



FEMINIST CRITICISM: THEORY, LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Dr Nilanjana Chatterjee

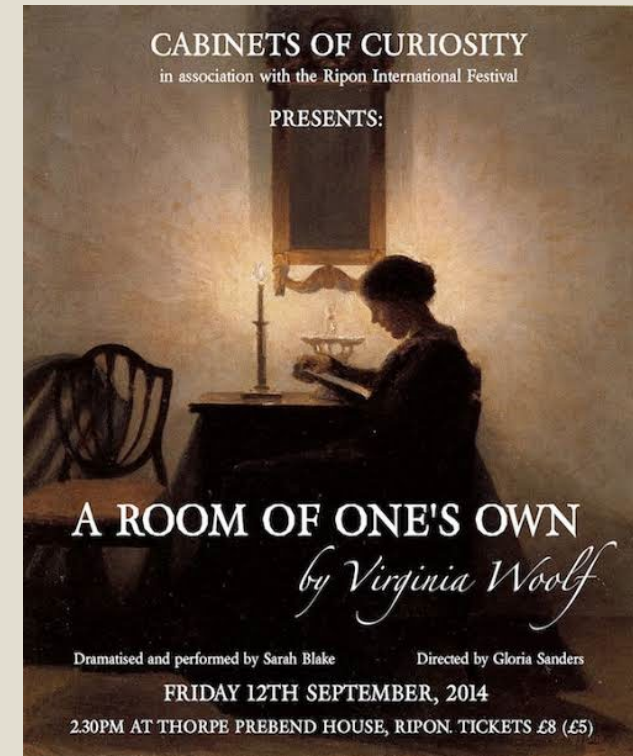
Content of the Lecture

- 1. First Wave Feminism
- 2 Second Wave Feminism – a) Anglo American Feminist and b) French Feminist
- 3. Marxist Feminism
- 4. Contemporary Feminism(s) / Third Wave Feminism
 - A. Post Colonial Feminism/ Third World Feminism
 - B. Black Feminism
 - C. Lesbian Feminism
 - D. Ecofeminism
- 5. Post Feminist Era
- 6. Fourth Wave Feminism
- 7. Feminism during the Covid 19 Pandemic



<https://youtu.be/E8czs8v6PuI>

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)



The book cover features a black and white profile photograph of Simone de Beauvoir. The title 'Simone de Beauvoir' is printed in white serif font on a magenta horizontal band. Below this, the title 'THE SECOND SEX' is printed in large, white, all-caps serif font on a red horizontal band. At the bottom, a teal band contains the text 'A new translation of the landmark classic by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier / Introduction by Judith Thurman' in white sans-serif font.

Simone de Beauvoir

<https://youtu.be/Aekr?sLbVhQ>

THE SECOND SEX

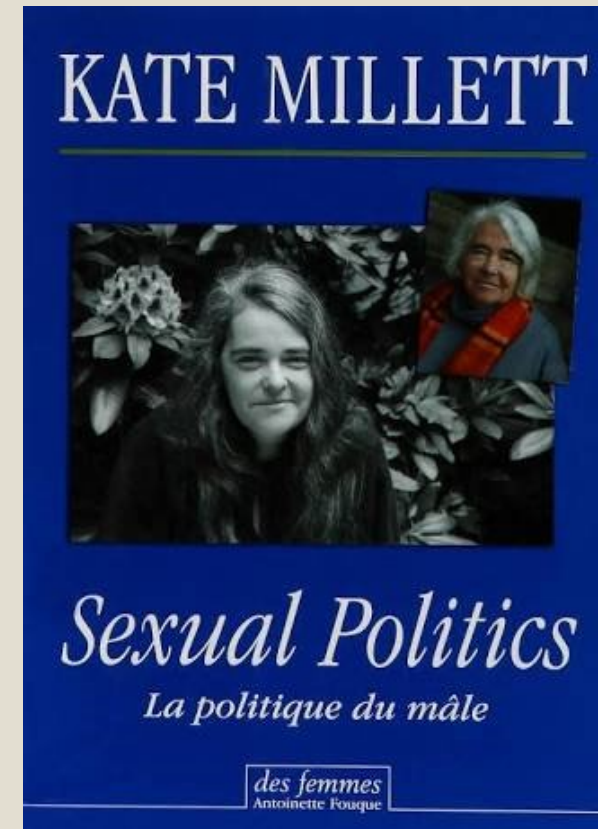
A new translation of the landmark classic by Constance Borde and
Sheila Malovany-Chevallier / Introduction by Judith Thurman

Simone de
Beauvoir (1908-
1986)





Kate Millett (1934-2017)



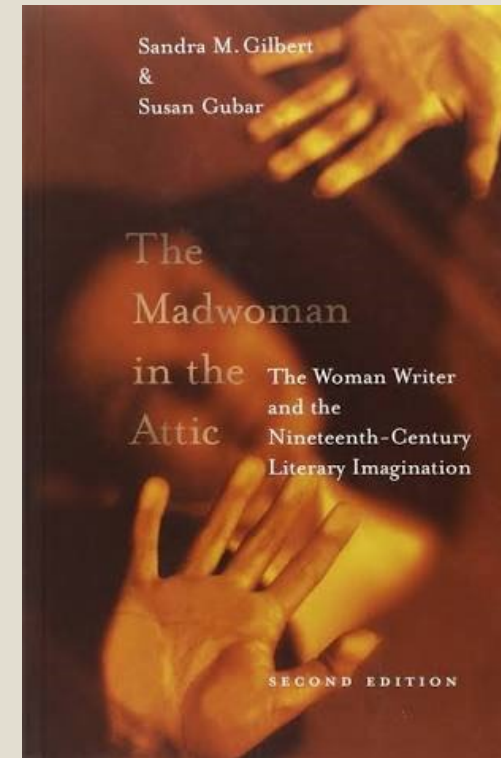


Criticism by Marxist Feminist Cora Kaplan

- 1. Problems of women homogenised, universalised
- 2. Removes Feminism from Class Struggle
- 3. Avoids economy altogether



Anglo American Feminism and Literature: Gilbert and Gubar (1979)



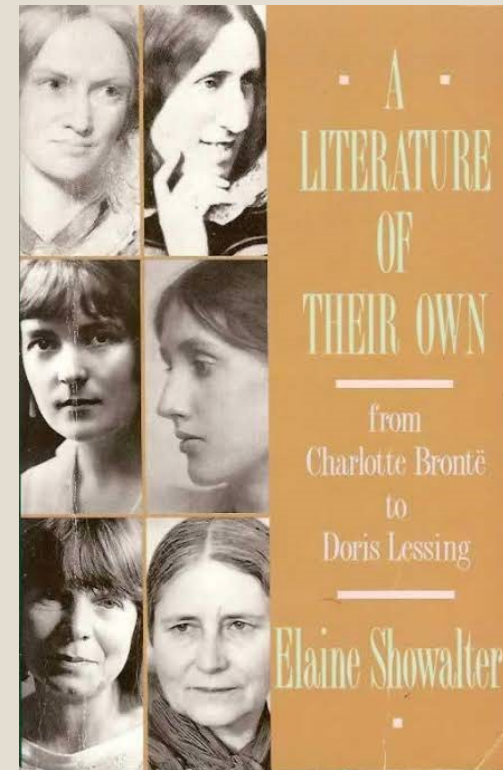


Women in the Novels of 19th c. British Woman Writers

- 1. Difficult to challenge Patriarchy
- 2. Therefore, conformed to Patriarchy
- 3. Yet challenged Patriarchy by creating a) anti-heroines and b) witches



Elaine Showalter(1941-)



Three Phases of Women Writing

Phases

- Elaine Showalter, one of the leading feminine critics in the U.S., came up with these three phases:
 1. "Feminine" phase (1840-1880)
 - Women writers imitated the dominant tradition
 2. "Feminist" phase (1880-1920)
 - Women advocated rights and protested
 3. "Female" phase (1920-present)
 - Rediscovery of woman's' texts and women

French Feminism: Influenced by Post Structuralism, Psychoanalysis, Post Modernism





Lacanian Influence

Three stages of life according to Lacan

- **Imaginary stage** the stage of wholeness, or totality
- **Mirror stage** the stage of split/ mirrors himself and herself
- **Symbolic stage** the stage of post- language acquisition stage

How human unknowingly enter into man-made language network ?

The imaginary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Pre-linguistic, pre-Oedipal stage-No clear distinction between the subject and an object, or between itself and the external world.
The mirror stage	<p>The moment when the infant learns to identify with his or her image in a mirror, and so begins a sense of a separate self.</p>
The symbolic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-After the acquisition of language, “the law of the father”-the infant subject assimilates the inherited system of linguistic differences (male/female, father/son, mother/daughter).



Helene Cixous (1937 -)

Écriture féminine

- Écriture féminine, literally women's writing, is a philosophy that promotes women's experiences and feelings to the point that it strengthens the work.
- 'Écriture féminine places experience before language, and privileges the anti-linear, cyclical writing so often frowned upon by patriarchal society' - Cixous

Julia Kristeva (1941 -)



Two Interdependent Aspects of Language

- **Language:**
- **Semiotic (parallel to Imaginary and Mirror Stage)** **Symbolic**
- **Poetry** **Prose**
- **Genotext** **Phenotext**
- **Body of the Mother** **Body of the Father**
- **Symbolic Stage must be disrupted, Phenotext must be ruptured. Both male and female writers can practice Phenotext. Ex: Avant-garde writings, Post- Modern writings**



Luce Irigaray (1930 -)





Alice
Jardine
(1951 -)

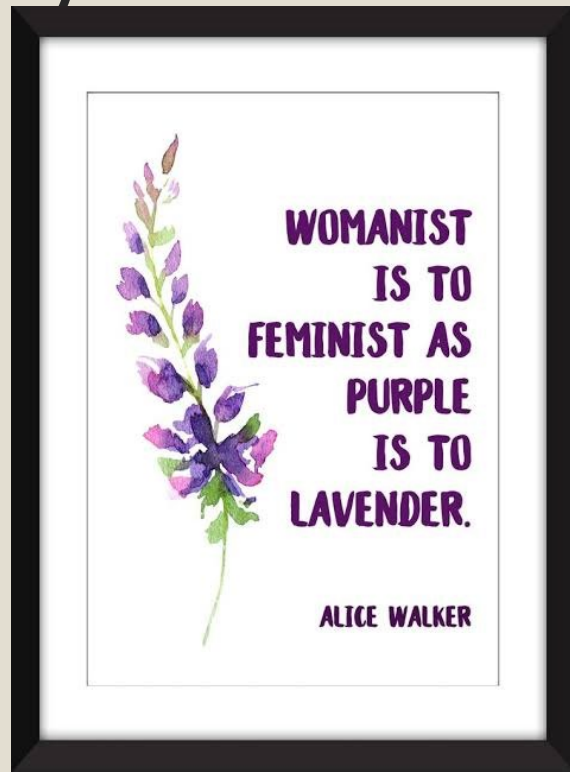


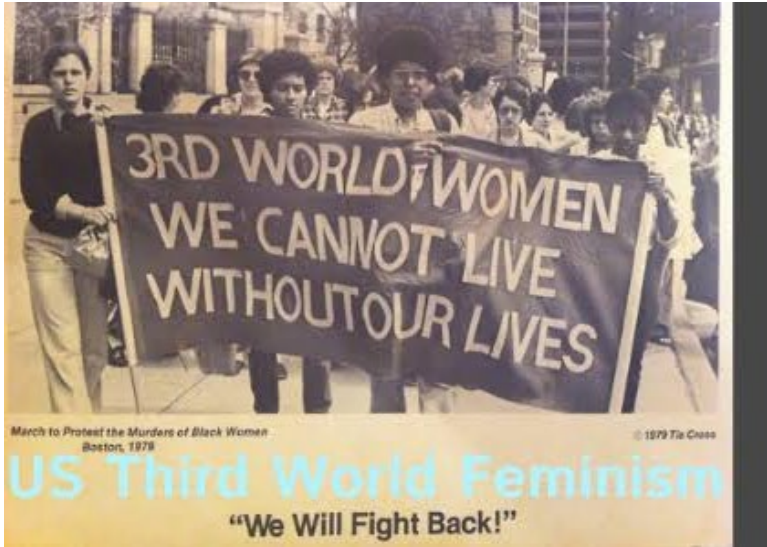
GYNESIS

CONFIGURATIONS OF
WOMAN AND MODERNITY

ALICE A. JARDINE

Black Feminism (Womanism): Walker (1944 -)





Post Colonial/ Third World Feminism

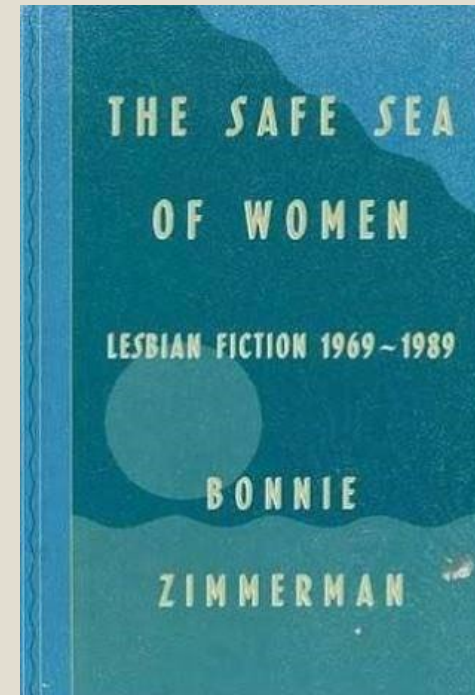
- Sara Suleri

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

Are you trying to uphold
oppressive binary gender
standards? Because that's
how you uphold oppressive
binary gender standards

Lesbian Feminism
Essays Opposing Global
Heteropatriarchies

Lesbian Feminist Criticism



Postfeminism

1970s – Present Day

Context

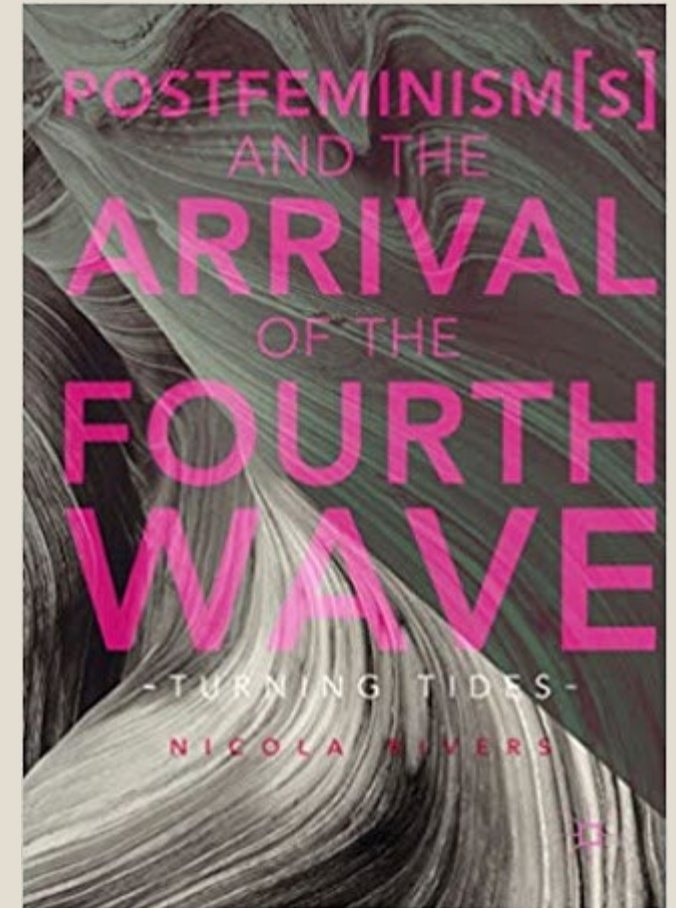
Postfeminist's assume that equality has been more or less achieved and women are no longer victimised by a patriarchy.

Key Issues

- Postfeminism is the back-lash to feminism.
- Empowerment does not have to bow to traditional feminist ideals
- The idea of women exercising agency emerges
- Postfeminism suggests discourse of independence and self definition for women widely inform popular culture.
- Views that separate the sexes rather than unite them are sexist rather than feminist

Fourth Wave Feminism

Queer Issues
Sex positive
Trans Positive
Anti-misandrist
Body Positive
Digitally Driven



Feminism During Covid-19

can woman say no to enforced ways of living conditions?

Parenting, Homeworking,
Homeschooling?

Institutional relationships
Community, care and ethics?

Home as a contested space?

Migrant woman workers,
woman refugees,
transnational woman workers
or family member ?

