what literary criticism is, it is important to know concepts related to the field to be analyzed to achieve accurate understanding. Literary criticism or literary analysis can be defined as "an informed analysis and evaluation of a piece of literature" or "a written study, evaluation and interpretation of a work of literature".

Literary theory can be understood as the set of concepts and intellectual assumptions on which rests the work of explaining or interpreting literary texts. It also refers to any principles derived from internal analysis of literary texts or from external knowledge of the text that can be applied in multiple situations. In other words, Literary Theory is the practice

of guessing what people meant when they wrote something down. Literary theory refers not to the meaning of a work of literature but to the theories that reveal what literature can mean.

Literary theory is the way a person explores literature. If each piece of literature that a person reads is an adventure on the high seas, literary theory is our boat, our navigation device. It helps to make sense of the massive world that is literature and it gives direction and interpretation. **Literary theory formulates the relationship between author and work by showing the meaning of race, class, and gender for literary study and in both cases, from the perspective of the biography of the author and an analysis of the thematic presence within texts.** When a book gets popular, lots of people tend to describe what it means. For example, when a poem is read, readers approach the text in a certain way and, whether they are aware of this or not, they make assumptions about the text and what it tries to express.

Literary theory helps people to enjoy literature more deeply and thoroughly since it allows to navigate with precision and make deeper connections in the text. There are many different kinds of literary criticism that can be used to move through a text and based on School Work Helper, the below are the most important with a brief explanation of each one:

Feminist Criticism: it is literary criticism based on feminist theories. It considers texts with the knowledge that societies treat men and women inequitably. Feminist criticism will analyze texts in light of patriarchal (male dominated) cultural institutions, phallogocentric (male centered) language, masculine and feminine stereotypes, and the unequal treatment of male and female writers. Feminist criticism developed primarily in the 1960's and 1970's, although it is evident in earlier works as well, for example in the works of Virginia Woolf and Mary Wollstonecraft.

Marxist Criticism: based on the writings of Karl Marx (1818-1883) this school of thought contends that history and culture is largely a struggle between economic classes, and literature is often a reflection of the attitudes and interests of the dominant class. An often-repeated statement from Marx expresses a basic idea specific to this form of criticism. “It’s not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness”.

New Criticism: it is a movement in literary criticism that proposes close reading and textual analysis of the text itself. It is referred to as “New” because it operates contrary to the previously favored focus on the author’s biography, the historical context, and the perceived parallels between these and the text. Practitioners focus on both the “external form” (e.g. ballad, ode) and the “internal forms” (e.g. structure, repetition, patterns of figurative language, plot/content, syntax/diction, tone, mood, context/setting, style, literary devices, theme). These practitioners reject consideration of the author’s intention and the affect on the reader as illegitimate. The movement is also referred to as formalism or structuralism.

New Historicism: it is a range of critical practices that examine works in their cultural and historical contexts. Practitioners of the critical movement developed it by examining a wide range of texts such as newspapers, advertisements, popular music, historical accounts, poetry, novels, and diaries. Practitioners believe that works cannot be viewed in isolation from history and culture. A reading of a work must take into account its intention, genre, and historical situation.

Post-structuralism: post-structuralism refers to a critical approach to language, literature, and culture that questions or criticizes structuralism. Like structuralists, post-structuralists rely on close readings of texts; however, post-structuralists believe that language is inherently

unstable in meaning and the meaning of the texts is ultimately indecipherable. The best-known post-structuralist approach is deconstructionism.

Reader-Response Criticism: it is a critical approach that shifts the emphasis to the reader from the text or the work's author and context. This approach focuses on the individual reader's evolving response to the text. The readers, through their own values and experiences, "create" the meaning of the text and therefore there is no one correct meaning.

"When analyzing a text, from which a student will write a major paper, it is advised that the student should first focus on the elements of a story: plot, setting, atmosphere, mood, character, theme and title. The next logical approach is to look at the language (devices and patterns) and form of the text (structure). Then the student might consider any of the following approaches such as New Historicism, New Criticism, Archetypal Criticism or Cultural Criticism." (Schoolworkhelpernet, 2019))

### **Feminist Literary Criticism**

This investigation consists on a literary analysis and it is basic to know concepts related to the field to be analyzed to achieve accurate understanding. Definition of what literary criticism is, basic methods of feminist literary criticism and approaches that are based on feminism.

Feminist literary criticism, also known as feminist criticism, is the literary analysis that arises from the viewpoint of feminism, feminist theory and feminist politics. The main points of this criticism are the oppression of the women in social, political and economic literature. Basically, the feminist criticism wants to give a different perspective and a new interpretation of women's literature as well as a new reestablishment of the importance of women's writing.

The goal of the feminist theory is to bring awareness about the analysis of women writers from the feminism perspective.

There are many different kinds of feminist literary theory. Some of them examine the language and symbols that are used and how that language and use while other check how men and women write differently and then analyze at how the gender of the author affects how literature is written. Many feminist critics look at how the characters, especially the female is described. Feminist literary theory also suggests that the gender of the reader often affects the response to a text, and it asks the reader to consider the relationships between men and women and their roles in society.

One of the most important developments in literary studies in the past twenty years or so has been the emergence of feminist criticism. At the beginning, feminist criticism reflected the political goals of feminism in the sense that authors and texts were judged based on how far they could be settled with feminist ideology. “The ‘images of women’ school of feminist critics adopts this point of view and it is particularly concerned with how women characters are represented in literature”. (Springercom, 2019)

Feminist literary criticism is a discourse that reflects on power, hierarchy and male power in the cultural scope. It pursues a political struggle, a battle that begins with the recognition of the legitimacy of women's writings, their literary tradition and literary strategies that demonstrates male oppression at that time. It has shown that neutral and universal discourses such as philosophy, history, psychoanalysis, religion and even science are actually stated in masculine points of views.

Feminist literary critics accept the basic belief of feminism. First, by saying that the injustice of women's oppression must be eliminated. Second, feminist critics believe that literary history is shaped by androcentric biases, (the evaluation of individuals and cultures based on male perspectives, standards, and values), and, since men and women read differently, that gender is a crucial factor in the creation and interpretation of literary texts. Third, feminist critics argue that all literary studies are subjective, even those ones that pretend to be objective. Finally, through feminist readings, it is intended to show the marginalization of women in literary history.

“The basic methods of feminist literary criticism include:

- Identifying with female characters: By examining the way female characters are defined, critics challenge the male-centered outlook of authors. Feminist literary criticism suggests that women in literature have been historically presented as objects seen from a male perspective.
- Reevaluating literature and the world in which literature is read: By revisiting the classic literature, the critic can question whether society has predominantly valued male authors and their literary works because it has valued males more than females”.

(Thoughtcocom, 2019)

Feminist critics, for example, have re-valued the political, social, geographical, and historical contexts in where literature exists. Boundaries between the text and the world, the text and the critic, the text and the reader have been considered fluid but sometimes inconstant. It is important to mention that the critic is interested in what a text does to the reader, and what the reader can reflect or obtain from the text. The work is read for its values,

or for values that are not exclusively literary. This means that the critic's focuses may include gender, race, nationality, and social class of the writer; the way a work is seen by its cultural contexts and the way in which cultural contexts shape the work are key subjects of study.

The book which is the subject of this investigation is not a novel, so it is not possible to define characters on it. Therefore, the investigator considers the “Characters” on Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* are women from around the world who are discriminated according to the concepts and beliefs of the society they live in.

### **Feminist approaches**

For a better understand on feminism approach, it is necessary to know the meaning of feminism. Feminism is a social movement and ideology that fights for the political, economic and social rights for women. Feminists believe that men and women are equal, and women deserve the same rights as men in society. Once the meaning of feminism has been understanding it, a shortly explanation of the waves of feminism plus some important representatives of the movement will be analyzed.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, feminism was definite as the state of being feminine. However, this concept has a different connotation in France, since it was identified as the political and protest movement of women. Then, during decade of the 60s, it was full of social transformations worldwide because of the liberation of women, the sexual revolution, and the protests of youngest; it was mainly a decade of change for women.

It is common to see the word "feminism" used nowadays for many people, sometimes is more a buzzword but its importance is not missing. There has been speculation about the fist used of the word, it has been said that Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), was the first person who

introduce it the word after her 1792 book "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" was published. However, there is speculation that it was used before then. At this time, the word referred to women's freedom or emancipation.

Feminism movement also advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. The feminist movement has fought for many different causes, such as the right for women to vote, the right to work and the right to live free from violence. It is important to bear in mind the feminism is an alternative theory, which attempts to look at women's oppressed positions in today's society.

Feminist approaches, they come from at least four areas of contemporary critical thoughts which are the historical (including Marxist), psychoanalytic, reader-response, and deconstructive theory. In this case, this project maybe focusses on some of the theoretical concepts, which have contributed to the feminist literary movement. There will be comparison and contrast aspects of theory put forth by three prominent feminist critics, while also considering their arguments. As well, this includes how female characters are created and how they can be understood within any given text, in addition to the role of female authors and female readers.

### **A Brief History of The Waves of Feminism**

Women's rights movement, also called women's liberation movement, diverse social movement based in the United States during the 1960s and '70s sought equal rights, opportunities and freedom for women. It coincided and it was recognized as part of the "second wave" of feminism. While the first-wave feminism of the 19th and early 20th centuries focused on women's legal rights, especially the right to vote, the second wave was

focuses on every area of women's experience including politics, higher education, work, the family, and sexuality.

The first wave of feminism started from 1830's to early 1900s urban industrialism and liberal, socialist politics and my main goal of this wave was to obtain opportunities for woman and mainly the suffrage. Women realize that they must fight to gain political power (including the right to vote) and after this they expanded to issues concerning sexual, reproductive and economic matters. They said that women have the potential to contribute just as much if not more than men.

The second wave started from 1960s until 1980s. Women began to notice how to define themselves, what it meant to be a real woman and why they had to be less than a man. For ages, women had been taught that they were "natural" based on biology but since the Women's Liberation Movement of the Second Wave, it was rejected all the thoughts of beauty, they were tired of being turned into sex objects by the fashion industry. This phase focused on the workplace, sexuality, family and reproductive rights. Many women during the second wave were of movements like for example the Black Civil Rights Movement, Anti Vietnam Movement, Chicano Rights Movement, Asian-American Civil Rights Movement, Gay and Lesbian Movement and many other groups fighting for equality.

The third wave of feminism began in the mid-90s and women were fighting for "universal womanhood," body, gender, sexuality and heteronormativity. This wave was about acceptance and an understanding of the term 'feminism' and here it was emphasizing diversity in all its forms, from race, gender, class, and sexual preference. The opportunity to reincorporate sexuality and femininity into feminism was a remarkable point during this third wave.

## **Women's roles in the 1950s, 1960s and the present**

In the year 1949, the French writer and philosopher Simone De Beauvoir, published *The Second Sex*, a fundamental work that inspired feminism around the world. As it has been mentioned on this project, de Beauvoir states that a woman is not born, but is made, according to the conditions imposed by her sociocultural environment. But along with her, there have been other women that feminism has defined not only as their predecessors but also as pro feminists. It refers to a group of women who have been identifying as icons and influences and who have left their mark on the movement since the beginning until today and they are Mary Wollstonecraft, Helene Cixous and Gloria Steinem

To start with, Simone de Beauvoir with *The Second Sex* has inaugurated the second wave of feminism with its central argument that throughout history, cultures, the fact that woman has always occupied a second position in relation to man, being relegated to the position of the “other”, and finally the existential activity of man. Whereas man has been enabled to transcend and control his environment always with the control and the domain of his physical and intellectual forces, woman meanwhile has remained captive and as a slave.

De Beauvoir demonstrates her logical reasoning regarding the perception of female sex by men and women. For her, there is a difference between the term's female and woman, and she believed that these perceptions on gender were not biologically inherited, but they are 'imposed' to by the society. de Beauvoir mentions that the woman has “obtain “a circle of duties imposed by her maternal and reproductive functions. Simone de Beauvoir ´s text will be discussed more openly in advance, for the time being, other women who inspired and continue to inspire feminism movement will be studied.

## **MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT**

Mary Wollstonecraft was considered the first feminist from the eighteenth century as well as one of the members who found the feminist school of thought. Wollstonecraft was an English novelist, political thinker, moral philosopher, and women's rights advocate. She was against the limitations on women 's freedom for self-expression, self-development and women 's rights. Wollstonecraft is best remembered for *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), an influential text in the field of feminist. Wollstonecraft 's work is considered a pioneering work of the eighteenth century in English literature and it is considered one of the first books that express feminist ideas. It is the first comprehensive text which illustrated the statement that women need to be educated and thoroughly stressed to end the gender differences.

In this book, Wollstonecraft states that women are not inferior or secondary to men, but they strike one as only because they lack education. She also emphasizes the role of women 's education due to their inferiority and insecurity. The book mentions that education alone can extend woman 's consciousness of the world and protect her place in the society.

Wollstonecraft opposed and questioned what society know today as male-supremacist ideas in regards the access to employment opportunities and political issues for women. In other words, Wollstonecraft asked for an equal social philosophy as the basis for the creation and preservation of equal rights and opportunities for women. Moreover, the book promoted equality of social, political, legal, moral and cultural rights between men and women. One of the most important features of this book is that it rejected the thought that women were weak and not capable of thinking effectively and that they do not deserve education but a proper place in husband 's home.

For Wollstonecraft, this hypothesis is nonsense and she believed women could become rational creatures if they are given education, freedom and equal opportunities in legal, political and other institutions. It is evident that Wollstonecraft and de Beauvoir shared the idea of the creation and preservation of equal rights and opportunities for women. Mary Wollstonecraft criticized the poor access to education and the lack of available alternatives for women who wanted more options other than marriage and motherhood.

## **HELENE CIXOUS**

Helene Cixous is a contemporary French poet, novelist, dramatist, philosopher and critical theorist that achieved name and fame worldwide because of her work *The Laugh of the Medusa*. This is an essay and it was written in French but later it was translated into English. The essay is about a literary manifesto in feminist criticism which urges women to write themselves about their bodies, sexuality and all opinions they have about themselves and others. In other words, Cixous reminds women that it is men who have written about history, sciences, nature, medicines and above all regarding women.

As she explains in the text, Sigmund is one of the many men responsible for categorizing women as weak and lacking knowledge. Cixous after mentions that the writings of men have created an image of women as “other”. She wrote: “Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies ... Woman must put herself into the text—as into the world and into history—by her own movement”.

*The Laugh of Medusa* explains the need for women to express themselves since only a woman can describe the true nature of femininity. Cixous states that this condition of inviting women to put forth their opinions in writing is called *Écriture féminine*. The term is a

combination between the French term created by Helene Cixous which in English means women 's writing or feminine writing. Helena believed that the art of writing can liberate women 's minds, bodies and it can give a position and power in society. She declares that once women start to express their feelings, opinion and sentiments in writings their voices will be reached everywhere. Cixous believed that the body must be heard it.

In other words, Cixous advocates that women are second to none. She really gave the importance to women 's body's as she asked women to keep faith in their bodies, minds, abilities and their individual existence. To sum, *The Laugh of Medusa* is about that feminine writing is the only force which can liberate the women from male domination in the world. It would inspire the sense of individuality among women and in Cixous 's words: "Write! Writing is for you, you are for you, your body is yours, take it"

### **GLORIA STEINEM**

To conclude, Gloria Steinem is an organizer, writer and lecturer and one of the most visible, passionate leaders and spokeswomen of the women's rights movement in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Her conviction, sensitivity and common sense have been three characteristics that she has been weaving throughout her life. Steinem co-founded New York Magazine and Ms. Magazine, where she remains a consulting editor for fifteen years.

Aware that women should be fighting for equality and not for supremacy over men, Steinem's life has been dedicated to the cause of women's rights, as she led marches and toured the country as an in-demand speaker. She has defended above all that people need to understand that women are not the weaker sex and that our decision-making capacity is not an opportunity from time to time; It is a daily right that women exercise with and without the permission of the patriarchy.

Regarding about her personal life, Gloria wrote about politics for New York Magazine by the end of the 60s. In the 70s, she founded a magazine that formed the feminism of today since it was transferred it from the movement to the magazine. Sex, class and race became topics on the agenda. Steinem helped to find the Women's Action Alliance, the National Women's Political Caucus, and Choice USA. She was the founding president of the Ms. Foundation for Women and helped create *Take Our Daughters to Work Day*. Steinem became more engaged in the women's movement after reporting on an abortion by the radical feminist group known as the Redstockings. She expressed her feminist views in the essays "After Black Power, Women's Liberation."

Known as "The Mother of Feminism", Gloria is an inspiration for all women, thanks to her incessant struggle for the rights of women. As a result, Steinem helped to find the Women's Action Alliance, a pioneering national information center that specialized in nonsexist, multiracial children's education, and the National Women's Political Caucus, a group that continues to work to advance the numbers of pro-equality women. Steinem also co-founded the Women's Media Center in 2004.

Her biography, *My life on the road*, is a best seller that confirms why this woman is an inspiration for all people who fight for equality, respect and freedom. Many celebrities feel inspired by Steinem and one of them is the actress and activist Emma Watson who does not hesitate to pose on their social media profiles with the book. Nowadays, she has been awarded as a writer and she has been the subject of three television documentaries including one from HBO.

## Who was Friedrich Engels?

He was a German philosopher, social scientist, journalist and businessman who was born in Germany on 1820 and died in England in 1895. He adhered definitively to socialism and established a friendship with Karl Marx in 1844. Together they produced many pieces of jobs where they criticized capitalism and the developing of an alternative economic system in communism and thought, Max was the first headship in socialism, Engels was a great influence for him. Some of their important jobs are: *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, *The Communist Manifesto*, and each volume of *Das Kapital* and after Max's death, Engels published the fourth volume of *Kapital*. Engels brought the knowledge of the English labor movement and he criticized the classical economic theory. When Max died, Engels struggles to keep the spirit of communism alive as well as gaining the status of the first Marxist.

De Beauvoir criticize the work of Friedrich Engels, called *The Origin of Family, Private Property and the State* published in 1884 because in his book, Engels reviewed the history of woman according to his perspective and he showed that the history only depends on the incapability of women and on the other areas of Historical Materialism as he places in the origin of humanity at first stage where equality between the sexes are superior.

De Beauvoire mentions how Engels makes an inadequate deduction to explain the problem when he claims that woman's oppression was unknown in the earliest human societies and that it was based on the development of private property. Beauvoir also finds Engel's theories lack of any basis or reasons for his claims to assign the "great defeat of the female sex" to the discovery of bronze and emergence of private property. Since he assumed

without discussion the link that ties man to property, she negates those affirmations and she says that it is not enough to explain property.

“There is absolutely no indication of how [the transition to private property] was able to occur; Engels even admits that ‘for now we know nothing about it’; not only is he unaware of its historical details, but he offers no interpretation of it. Similarly, it is unclear if private property necessarily led to the enslavement of woman. Historical materialism takes for granted facts it should explain: it posits the *interest* that attaches man to property without discussing it; but where does this interest, the source of social institutions, have its own source? This is why Engels’s account remains superficial, and the truths he uncovers appear contingent. “

She continued explaining the value that techniques acquire in social life, where a central point is marked with the appearance of bronze. Bronze became a key for agriculture and therefore, for the establishment of sedentary life, the appearance of private property and the woman as a slave under the oppression of males. Man, not only became the master of woman but also of paternity, paternal rights, transmission of property from man to son and from not woman to clan.

As mentioned before, Engels assumed that man has a link to property and that private property has given to man the power to indulge himself in sexual caprices, polygamy and among others. This domination rises the social oppression for women in general in where she declares “Equality cannot be re-established until the two sexes enjoy equal rights in law”, but this enfranchisement requires participation in general industry by the whole female sex”.

On the other hand, Beauvoir disagreed with Engels as she describes that it is impossible to consider woman simply as a productive force and that woman should not be

seen for only for sexual purposes to men; a reproducer, an erotic object or simply an “other”. De Beauvoir points out that women with the “reproductive function” cannot be seen as economic workers as we cannot compare jobs like military services to pregnancy and childbirth and it cannot say or assume that sex, eroticism, lust, and love must be spontaneous things.

Beauvoir also claims that people must look beyond historical materialism, that man and woman are not more than economic units and for the same reason she rejects both, the sexual monism of Freud and the economic monism of Engels. She believes that in our effort to discover woman, we should not reject certain contributions of biology, psychoanalysis and historical materialism and she says that it is not her biological data that defines a woman, it is maybe what she is allowed to do in the social context in where she exists, that is to say, a context which is also a product of human action and not some kind of natural given.

## **2.2 Themes in the Stories**

In order to continue with the analysis of the book, the reader needs to understand the concepts that have been explained above. The theme of a story is what the author is trying to transmit; the central idea of the story. Themes are often a declaration of the human condition or a truth that explains human behavior. In most literary works, there could be more than one theme and some of them such as novels are long enough that different readers could pick up different themes. Every book, novel, short story, or poem has its own theme or themes and they are connected to the character's internal journey. Additionally, themes are often universal in nature. Some common universal themes are love, freedom, equality, sacrifice, betrayal, loyalty, greed, justice, oppression, and revenge. They can also be personal and part of the human condition, for example loneliness, trust, commitment, or family.

This investigation is focused basically on one female character of Simone de Beauvoir and also in real-life women all over the world. It is of great importance to mention that since this is an essay and not a book, there are neither motifs nor symbols, the research will be focuses on themes mainly. In this investigation themes such as existentialism, biology, society, freedom and nature are going to be analyzed in the context of the paper. Each theme will be presented in a chart of two columns with its explanation in chapter IV.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
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## **CHAPTER III**

### **Methodological Framework**

On the following chapter, the researcher will show what a research method is as well as the different methods that can be applied when doing an investigation. The reader will also know what types of methods have been used during this investigation and additionally, a brief biography of the author, the background of the book, what the book is about, and a data collection instrument. All these points will give a clearer view on this research project.

#### **3.1 Research Methods**

The research method is one of the most important phases in a research project. It is important to clarify each of the parts or methods that will be applied in order to establish the correct methodology that will guide the rest of the research. In other words, the research method will tell how and with what methods it will be used throughout the investigation. Therefore, it gives an idea of the direction that the research will follow, and in this way all the eventual readers will have the opportunity to know if all the objectives were achieved. Usually, researchers choose the most appropriate research method for their project; they include the qualitative, quantitative or mixed method depending on the nature of their research.

#### **Qualitative Research Method**

In the first place, qualitative Research Method is a kind of social science research that focuses, collects and works with non-numerical data. It helps us to understand and based on those data information, social life through the study of targeted populations or places and it

usually involves interviews or conversations, which produces non-numerical data. This method is not only about “what” people think but also “why” they think, and it reveals the behavior and perception of a target audience with reference to a particular subject, contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals. The method is used when research questions need to be sharpened and when you need detailed description of an issue and it also provides information about the “human” side of an issue, for example the connection between poverty and racial hate.

The three most common qualitative methods are participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. It is better to use Participant observation when it is needed to collect data related to naturally occurring behaviors in usual contexts. The second method is used when it is necessary to collect data on individuals’ personal histories, perspectives and the last one, focus groups, refers to data on the cultural norms of a group and cultural groups or subgroups represented.

### **Quantitative Research Method**

Secondly, Quantitative methods are based on the measurement of quantity or amount. They are methods that use numbers to gather information from existing and potential customers. These numbers are usually numerical and after a careful understanding of them, they help to predict the future of a product or service and make necessary changes. The method emphasizes objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys. Quantitative research focuses on gathering numerical data and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon.

The main goal of Quantitative Research Method is to determine the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent or outcome variable within a population and it designs either descriptive or experimental researches. A descriptive study establishes only associations between variables, that means that the relationship is an experimental study that establishes connection.

There are four different types on this method. In Survey Research a researcher has a series of questions that needs to be responded, summarized in percentages and frequency. All those questions use sources such as online polls, surveys, questionnaires via Email, Social Media or on a website. The second is Cross-sectional survey where the researcher intends to collect data from an example of the target population at a given point in time. Longitudinal surveys are also observational surveys but unlike cross-sectional surveys, longitudinal surveys are conducted across various time durations in order to observe a change in respondent behavior and thought-processes. This time period can be days, months, years or even decades. And finally, Correlational Research which explain the relationship between two closely entities and how one impacts the other and what are the changes that are eventually observed. (Questionprocom, 2018)

### **Comparing Quantitative and Qualitative Research**

It is important to understand the difference between qualitative and quantitative research. Based on the information that reviewed before, it is very common to say that one is better than the other one, but both are going to depend on the purpose of the investigation. To be clear in this subject let's refresh both of them: while the qualitative research relies on verbal narrative like spoken or written data, the quantitative research uses logical or statistical

observations to draw conclusions. The following chart explains historical materialism theory with their main purposes:

Characteristic	Qualitative market research	Quantitative market research
Is well suited to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the "how" or "why" behind specific behaviors or attitudes</li> <li>Projects where the <b>dynamics</b> of a market or decision-making process are <b>not well-understood</b></li> <li><b>Niche</b> audiences, because quantitative research may not be possible</li> <li>The initial stages of a <b>larger program of research</b> – especially to further scope or refine the design of later phases of the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Studies where <b>measurement</b> is the primary objective</li> <li><b>Mass market audiences</b> – such as consumer markets or small businesses</li> <li>Projects that require a <b>high level of statistical confidence</b> in the results</li> <li>Where the <b>structure of a market is known</b> and research respondents are familiar with the language that is used in questions</li> </ul>
Sample sizes (number of interviews, observations etc.)	<b>Small numbers</b> – Frequently fewer than 100 responses	<b>Larger numbers</b> – Survey sample sizes are often in the 100s or 1000s
Time taken	Dependent on sample sizes, but simple qual studies can be completed in <b>days or just a few weeks</b>	The fieldwork phase for quant studies may take <b>many weeks or months</b> to complete
How the data is reported	Data are presented <b>thematically</b> , capturing the main "stories" behind the data. Individual responses in the form of <b>videos, quotes and audio</b> are often used to demonstrate a specific theme.	Usually <b>charts, aggregated tables and other statistical plots</b> .

(B2b international, 2019)

The results of the analysis of the information will be presented in the next chapter of this investigation in the form of paragraphs appropriately identified.

### **Mixed Method**

Ultimately, Mixed methods are a methodology for conducting a research that involves collecting, analyzing, and integrating quantitative and qualitative research in a single study or a longitudinal program of inquiry. To put it another way, mixed methods is a research approach where researchers collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data in the same study.

Using mixed methods therefore uses the strengths of each research approach making sure to avoid single method pitfalls. Not only must the quantitative and qualitative data be

integrated, but the hypotheses also must be integrated. Sometimes it is even possible to reach an added value of combining methods when done properly. Mixed method can be used when a person wants to validate or corroborate the results obtained from other methods or when one method is used to inform another method. They can be used to gain a better understanding of connections or contradictions between qualitative and quantitative data since they can provide opportunities for participants to have a strong voice and share their experiences across the research process.

When reading mixed methods research or writing a proposal using mixed methods to answer a research question, the six questions below are a useful guide:

- Does the research question justify the use of mixed methods?
- Is the method sequence clearly described, logical in flow and well aligned with study aims?
- Is data collection and analysis clearly described and well aligned with study aims?
- Does one method dominate the other or are they equally important?
- Did the use of one method limit or confound the other method?
- When, how and by whom is data integration (mixing) achieved?

(Bmjcom, 2019)

As advantages of this method, researchers mention that when mixed data collection, data analysis and interpretation of the evidence, the researcher gains in aspects such as an extensa panoramic view of the research scenery, different viewpoints of view and answering research questions. Another advantage of mixed method can simplify and improve the experiences of researchers as different perspectives are given during the studied. One of the

most important advantages is the possibility of triangulation, which means the use of several resources (methods, data sources and researchers) to examine the same phenomenon.

However, there is also some disadvantages in this method. The process of mixing methods in one study, often requires more resources (time and employees). Furthermore, this type of method is complex to strategy since it needs research training to plan and to describe all aspects of research, including the study sample for qualitative and quantitative portions, timing, and the plan for integrating data.

Integrating qualitative and quantitative data during analysis is often a challenging phase for many researchers and that is why it is considered as one of the biggest disadvantages of this method. The final is that mixed methods studies are labor intensive, and they require better resources and time than those needed to conduct a single method study.

In general terms, this project is based on the qualitative research because it is the most appropriate for the investigation. To research for answers to a question, to collect evidence as well as to describe the data collection and the objectives are part of the qualitative research that the project will develop.

A vital part of an investigation is the author's life and historical context since these two elements shape their literary work. There is a lot to be said about Simone de Beauvoir and how the society she lived in along with her upbringing brought her to create her most famous literary work.

## **The Historical Background of *The Second Sex***

*The second Sex* was the most important job of Simone de Beauvoir and it was published just five years after women in France received the right to vote but they continued with the lack of other basic rights.

In this book, the author wants to explain why a woman experiences inequality and why genre roles depend on social and cultural factors. Beauvoir was certain women had a long way to go in terms of equality, since she considered women equal to men neither a rival nor enemies or antagonists. The book was written only four years after the end of the Second World War while France had only begun its recovery process from the massive loss of human lives, infrastructure, a destroyed economy and everything that involved the reconstruction of a country, not only in regarding the economical and physical reconstruction, but the national identity right after years of Nazi occupation.

### **3.2 Who was Simone de Beauvoir?**

Simone de Beauvoir was one of the most influential feminist thinkers of the 20th century. A novelist, political activist, memoirist, and philosopher, she is most well-known for writing the *The Second Sex* which was revolutionary in its discussions on the role of women in society.

She was one of those women who was not feminine, was an atheist, and had a very particular way of thinking which included not believing in marriage and having children for she considered marriage to be a burden for women. At the time that De Beauvoir wrote *The Second Sex*, women, especially those raised in Christianity, were still regarded as appendices

of men and that is why she and her books were a huge influence in the feminist social movement.

Simone-Ernestine-Lucie-Marie Bertrand de Beauvoir famously wrote, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman”, was considered a pioneer of The Feminist movement during the XX century. She was born in 1908 in France and she grew up in a Catholic family with pretensions to nobility having a Proustian childhood (French novelist Marcel Proust) on the Boulevard Saint-Germain, in Paris. Her father, Georges, lost most of his fortune after World War I and she was the daughter of Françoise, who had never lived without servants, while her Hélène, could not have a marriage with someone of a higher class.

De Beauvoir’s education involved many of the classic philosophical thinkers, from Descartes and Hegel through to Bergson and Nietzsche; influences which were essential in her philosophical and literary works.” When she was 21 years old, Beauvoir was the youngest student ever to pass the *agrégation* in philosophy and she became the youngest philosophy teacher in France”. Between 1927-1928. she graduated in philosophy and while preparing the opposition it was the time when she met Jean Paul Sartre, who was his partner throughout her life. (Utmedu, 2019)

During this time, they started a relationship that they kept until Sartre's death. The two of them were a very peculiar couple for their time because they never married or lived under the same roof, and they also kept out of jealousy relationships with other people. When Sartre died in 1980, she threw herself, distraught, on his grave. She had once said: "Whatever happened between us, I knew that he could never hurt me, except by dying."

De Beauvoir taught philosophy at the Lycée Pierre-Corneille in Rouen where her friend the feminist Collette Audry also taught. In 1947, she was sent by the French government to the United States to give university lectures on contemporary French literature. She travelled many times and wrote several travel diaries about her journeys through China, Italy, and America, which she visited more than once.

In 1943, Simone de Beauvoir began to write her first novel called *The Guest* and later on *Why the Action?* in 1944 and *For a Morality of Ambiguity* in 1947. During the War, she continued writing and *In The Blood of the Others* was the next one in 1944 and *Los Mandarins* in 1954 that reflected issues, such as the political commitment, relationships of love and friendship in trouble, and the necessity of resistance. She also wrote autobiographical works such as *Memoirs of a Young Woman Formal*, *The Fullness of Life* or *La Vejez* 1968. In this last work, she used the same methodology these in *The Second Sex* where she explained the situation of discrimination suffered by the elderly in Western societies.

In 1970 she joined the MFL (Women's Liberation Movement) participating in all their activities and later in 1974, she proposed to create the LDF (League of Rights of Women). When her mother died in 1964, she wrote *A Very Sweet Death* and in 1980 with the death of Sartre, she wrote *The Goodbye Ceremony* a work that represents her last years with Sartre, while *Lettres au Castor* in 1986, where all the letters written by Sartre to Beauvoir. as she wanted to examine the limits of female freedom and explore our deeply beliefs about femininity.

Beauvoir had a privileged position; she had a teaching career, university degree, she interacted with Parisian intellectual circles. The author had never felt much of a sense of injustice or inequality because of her “save life” but she began to realize that people saw her

as Sartre's inferior just because she was female, and when she sat down to write *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir found herself writing what seemed the most essential fact about her personhood: "I am a woman". Simone de Beauvoir died in 1986, aged 78 and she is buried next to Sartre at the Montparnasse Cemetery in Paris.

Some interesting facts about this author are that she lived her whole life in France and besides Coco de Chanel, she is probably the most iconic French woman of the XX century. She graduated from college when she was 17 years old and at the age of 21, she was one of the youngest people to pass the agrégation in philosophy having the second highest grade and only defeated by Jean-Paul Sartre. They both became lovers and they were considered as the Prince and Princess of French intellectual society, but the couple never married or settled.

### 3.3 *The second Sex*

"Beauvoir opened *The Second Sex* saying, you know that battle is over, the battle for suffrage is over, and that wasn't a very important battle. There are much more serious obstacles to women being free. That's all the philosophical stuff that's in *The Second Sex*. Marriage, as an institution, second-rate jobs, household chores, all of which were done by women, all of it, compulsory maternity, illegal contraception."

In 1946, Simone de Beauvoir began one of her most important works called *The Second Sex* which main idea is that woman has been held in a relationship of oppression to man through her relegation to being man's "Other. Its content will mark a whole new stage and a before and after in the history of feminism after World War II and it is the most complete of all the present. *The Second Sex* is considered a kind of "feminist bible," and it relaunches feminism, but not from a political platform. At the beginning, she thought it would be an autobiographical essay explaining why she had tried to define herself as a woman.

She wrote the book in fourteen months at the age of 38 years old and the book was first published in France in 1949, and then the first English edition was published in 1953 with eight-hundred-pages. *The Second Sex* is divided into two volumes; the first refers to “Facts and Myths”, looking at biological, psychoanalytical and historical perspectives and later describing the history of ‘the role of woman’. "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. Is the most famous phrase on this volume and by this, Beauvoir means to destroy the essentialism which claims that women are born "feminine" and that society is an influence a woman.

Volume two is divided into four parts; ‘Formative years’, ‘Situation’, ‘Justifications’ and ‘Towards Liberation’. Beauvoir describes the learning of appropriate femininity and domestic roles. It is noticeable how she criticism the idea of marriage and mentioned the acceptance of lesbianism. “Beauvoir studies the roles of wife, mother, and prostitute to show how women, instead of transcending through work and creativity, are forced into monotonous existences of having children, tending house, and being the sexual receptacles of the male libido. Because she maintains the existentialist belief in the absolute ontological freedom of each existent regardless of sex, Beauvoir never claims that man has succeeded in destroying woman's freedom or in actually turning her into an "object" in relation to his subjectivity”. (Utmedu, 2019)

*The Second Sex* has also a classic of gender studies and can be considered as the starting point of the distinction between gender and sex because the author mentions that while sex constitutes a biological difference, gender is a ‘socialized’ difference, jumping from ‘nurture’ to ‘nature’. Many of the myths she uncovered in biology, psychoanalysis, philosophy, economics, and political theory are as strong today as they were 50 years ago. De

Beauvoir followed an existentialist philosopher pointing out that experience precedes essence and she argues that “One is not born, but rather becomes, woman”. She says that throughout history, woman have been defined as ‘the Other’, an aberration of the ‘natural’ and ‘normal’ male.

“She writes about the problems of sexuality, the exigencies of housework and the ambiguities of reproduction, in a way that makes you feel she wrote the book yesterday. And nowhere is she more hauntingly contemporary as in her descriptions of the 'woman in transition'. 'The women of today,' she wrote, 'are in a fair way to dethrone the myth of femininity: they are beginning to affirm their independence in concrete ways; but they do not easily succeed in living completely the life of a human being. (Maureen Freely, 1999).

The book was not only a scandal because of her philosophical ideas, but as well as the controversy topics she pointed out. She wrote about abortion, lesbianism, sexual initiation, sex, and the body and she said those were philosophical issues. Simone assured that she was perfectly happy not to be womanly, not to be discreet, not to obey codes of decency and to be a woman.

### **3.4 Data Collection Instruments**

Regarding the instrument of the data collection used for this investigation, it is said that the feminist approach is used to analyze books based on the feminist perspective and it shows and proves a new point of view when it refers to the oppression that women have suffered from men. This approach also indicated that feminism is based on three theories which are the literary, sociologies, and feminist, however, this research is only going to analyze the feminist theory and some others that the book present. This data will give the perspective to study the movement behind the theory through literature charts.

Feminist approach has been presented in the whole book, and for this research the background of feminism has been studied in order to understand and analyze the book *Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir. Feminist pointed out, for example, that in nineteenth century fiction very few women worked for living or studied, unless they could support it, but it was difficult to have the approval of their families. Simone de Beauvoir was one of the luckiest one that had the opportunity not only to graduate from university but also to work. That is why she could stand the idea of the women without this opportunity and she states:

“One is not born, but rather becomes, woman. No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine. Only the mediation of another can constitute an individual as an *Other*”.

( De Beauvoir,1949,*The Second Sex*. Pag 330)

In this quote, Simone de Beauvoir claims that being a woman is not a way in which one is born, it is something that a woman becomes. This leaves the interpretation where woman must be understood either as an abstract concept where one feels like a woman, or as a social category. As this is the only credible way to interpret the quote, then again it is noticeable that Simeone de Beauvoir has already made a distinct separation of the physical sex from the social or emotional gender. The Autor calls women the second sex, and by saying this, she proclaims that man is considered to be the standard, even if the woman is defined in relation to the man.

For the further developing of the research, in chapter IV a table will be developed which will contain the following: in the first column quote from the book analyzed, second the theory that most adheres to this quote and finally, a third column with an explanation from the

researcher. This table will be used as an instrument to present the information, and it will be further explained in the following chapter.

Quote	Theory	Researcher's Opinion

## Chapter IV

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the information that has been collected throughout the research data according to the theories that have been studied on the essay *The Second Sex*. Additionally, it includes the process in which the information is analyzed by the researcher and the analysis of passages on the essay supported by literary theories and the feminist approach. As previously highlighted in Chapter II, the researcher is going to use the qualitative method for data analysis in order to understand the relationship among the essay, different author's opinions (theories), and the researcher's point of view.

During a research, the importance of data is visible in each of its steps. Data must be analyzed to find the appropriate approach in order to show accurate results and use it in a correct way during the process. Based on Business Dictionary, data analysis is “the process of evaluating data using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of the data provided. This form of analysis is just one of the many steps that must be completed when conducting a research experiment. Data from various sources is gathered, reviewed, and then analyzed to form some sort of finding or conclusion”. (Businessdictionarycom, 2019)

The following chapter has to do with data analysis of the theory selected versus the literary work chosen to be analyzed. The main objective of this chapter is to provide a broader explanation to the use of Feminism theory previously mentioned in order to give a conclusion to the general objective of this research and a better understanding to the readers. Moreover, the researcher will take a comparative chart that contains three columns and will expand it with her own explanation. The first column contains a quote taken from the text, the second column will explain the theory it falls into, and finally the third column with the researcher's explanation.

#### **4.1 Approaches to the Investigation**

A literary analysis is an opinion. The writer usually forms an opinion about a literary work, then presents that opinion and supports it in the form of an essay. An approach also deals with a particular problem in an investigation and it creates different perspectives that will help people to see and appreciate a literary work as a multilayered construct of meaning.

In literature, an approach shows how or why a particular work is built it and what are its social and cultural implications. It is also an opinion supported by evidence relating to theme, style, setting or historical or political context that becomes essential to the literary work. Besides that, it can include a discussion of the work's content and integrates ideas with other perceptions that have been added in the research.

Literary criticism is not a plot summary nor a biography of the author. It includes types such as biographical, comparative, ethical, expressive, historical, social, etc. As an advantage it can be mentioned that literacy criticism will help the reader to make better sense of the work since he or she will have to form judgments about literature, study ideas from different points of view, and determine individually if a literary work is worth reading.

The subject of investigation for this paper is the famous essay *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir. The researcher looks to demonstrate and to analyze feminism from the feminism approach which is the application of feminist theory in literature. The researcher looks to demonstrate and the analyze feminism from her biography as well as the influence that Simone de Beauvoir has brought into feminist movement. All of these facts will help the reader to look beyond and to be able to find the lack of importance that female had been received and the importance of the essay to women history.

Since the beginning of the essay, Simone de Beauvoir believes a woman should embrace her identity not only as a woman but as a human being. When she talks man and woman being equal, de Beauvoir explains that in terms of the history of feminist theory, it is different since many women still believe they must act like men in order to gain a position in society. She rejects the idea that women must compete with men if they want to be treated as equals or to be in a position of power because she believes that the biological difference between men and women must be acknowledged not only by men but also by society.

De Beauvoir shows in *The Second Sex* how women have been trapped into man's dependency in every area of their lives. For her, woman has no power in culture nor society and it has been society the one in charge of treat women as minority it can be said that this was that reason of why women were absent from the great stories of history, they felt frustrated and they could not take part in public life on an equal position with men. In *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir describes the suppression of woman, defines a method for her liberation, and recommends strategies for this liberation that still have not been implemented nowadays.

According to de Beauvoir's interpretation of history, women have always had to choose between societal integration and personal freedom. In earlier times, a married woman could use her husband's resources and enjoy societal respect. However, by integrating into society through marriage, she also had to give up many rights and freedoms. By contrast, prostitutes lived on the margins of society, often struggled with poverty, and were disrespected by most people. At the same time, they were able to be independent of men in ways that married women were not. In the modern day, this theme continues; de Beauvoir writes that older women gain a certain type of freedom through their age, which excuses them from

domestic and sexual expectations. On the whole, women are either productive members of society who live in semi-slavery, or non-productive and freer. (Gradesaver, 2019)

The relationship between the man and the woman was similar to the relationship a between master and slave; the identity of the woman depended on the identity of the man and she was defined only as reference to the masculine subject Man, however, was defined as essential, woman as inessential; the destiny of men was transcendence, while women were obliged to stay behind the man.

As part of De Beauvoir's ideas, she thought that society viewed women as the "Other" because they are viewed only in relation to men. They are treated as objects of desire for men, as the mothers to the future, and even as the ones who will look after everyone else. For women, there was no individual.

Additionally, the essay shows how the author criticized the institution of traditional marriage, monogamy and the idealized concept of marital love. Regarding to this topic, she emphasizes that household chores are boring and repetitive, and she also mentions the situation of a dependent, traditional, mother wife during the middle society class, who were supposed to be financially independent from their husbands. However, most women, must have recognized in their own lives the weights of the household and parenting, both of which remained their exclusively "feminine" duties.

The Second Sex shows the contradictions and untruths about femininity in regards art, literature, religion, and popular culture. For example, in religion there is a common interpretation of women's inferiority and subordination to men because of the role of women in the Bible and also the assumption that Eve was inferior to Adam.

“Early Christian writers depicted Eve as subordinate and inferior to Adam -- because she was created after and from him -- and as weak, seductive and evil, the cause of Adam's disobedience. Not only was Eve regarded as "the mother of all living things" (the popular etymology derives her name, Havva, from the Hebrew word for life, hayyim), she was also held up as the paradigm for the evil inherent in all women -- except of course for Mary, the mother of Jesus, who later became the paradigm for idealized womanhood”.

#### **4.2 Theories vs Literary Work**

In order to provide supporting data for this research and to increase its validity and credibility, the researcher has investigated and analyzed the different feminist theories that will contribute reaching the objectives of this investigation. It is of great importance for the writer to point out this theory and to justify the correct use of the approach in the investigation; all this is performed to ensure that the study has been done appropriately.

In this investigation, the most important approach is feminism which refers on how literature has represented women and relationships between women and men. It is an analysis from the point of view of feminism and feminist theory. It includes identifying the main female character, their research should focus on the condition of women in society and reevaluating literature and the world in which literature is read it. In this case, the main character is the author, Simone de Beauvoir, as this is an autobiographical biography in form of an essay.

The following table looks forward to analyzing fragments of the stories through the lens of the different feminist theories. In addition, it also includes the researcher's opinion. This table is considered a triangulation process, as it includes a fragment, a theory, and an analysis of the researcher.

<b>Fragment</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Researcher's Opinion</b>
<p>“One is not born, but rather becomes, woman.”</p>	<p>Existentialist Feminism</p>	<p>Existentialist feminism helps to understand the status of woman as ‘other’ clearly and in the essay the author claims being a woman is not a way in which one is born, but rather something one becomes. This is perhaps the most often quoted line from Simone de Beauvoir’s work <i>The Second Sex</i>. It shows that women can be liberated by challenging their feminine destiny; by becoming a self-sufficient being; by becoming intellectuals, and by gaining financial independence. She encourages the freedom of women and says that women do not only create their own</p>

		values, they create themselves.
“If I want to define myself, I first have to say, “I am a woman”; all other assertions will arise from this basic truth”	Existentialist Feminism	The essay pretends to make understand what a woman is and why a woman is a woman and discusses why in societal the concept of “woman” is problematic. This is a very interesting passage because Simone first response to the question "What is a woman?" and then she realizes that she is forced to define herself as a sexed being, in this case if she wants to define herself, she first has to declare: “I am a woman”. It can be thinking that this is a very simple phrase, but it contains a broad background. Beauvoir also insists that we must not look

		at society good, but at individual good.
“Humanity is male, and man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation to himself”	Existentialist Feminism	This passage examines the ways women have been forced to assume second positions on men. From history, there is the assumption that woman is the shadow of men, that they always follow the path than men establish. This can be noticeable from the biological, psychological, philosophical and sociological viewpoints. Additionally, she states that women have always been men’s dependents, and the opinion that the two sexes have never shared the same equality. To support her idea, even in today’s society this thought

		<p>continues with differences such as men hold more high-ranking jobs, earn higher wages, and they still are seen as the stronger and more domineering sex. At the end, Simone argues that it is still a world that belongs to men.</p>
<p>“No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between male and the eunuch that is called feminine”</p>	<p>Cultural feminism</p>	<p>In this fragment, Simone explains that nature has nothing to do with the fact that society is the responsible for the destiny of the woman. Unfortunately, this starts from childhood when parents teach children the separated role that each one has in front of society and it continues nowadays. A sad connotation of this phrase is that the society is the one that defines what feminine means even if</p>

		<p>a woman demonstrates that she is valuable.</p>
<p>“[Woman] is simply what man decrees; thus she is called “the sex,” by which is meant that she appears essentially to the male as a sexual being. For him she is sex — absolute sex, no less. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute — she is the Other.”</p>	<p>Cultural feminism</p>	<p>With this description, de Beauvoir refers to the fact that a woman is a representation of sex and always the differentiation is among man, there is no other way to compare a woman. It also mentions the domination of men and how the women have lost their dignity as a human beings since men become the essential and transcendent, the ones that really matter while women are destined to become the inessential, the objects, the bodies that provide pleasure to men, no value is given to their sexuality. Many women were only used as</p>

		<p>'instruments' for male pleasure rather than as sexual subjects whose desires and pleasure were also taken into account.</p>
<p>“This world has always belonged to males, and none of the reasons given for this have ever seemed sufficient”</p>	<p>Radical Feminism</p>	<p>Taking into account biology, nature and roles of males and females in society and in other animal species, traditionally man is the one with the dominant role. This has been happening since the beginning, the world has been in control by man and unfortunately, society supports that fact that woman is inferior and that neither a job nor the right to vote constitutes true liberty for woman.</p>

<p>“If so few female geniuses are found in history, it is because society denies them any means of expression.”</p>	<p>Social Feminism</p>	<p>This fragment refers to the lack of visibility and opportunity that has been given to women. This is because in history, there have been very few women who have stood out for their achievements. However, this is not due to the little knowledge that people have of them but because society itself has taken charge of “eliminating” them.</p>
<p>“I never asked anyone for anything. I made it on my own”</p>	<p>Liberal Feminism</p>	<p>It is clearly seeing in this passage that Simone was as proud of being self-sufficient. Since the beginning of her life, it was pretty impressive that she was confidence with her knowledge and even her body. She assured that a</p>

		woman does not need a man to be sufficient in any area.
“The destiny that society traditionally offers women is marriage”	Radical and Liberal Feminism	<p>In the Married Woman’s chapter, Simone de Beauvoir discusses that for men, marriage is as a kind of attaching situation, but not a project. A man will simply “take a wife” when he is ready to settle down and thinks he has found a suitable partner; it does not confirm his existence or his right to exist. For men, marriage was a way of life and not a destiny and he could take it for granted but it did not cause problems if they do not get to marry.</p> <p>A woman on the other hand, did not have this freedom, it was her destiny to get married</p>

		<p>otherwise she was seeing as a failure.</p>
<p>“If her functioning as a female is not enough to define woman, if we decline also to explain her through ‘the eternal feminine’, and if nevertheless we admit, provisionally, that women do exist, then we must face the question “what is a woman”?”</p>	<p>Existentialist Feminism</p>	<p>This fragment explains the definition of women in every aspect. Just by asking the <i>question what a woman is</i>, it indicates that something is wrong and that if it is truth the woman exists. Also, according to the author, a man never asks this kind of question because he assumes that he is a man, he has the confidence enough to assure this statement. Asking <i>what a woman is</i> makes them doubt about the existence of the woman and therefore their femininity.</p>
<p>“She follows him where his work calls him: where he works</p>		<p>As per de Beauvoir and the time she was living in, marriage was</p>

<p>essentially determines where they live; she breaks with her past more or less brutally, she is annexed to her husband's universe; she gives him her person: she owes him her virginity and strict fidelity. She loses part of the legal rights of the unmarried woman”</p>	<p>Cultural Feminism</p>	<p>considered to be the ultimate goal for a woman and to be the wife and the mother of someone was more important than her own wishes and desires. Also, women were not allowed to explore the world to gain their independence. There was not freedom for them since male dominated world and they lived in the shadow of man. A woman found it difficult to have an independent world of her own as she is always thought to be dependent on man and there was nothing for her only surrender completely to man.</p>
<p>‘When the woman loves, she must forget her own personality. This is a law of nature. A</p>		<p>On Beauvoir's view, men were raised to expect to be active in the world. Women, however, were taught that</p>

<p>woman does not exist without a master'</p>	<p>Existential feminism</p>	<p>their value was conditionate to men and that they needed to be loved by a man to have worth. She describes that a woman in love tries to see through her beloved's eyes, trying always to be around the man and to please them. For example, with his favorite music, in his ideas, his friends, his politics, etc. The problem with love was that they were not reciprocal, men always had the advantaged and the benefits, and that in when a woman loses her own personality and values. Despite the above, Beauvoir thought a true love was possible in relationships that were reciprocal.</p>
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<p>“No “maternal instinct,” innate and mysterious, lies therein Either”</p>	<p>Existential feminism</p>	<p>De Beauvoir argues that being a mother is not a natural desire or an inclination of women, it is imposed by society. Additionally, she mentions that there is no compassion for woman since she has to suffer pregnancy, hormone change, breastfeeding, etc. She also defends that being mother must always be a choice and that only free motherhood can ensure love and good care of children. Something very interesting from this phrase is that she states that love does not impose itself and even motherhood cannot be imposed since it is a natural inclination and a primordial</p>
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		and inescapable desire in women.
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### 4.3 Themes

First, at all, a clarification needs to be done on regards themes since *The Second Sex* is an essay and not a book and that is why symbols and motifs are not presented. Instead, themes are going to be the main focuses on this thesis. The main common themes refer to social, existentialism and biology fields.

The theme in a story is the basic message or “big idea”. In other words, a theme is a message or abstract idea that emerges from a literary work and it can be expressed in a very general way or as a broad subject. The following table was created to explain the main themes in the essay with an explanation of it.

Theme	Explanation
Woman as Other	The Second Sex is an attempt to answer the basic question ‘What is Woman’? Throughout history, men have differentiated and defined women in reference to themselves, rather than as beings in their own. This means that person is a man, and no more explanation is necessary while a woman must be described as a person of the female sex. As a result,

	<p>Beauvoir says that woman is “the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is Absolute while she is the Other.”</p> <p>In addition, that ‘Other’ can be applied to any group in society that is not considered the ‘main’ group. Simone also explains that men do not feel they have to justify themselves on any objective basis because they have their feeling of superiority from not being women.</p> <p>De Beauvoir observes that in democracies men like to say that they see women as equal but their attitudes on many levels tell a different story.</p>
<p>Is biology destiny?</p>	<p>De Beauvoir shows how science itself helped to reduce the power and potency of the female in favor of the male. In conception, for example, de Beauvoir notes, neither male or female gamete is superior to the other; rather, they both lose their total individuality when the egg is fertilized. The author also explains the woman is from puberty to menopause is at</p>

the mercy of a body changing itself according to reproductive needs, and with a monthly reminder of this. For example, in pregnancy in the early stages, vomiting and loss of appetite or in the case of the hormones that can really affect a woman. In contrast, “the male seems infinitely favored: his sexual life is not in opposition to his existence as a person, and biologically it is normal, without crises and generally without changes.”

A woman’s biological features are therefore the key to understanding her situation in life, but de Beauvoir says, “I deny that they establish for her a fixed and inevitable destiny”. She ensures that biology is not a reason enough for inequality, and also that her physicality does not condemn her to remain subordinate. Another example is physical inferiority that becomes senseless if there is an absence of violence and wars. If society is different, the evaluation of physical attributes changes is as well.

Becoming woman

Beauvoir's famous comment that "One is not born but rather becomes a woman" open this theme. Simone mentions that when you are a child there is no difference between the sexes in terms of what they are capable of. The difference begins when boys are told to be superior and how they need to be prepared for the difficult and heroic path. While pride in his sex is pointed out to him by adults, the girl's sexual anatomy does not receive the same trade. An interesting fact from the text is that Simone points out a sexual difference: the presence of an organ that can be seen and grasped helps man to identify himself and it becomes a kind of alter ego while for the girl it is the doll which becomes the alter ego.

Simone also explains that women are both treasured and reviled for their reproductive function, and that one of the main problems of the female situation is the difficulty reconciling woman's reproductive capacity with her productive capacity. For example,

	<p>when sexual life awake boys are aggressive and grasping whereas for the girl it is often a case of anxious waiting (“She is waiting a Man.”) While boys have the freedom to explore their bodies and enjoy them a female has to wait to the correct man and only have the opportunity to discover her body.</p> <p>De Beauvoir concludes that woman’s character is more molded by her situation. For her, women are not socially independent, but they can form part of the groups governed and defined by men. Any club or social service they set up are all within the framework of the masculine universe. Women has “the freedom” to join or to participate on them if they understand or have a clear notation that men still control the situation and that thy have the power over them.</p>
Society vs Freedom	Beauvoir shows how women’s position in the world is created by society explaining that men create, women maintain. She argues that women are oppressed and made to be inferior

	<p>to males due to society and this simply by the fact that they are women. She notes that men define their own world, and women are merely meant to live in it, meaning that they will be always captivate by man. She sees women as unable to change the world like men can, unable to live their lives freely as men can, but not because they do not want. But because society put man in the first place and woman do not have the opportunity to be more and to change.</p>
Nature vs Nurture	<p>Many women around the world were unable to have any influence over the political, religious or cultural lives because of the society conditions they were lived in. They could not own properties or inherit land. On the other hand, they were treated as mere property themselves. It is really important the opinion the De Beauvoir in the essay as she believes that women inferiority in society is a result not of biological differences (gender or sexuality) but of differences in the breeding of</p>

	<p>man and woman (society). Since society has been dominated by men, they expect for women to fulfill their expectation of what a woman is. She basically blamed humanity of the condition of many woman had and how the society always stopped women in taking opportunities to become better in life.</p>
Transcendence Toward Being	<p>De Beauvoir refers to transcendence as active, creative and projecting and immanence as passive, internal, and centered. She also used the concepts of transcendence and immanence in her work as a broader context of social and cultural oppression of women by men.</p> <p>Transcendence is term is more appropriate for males because they are seen as the creative and active ones while women are placed in positions of constant immanence since they appear more passive and centered.</p> <p>Throughout history, man has denied woman the transcendent role and that is why woman has always been on the shadow of man, being the woman immanence, which leads to the</p>

	<p>imprisonment of the woman. De Beauvoir explains the fact that women have been historically dominated by men and since means creative, positive and powerful.</p>
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## Chapter V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter will present some conclusions obtained by the researcher throughout the complete investigation. The chapter consists of three parts. The first one corresponds to all the conclusions reached by the investigator through the analysis of the essay, *The Second Sex*. The second section corresponds to listing the specific objectives and the explanation of the conclusions reached by the investigator through the analysis performed in the previous chapter. And the third section, which is directed to future students that will like to use this work, whether as a reference for similar studies or as a base to expand the objectives and ideas exposed here. To finish, in this chapter, the researcher provides a series of suggestions to any other researchers that will use this thesis as support material for any future investigations.

#### 5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

The conclusion's purpose is to help the readers to understand the value and importance of the entire study and makes them think on the conclusions they may not have thought about. In other words, as stated by Walden University (2018),

A conclusion is an important part of the paper; it provides closure for the reader while reminding the reader of the contents and importance of the paper. It accomplishes this by stepping back from the specifics in order to view the bigger picture of the document. In other words, it is reminding the reader of the main argument. For most course papers, it is usually one paragraph that simply and succinctly restates the main ideas and arguments, pulling everything together to help clarify the thesis of the paper. A conclusion does not introduce new ideas;

instead, it should clarify the intent and importance of the paper. It can also suggest possible future research on the topic.

For the completion of this thesis, the feminism theories were taken into consideration to supplement the specific objects in which the whole work is based upon. The researcher analyzed the feminist movement and its theories, as well as, remarkable and important women who have contributed, in any or other way, to make visible the women's oppression and inequality. Below, there are the conclusions obtained in this research.

Simone de Beauvoir defended the reaffirmation of the "I am," as she defended her existence as an individual beyond her condition as a woman; as it can be seen in her memories. She also mentioned that it is not about women reaffirming themselves as women, but it is about being recognized as complete human beings. In the essay, there are some remarkable women who have contributed, in any or other way, to make visible the women's oppression and inequality in literature. For example, in this investigation, the researcher has mentioned women such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Gloria Steinem.

The conditions of discrimination represent a lack of possibilities for women. When they were oppressed mainly by men and society, de Beauvoir realized that it was possible for women to be whoever they wanted to resist society. However, there are significant barriers to this kind of self-realization. Women can never be completely free; since as she mentioned, they will come face to face with discrimination at some point and it will be a battle just to be who they are. It takes courage to do that, and not everyone has the means or the resources to break free. More importantly, societal expectations are so ingrained into our thinking that it is difficult to detect them, and that is why de Beauvoir argued that women are free to break from this role and define who they are.

The researcher learned from the analysis and theories applied, that Simone de Beauvoir has been one of the most important feminist theorists since the beginning of the release of her book. Although, *The Second Sex* marked the feminism of the second wave, de Beauvoir's reading led many women to acquire awareness and commitment regarding the situation of oppression. She also encouraged other feminist thinkers that either followed her or got new approaches from hers; the book helped to bring change. Because of the time and the period in which the book was developed, there are stereotyped ideologies about the roles that women may or cannot perform. It is relevant to mention that the author lived in a time of war, so she took her experiences from what she has lived and added them in part of the story of the novel.

It has been learned through the analysis of this essay, that Beauvoir defended rights that at the time were considered politically incorrect; as for example, the right of women to work, to contraception, to free abortion, to participate fully in society, which are rights that, on the other hand, have continued to be important, but are not always respected. Simone de Beauvoir was one of the first women to attempt a philosophical explanation and, therefore, a theory of the subordination of women, both socially and individually. She tried to explain the word "a woman" in a philosophical way and going through the different discourses and knowledge about that object, this why she becomes a reference for the feminist movement.

The researcher has also concluded that besides the feminist movement, other examples of that can be found in the essay. For instance, there is the second wave of feminism, which was concerned with studying how female characters were treated by males and society in general, and situations real women faced at the time. The feminist theory was presented in this wave with de Beauvoir, who played a major role in raising the Women's Liberation.

The following is also a good example of how the feminist theory has been applied during the research project and how de Beauvoir raised her voice through her letters. As stated by Simone de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex*, 1949),

The woman who is shut up in immanence endeavors to hold man in that prison also; thus the prison will become interchangeable with the world, and woman will no longer suffer from being confined there: mother, wife, sweetheart are the jailers. Society, being codified by man, decrees that woman is inferior: she can do away with this inferiority only by destroying the male's superiority. She sets about mutilating, dominating man, she contradicts him, she denies his truth and his values. But in doing this she is only defending herself; it was neither a changeless essence nor a mistaken choice that doomed her to immanence, to inferiority.

The researcher has also found not only that a literary analysis can be performed through the feminist approach, but also that the amount of theories that exist can help to provide an expansion to the hypothesis. Additionally, the researcher was able to gain knowledge, as the stories were analyzed through feminists' theories and literary elements highlighted in the project. For the above reason, the researcher considers that *The Second Sex* is related with the characteristics of the Feminist Approach, and also that it was the perfect fit to deconstruct and analyze the character, themes, and other literary devices that evidence feminist theories in this research project.

## **5.2 Specific Objectives**

At the beginning of this research project, specific objectives were clearly established. Therefore, it is also important to provide and analyze the way in which they were accomplished through the investigation and developing of this research. Following, the

researcher will enumerate the specific objectives that helped her to complete this work. These were obtained through the feminist approach that the investigator utilized for this investigation. The three objectives that were considered in the development of this work are the following.

### **5.2.1 Identify the role of women in the social context of that time.**

The first objective was achieved through the analysis and the acquisition of knowledge of the feminist approach. Since the beginning of the research project, the role of women in their social context has been studied; as for example, the Historical Background of *The Second Sex* and how the author wanted to explain why a woman experiences inequality, and why genre roles depend on social and cultural factors. It is important to mention that de Beauvoir dedicated the first part of her work to "Facts and Myths." Meanwhile, the second one, "Lived experience," is oriented to the treatment of the stages of life of women as children, youth, and then it analyzed the prototype of lesbians, the different situations of mothers, prostitutes, among others, without forgetting the feminine models.

Another example that proves that this objective was achieved, can be found in the explanation of the history of The Waves of Feminism and how the author excelled in the second one. Finally, it can be stated that women's roles in the years before the second wave of feminism and the present, are the background of the book and a timeline of the women who inspired and continue to inspire the feminism movement, such as Mary Wollstonecraft, Helene Cixous, and Gloria Steinem. The latter dedicated her life to the cause of women's rights, as she led marches and toured the country as an in-demand speaker.

### **5.2.2 Determinate the author's points of view and her influences.**

The second objective aimed to demonstrate that *The Second Sex* is mainly full of feminism. As it was mentioned before, de Beauvoir advocated for the women's rights and freedom from a philosophical point of view. Moreover, *The Second Sex* was influenced by Sartre and Friedrich Engels' philosophy, in laying the theoretical foundations of feminism and topics, such as feminist issues of racism, motherhood, and lesbian identity.

This objective was achieved through the analysis of the story and by using the precepts of the feminist theory. In addition, the theories used to develop and make this work more comprehensive are the different types of feminism, which are social feminism, liberal feminism, radical feminism, and post-modern feminism. Some of them contain important features that were considered into the investigation; others were taken as guidelines to be able to make a comparison throughout the whole work; and some others were used as a reinforcement of the researcher's general knowledge to improve the investigation.

Additionally, through this feminism theory, the researcher is aware of Simone de Beauvoir's statement, when she said that one becomes a woman. She is right to identify societal expectations and pressures as the cause of women's oppression, and although she made it seem like women can be whatever they want to be, there is still a problem with the existentialism in general that does not allow women to achieve this. The problem with being a woman is, that she cannot live without the other gender. She coexists with the gender that marginalizes and stereotypes her, because women come to love men. De Beauvoir showed through a feminism approach that this is not correct, and she explained in detail what a woman has to do or not in these cases.

### **5.2.3 Identify importance and contributions of the book *The Second Sex* for the feminist movement.**

Finally, the third objective analyzed the importance and contribution of *The Second Sex* for the feminist movement. Simone de Beauvoir was aware that, until the twentieth century, the history of women had been told by men. Consequently, perhaps that is why she wanted to record her own history, making it a showcase, so that there would be no doubt. De Beauvoir represented freedom, to be the owner of her actions, of her own life, and of her own destiny, and for that nothing better than to establish a loving relationship with herself. As well, she taught to a whole generation of women that their destiny did not have to go through marriage or a subordinate relationship to a man.

In the years before the women's movement, *The Second Sex* was a source of inspiration and insight for many women. It changed the life of women, since it was something new and fresh in the feminist movement. A fundamental contribution of the book is that women started wondering about what is to be a woman and continued asking "How will the fact of being women has affected our lives? What precise opportunities have been given to us, and which ones have been denied? What destiny awaits our younger sisters, and in which direction should we point them?" (Beauvoir, 2013, p.30). From these questions, the author denounced inequality of treatment, status, and social conditions between men and women that are applicable to the current reality.

An example that proves the that third objective was achieved by the researcher, is that Beauvoir's analysis of sexism is perhaps her most powerful theoretical contribution to feminism, since she argued that a man is universal and a woman is particular; in other words, he is the One and she is the Other. Women, therefore, found themselves placed in a position where they are faced with the "choice" between being imprisoned in their femininity and being obliged to an abstract subject.

The objectives of this investigation demonstrated that in *The Second Sex*, the author offered information to reflect on the role of women and the need for their independence. For these reasons, the text has been considered as the bible of feminism and Beauvoir was undoubtedly the one referring to the feminist movement.

At the end of this research project, there are three main conclusions that have to be mentioned. *The Second Sex* not only overcame the proof of time as such essay crossed oceans and became famous in America and many countries in Europe, but also Beauvoir had a vision of the future considering that a change in the social order was necessary and that women needed to transform their passivity into a more active role, being protagonists of their own history and their freedom. Even nowadays, it gives a great contribution not only to the female literature, but to feminism itself. De Beauvoir will be remembered as one of the activists who contributed the most to chart a path towards real equality among genders. Her philosophy has been adopted by millions of women around the world and she has inspired feminist activists such as Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and Kate Millett.

Secondly, it cannot be failed to mention that history has given reasons to the writer, because *The Second Sex* is considered as the bible of feminism. De Beauvoir not only impelled feminism, but also, she expressed through her words and thoughts what many women were not able to. She dared everything, even with the title, to talk about women as maybe nobody had ever done it and she did it on behalf of many women, who could not speak out of fear or because they had really come to feel part of the second sex.

Many years have passed since this revolutionary book was published, and now women are on the Forbes's lists of millionaires; they have won Nobel prizes, they are women who have taken personal decisions about their motherhood; they openly live their sexuality; decide if they want to directly or indirectly exercise their role as housewives; they handle planes and

go everywhere; they lead countries; they influence nuclear agreements; they define whether a country stays in an economic block or not; and, their decisions on whether or not interest rates rise can affect the economic direction of countries. And thanks to women such as Simone de Beauvoir is that many women have the opportunity to feel free and to express themselves.

Lastly, it is important to take into account that de Beauvoir never put the woman before the man. She did not attack man or wanted it to look like a power struggle. What de Beauvoir tries to teach through her essay is the problem that society has when it comes to making reference to women and men. She mentions that "man is not the enemy," the issue is equality and that feminism did not pretend that women were the opposite of men; they sought to be a true "other" and the recognition of their particularity as a gender and not only as the opposed to masculine. From Simone de Beauvoir's point of view, the work of feminism was to transform society and women's place in it; therefore, she mentions that, "Just as I do not believe that women are inferior to men by nature, nor do I believe that they are their natural superiors either" (Simone de Beauvoir, 1976).

#### **5.4 Restatement of the Research Question**

The researcher has concluded that the investigation was accomplished successfully in its approach of Feminism and theories applied to the objectives, which were properly proven with examples taken directly from the book. The research question; What is the most significant contribution of Simone de Beauvoir to the feminist movement before and now? was effectively demonstrated since the beginning of the project, where the achievements of de Beauvoir in the second wave of feminism were mentioned, as well as the contribution of other writers of the time and de Beauvoir's scope in the present, since her essay is a source of inspiration for many women around the world. It is considered that de Beauvoir is a pioneer of

liberal feminism and her book is a reference to feminism from all times. In general, the characteristics of the approach helped to connect the points that the investigator wanted.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

In any research, it is important to provide some advice, so that further researchers know in advance the areas that need to obtain more attention and what aspects need to be improved. Due to the nature of this research, recommendations will be focused on the literary research with the purpose of facilitating some advice as tools to future researchers and let them know in advance which areas require more attention and which ones can be improved to obtain a successful investigation. The recommendations will be focused on literary investigations, since this investigation was a literary analysis.

First, it is recommended to read the essay that is being analyzed several times before the research starts. The first time will help to have a general view of the written work. This is because de Beauvoir's thoughts are not easy to understand from the beginning, and since this is a philosophical book, it can be difficult for the reader to understand what she is saying, and also to be focused on the text. The second time will help to reinforce what was learned the first time, and to identify some concepts presented in the essay. Then, the third time will help to obtain specific information, such as characteristics of the author, approach, or different analyzed theories.

Another important recommendation is to research the context and time in which the novel was originally written, as it will help to have a better understanding of the vocabulary used at that time. *The Second Sex* was written in 1949 and even if there are updated versions in the last years, sometimes it is difficult to visualize what the author is talking about or to assimilate that women were so oppressed. If needed, it can also be helpful to look for

different versions of the book and analyze them to see which version is preferred by the reader.

Depending on the version the reader has, the book can be of about 600 and 900 pages. In this case, time will be an aspect to consider when preparing the research; therefore, it is fundamental to prepare the investigation with more time in advance, so that the researchers will not find themselves without time for the analysis, which also affects the reliability of the results presented towards the last chapters of the research. Finally, the researcher must really believe in the approach used to analyze the literary work; since, it is important to work with a book of your preference and a topic of interest, as this motivates the researcher and it will lead to a successful research, being this also interesting for the audience.

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# **Annexes**