

Gender, race, and philosophy

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Philosophy of women Number Philosophy of women Philosophy of women, especially during the 20th century contributed immensely towards their emancipation from male dominance in society. Popular French philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex*, has successfully portrayed women as equally capable as men. Beauvoir noted that being man or woman poses no strength or weakness (Solomon, & Higgins, 2013). Therefore, by arguing that women have the capacity to make equally meaningful societal contributions as men eventually resulted in women being allowed to vote and vie for leadership positions since the contemporary times.

The main traditional, philosophical discourse had been that women were lesser human beings than men. But after feminist philosophers had demonstrated that women too had the capacity to do virtually anything men could do during the second half of the 20th century, predominantly male societies have over the history gradually given women more options in individual and social life (Solomon, & Higgins, 2013). It is then arguable that de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* has had tremendous impacts on women's rights and gender roles by allowing women more authority over their reproductive, educational, career and suffrage rights among others.

Apart from de Beauvoir, Schick and Vaugh (2008) said, Mahatma Gandhi was one of the most prominent 20th century figures in India who is credited for acknowledging women's efforts as imperative to every society. Gandhi had a soft spot for women. He perceived them as complementing men's contribution in the growth of society. Gandhi castigated stereotyping women as weak and lesser by refusing child marriage and obsession for dowry as well as seclusion (purdah). He, however, believed that proper gender roles demanded that a woman meets the interests of her husband, family and

society, in that order.

References

- Schick, T., & Vaugh, L. (2008). What is your philosophy? In Doing philosophy: An introduction through experiments. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Solomon, R., & Higgins, K., (2013). The Big Questions: A Short Introduction to Philosophy. New York: Cengage Learning.