

Simone de beauvoir

Philosophy



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Running Head: SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR, THE SECOND SEX Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex

Simone de Beauvoir was one of the greatest French existentialists, philosophers and writers of last century. She was born on January 9, 1908 in Paris to

Georges Bertrand de Beauvoir and Franoise (ne) Brasseur. Simone de Beauvoir was

one of few philosophers and writers, who got the opportunity to work alongside other

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famous existentialist philosophers including Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and

Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Beauvoir produced a rich corpus of writings including works on

ethics, feminism, fiction, autobiography, and politics. De Beauvoir taught high school

while developing the basis for her philosophical thought between 1931 and 1943.

Following in the tradition of the 18th century 'gadfly' philosopher's, De Beauvoir used

her background in formal philosophy to voice her sentiments on feminism and

existentialism. Her most famous and significant philosophical work is "The Second

Sex (Le Deuxième Sexe)," heralded a feminist revolution and remains to this day a

central text in the investigation of women's oppression and liberation (Mussett, 2006,

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para. 1-23).

The *Second Sex* was written by her in 1949 and in which de Beauvoir traced the

development of male oppression through historical, literary, and mythical sources,

attributing its contemporary effects on women to a systematic objectification of the male

as a positive norm. "The Woman in Love" is one of the chapters of *The Second Sex*. The

main argument of "The Woman in Love" is the love theme for man and woman and their

conceptions about love. According to Simone de Beauvoir's point of view, both genders

have totally different concepts of love. For man, love means the total possession of his

beloved while maintaining his identity as a sovereign subject. For woman, 'to love is to

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relinquish everything for the benefit of a master. Without a master, a woman is a

scattered bouquet' (Parshley, p. 608). Beauvoir's argument about love was also supported

by great philosophers like Byron and Nietzsche. She further reiterates that the difference

in conception of love for men and woman, is in accordance with the laws of nature, 'it is

not the individuality of this one or that one which attracts them to think so. According

to her although love plays a very significant role in women's life yet it has a very smaller

place in their life and in reality it acts as a mirage and it is too late when a woman realizes,

it is too late as her strength has been exhausted in a losing venture.

Simone de Beauvoir expresses that generally women reincarnate their childhood,

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adulthood, her dreams and ambitions through love and they expect that love will give

back her family and childhood. Through love she wants to recover a roof over her head,

walls that prevent her from feeling her abandonment in the wide world, authority that

protects her against her liberty. Love sentiment also plays a vital role in reconciling the

majority of women harmonic eroticism and egotism. Although this sentiment on one side,

strongly opposes a woman sexual destiny as it makes herself only a carnal object of

sexual satisfaction- a wild intoxication followed by indescribable disgust and it strongly

challenges her self-worship and self-esteem yet it also acts as a light in darkness, a magic

of eroticism tinged with mysticism and leads to masochism(Parshley, pp. <https://assignbuster.com/simone-de-beauvoir/>

611-615).

Simone de Beauvoir further adds that the supreme goal of human love, as of

mystical love is identification and total submission with love one and the best pleasure

or happiness of love for a woman in love is to recognize herself as a part her beloved. She

loves to share his prestige and reigns with him over the rest of world.

Unfortunately a

man is not a God and has tendency to commit a mistake or has a false move. And

from this fact are to come the unfortunate torments of woman in love.

Additionally any

decline in warmth love sentiment on behalf of her beloved, can turn her to masochistic

madness and all her narcissism can be transformed into self-disgust, into humiliation, into

hatred of herself, which can drive her to self-punishment (Parshley, pp. 615-
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616).

Simone de Beauvoir also gives her views about total possession of male, acceptance of his obligations, mutual love and the fundamental difference in the feelings

of both sexes. According to her genuine love out to be founded on the mutual recognition

of two liberties; the lovers would then experience themselves both as self and as other

and together they would manifest values and aims in the world ((Parshley, pp. 620-631).

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