

# DOWNLOAD PDF MADNESS AND (SELF-)DECEPTION IN SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S LA FEMME ROMPUE

## Chapter 1 : Table of contents for Simone de Beauvoir's fiction

*Beauvoir had received many letters from women in such a position and what makes this collection so distinctive is that she had detected self-deception ('mauvaise foi') in many of these letters and set out to illustrate the phenomenon.*

This excess is an expression of the failure of a necessary mutual relationship between the two, which results in abject discourse. See Bair for full details of the terms of its rejection and its effect on Beauvoir. This return of the repressed mad woman is accompanied by a parallel emergence of the first-person female narrative voice – or rather, a re-emergence – as the female *je* is the prevalent voice in *Quand prime*, but had almost vanished thereafter until later in her career. The vocabulary and the imagery evoked therein draws from a coarse sexual lexicon, both oral and colloquial: The text rushes breathlessly and headlong through passages and pages of words with little punctuation or pause, and this produces an emotional effect on the reader. Grammatical norms and conventions are not just transgressed, but flouted. Full stops are often missing where needed to produce meaningful sentences, and while ellipses, colons, semi-colons, question marks and exclamation marks are used liberally, interestingly, the story contains just one comma Beauvoir, p. This syntax and grammar produce a staccato, disjointed discourse that is largely devoid of subordinate clauses or logical connectives that would impose order and coherence on the language and logic therein. The mad and the poetic are often aligned, and there are aspects of the poetic here. This is not a poetry of logic, but rather the disordered excess of a poetics of chaos and anarchy. This excessive quality of language can be read as an unusual combination of both semiotic and Symbolic excess, to use the terms of post-lacanian psycholinguist Julia Kristeva. Kristeva makes it clear that these dispositions are mutually dependent in the signifying process. The text displays Symbolic excess disordered by a corollary semiotic excess: Meaning is not produced in a clear, logical, coherent way, nor does it emerge from openness and silences, as may be read in more predominantly semiotically-oriented texts. Meaning rather attacks the reader as words swamp the text and swamp each other, producing signification but also considerable ambiguity. The vengeful, spiteful spirit of the monologue is forewarned in the Flaubertian epigraph to the story: This internalization of the external is highlighted early in the narrative. Because she has no one else to speak to, she must speak to herself: There is a deafening silence in the litotic construction that evokes the positive sound of the silence of a world that is busy communicating with one another, but refusing to communicate with her: Beauvoir gives her didactic authorial desires away repeatedly, but explicitly in *Tout compte fait* when she writes: The danger, of course, is that the reader may discern an alternative truth in her writing rather than the one that was intended. See Suzanne Dow for a fuller discussion of the issue of authorial control and *La femme rompue*. *Je ne le supporte pas*. Yet, because it is a return, the Symbolic cannot be forgotten or effaced entirely; it remains noisily present outside, mocking and rejecting the narrator. This makes her room an asylum, a linguistic womb within which she desires wholeness, and reunion with the daughter. She imagines this form of expression, this exit, from her idios: *Je devrais raconter ma vie*. Murielle is trying to struggle with and in language, but this attempt is failing, and the reasons for the failure may lie in her abject self-loathing. With her daughter Sylvie dead, having lost custody of her son, Francis, and being separated from her husband Tristan, Murielle is no longer fully a mother or a wife. She has lost her maternal status, both in the Symbolic realm of the socio-linguistic and in the affective, semiotic domain her relations with Francis are now cold and formal. The transgressive language here allows for some ambiguity between having nothing and being nothing. The seduction of the mad discourse of the fictional form and of mad discourse itself may arguably have revealed more than the author intended. But they are the corporeal waste of others, not her own, as she is obsessive-compulsive about hygiene and cleanliness, obsessed with purity, revolted by dirt and contamination: This condemnation, this stain, and her revulsion thereof is a symptom of her self-loathing. Far from reveling in her abject isolation, Murielle desperately wants to recover her status and role as a mother: Beauvoir describes Murielle as an extreme case: That is partly the point. That much is clear. For a teenage girl to commit suicide by taking an

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overdose of pills is an extreme feature of the plot. But two points need to be made: Yet the words are in fact so vague and ambiguous that they can hardly be read as conclusive – they would constitute poor evidence in a court of law. There is so much we do not know or understand about the life and motivations of this deeply unhappy, deeply bitter woman and about the support or lack thereof to help her recover from the traumas of her own abusive childhood. Reading between the ambivalences of the text, we see that it is madness that incriminates Murielle; but it is also madness that exposes the injustice of her situation: Sylvie shut herself up in her room, closing herself off from communication with others in the same way that Murielle in part voluntarily, in part involuntarily has been shut away and shut up. The injustice of this perspective has arguably robbed her of her daughter, and made her mad. There is some communication, however dysfunctional, with her husband, Tristan, and their relationship is not wholly severed. They are separated and estranged, but not divorced. This monologue is one that Monique can re-read and analyze and, in consequence, she has the ability to achieve lucidity and to recover. The possibility for future feminine Symbolic production remains open. Monique is not the abject objet chu. We can read this final story, therefore, as a recuperation for the mad woman, and, specifically, the mad mother; and, too, as a way to offer Beauvoir, Murielle, and the reader, a way out of vengeful mad discourse through the practice of self-reflective writing and reading by women. Anne, ou quand prime le spirituel. *The Novels of Simone de Beauvoir. Folie, monologue et nouvelle: The Discourse of Madness. French Studies*, 56 3 ,

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### Chapter 2 : Alice Jardine " Interview with Simone de Beauvoir | laph Italia

*Critical approaches to Simone de Beauvoir's final fiction, La Femme rompue, have over the past fifteen years moved from an adoption of Beauvoir's reading to a more critical awareness of her use of language.*

Melancholy is characterized by a heightened sense of both despondency and exhilaration compared with depression. She also argues that melancholy is irreversible on its own and only responds to antidepressants. Still, she is quick to point out that the border between the two remains blurred and hence ill defined. This analysis propels us to conclude that the real sense of loss pertains to the loss of her personal identity. Even though this may seem unoriginal, it must be stressed that Monique ironically mourns the loss of an identity that insured her own self-destruction. In other words, her original self-identity had been constructed as a means to discourage development, and the break-up of her marriage curiously does not destroy her, but rather motivates her to put herself back together in new ways. Third, I will show that while Monique may not seem at first glance to gain from psychotherapy, she does so in an unorthodox way that resembles a cathartic experience. Related to this position, this article does not simply argue that journaling is therapeutic, which would hardly be a novel idea. Instead I concentrate on how journaling is therapeutic. For Kristeva, literary representations which must include diaries are about catharsis and less about elaboration, awareness of the psychic causes of suffering. For de Beauvoir, the diary is first about elaboration and then about catharsis. *Rompue* means broken, not destroyed. When we first meet Monique, she is brimming with happiness. She is proud and satisfied for having dedicated her life to her husband and daughters. Her contented state is reflected in her description of a blissful vacation alone in southern France, while her husband is off attending a conference. Upon her return to Paris, however, she learns directly from him that he has been having an affair. He also confesses in passing that he has had one extra-marital affair after another for the last eight years; and yet she had considered their relationship to be defined by transparency. The beginning of her depression is a refusal to feel depressed. Further, she still remains blind to the reality around her, to the role she plays; melancholy on the other hand draws reality into focus. Freud. Slowly, the role she plays and has always played of pleasing others, of ignoring her own needs, and of deceiving herself becomes unbearable. This type of inner dialogue is the first sign that Monique is actually falling into a state of melancholy. Her self-scolding suggests that she reproaches and vilifies herself for the person she had become in the past. She sees a psychiatrist, who allegedly manipulates her feelings. She quickly renounces psychotherapy; cuts off all contact with her friends and family; and turns to alcohol and drugs. Again, this is an example of turning aggression toward the ambivalently and unconsciously held lost object her husband into animosity toward her self. To understand this final statement, it is necessary first to examine the antecedents of her current breakdown. More specifically, it is important to explore facets of the self that she is trying to destroy. Put more succinctly, she descends into an abyss, hoping to rid herself of an inauthentic self, to wipe the slate clean and to become fundamentally who she is. There are two main personality traits that set the stage for self-deception. She plays the role of the *Mater Dolorosa* and the role of a child. The weeping woman is exemplified by the icon of Mary at the foot of the cross, shouldering the emotional responsibility for the crucifixion of Christ, while the men wipe their hands clean of the crime. If Monique defines herself by an absolute dedication to others, she simultaneously ignores her own development. Her internal conflict involves balancing an ethic of responsibility for others with the demands of personal integrity. This conflict is summarized by these comments: She chances upon an orphan teenage girl in the streets and quickly becomes her advocate, or better yet, her surrogate mother, after having already devoted an entire life to two daughters of her own. We understand how much Monique has given to her daughters when she confesses: In regards to her husband Maurice, she declares in her diary: When Maurice asks her to take a job seeing that their daughters have left home she responds: This statement represents a foreboding of things to come. She will be forced to live for herself, now that she is left without the crutch of defining herself according to the needs of others. Thus, when

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she does grieve the break-up of her marriage, she is mostly grieving the loss of the personality that she had constructed to serve the needs of others. Paradoxically, she grieves the loss of a self that encouraged her own destruction. Let us examine more profoundly why Monique has an almost obsessive urge to serve the needs of others. A compulsive need for approval and affection motivates her to seek to live for others. This need must be the result of an inner conflict. On the one hand, she strives to become someone extraordinary. Seeing that personal development is a daunting process, since it forces people out of comfortable roles, Monique fails to venture into the territory of self-definition. It may very well be too risky for her to mold herself in a creative and critical way. She might be afraid of isolation, as she separates herself out from the rest of the crowd. Further, she may fear that her sheltered life will not guarantee the pursuit of her dreams. She invests a defensive urge for transcendence into a love object her husband and the self-glorification that is so desperately needed is now located in the romantic partner. The love partner is transformed into a divine ideal in which personal meaning and fulfillment are dissolved into the other. More concretely, she gains self-esteem by projecting herself into her husband, a medical doctor who serves the needs of the poor and works as a specialist seeking a cure for leukemia. On an ostensible level, she lives through him, seeing that she had renounced medical school when she became pregnant. This suggests that her definition of self stems from those around her. And yet, the more Monique lives her life for others, discounting her emotions, the more she despises herself on an unconscious level for being so inauthentic. In short, one could describe Monique as leading a life of emotional barrenness and a throttling of feeling. Masked desires and avoided conflicts breed mendacity. Eventually, she questions if she has lost sight of the truth: It is perhaps more succinct to speak about lurking shadows, for she also plays the role of a child, while a more authentic Monique remains nothing but a shadow. He too was a doctor, like her husband. Her mother is totally absent. Her mother neither appears in the story, nor is she referred to in her diary at any point. I am not the kind of mother that is lied to: Either we are to assume that Monique did not have a mother or that she considers herself to be so perfect that she would never have lied to her. Her mother could also be absent in her diary, as there is no boundary between them. She need not speak about her mother, since she is the imaginary embodiment of her mother. In light of her propensity to act child-like this seems highly plausible. Monique acts like a child in more ways than one. She travels to New York to ask her daughter for advice, and in an exchange of roles, her daughter predicts that her mother will find herself. There is yet another more convincing reason to believe that she has never fully matured. Monique is not connected to the concrete situations of her life. She is detached from life and from herself. When life turns messy, when she no longer knows the truth from lies, she must re-organize the wardrobes and buy Maurice new socks, sweaters, and pajamas in a desperate attempt to find order among disorder. She even confesses that she comprehends that she is like a child: What are the psychological benefits of this behavior? Monique has lowered her intellectual and moral qualities in order to make sure she does not understand reality. She does not wish to comprehend that she has wasted her life on a man who has turned out to be less than ideal, a real swine, seemingly addicted to deception, material possessions and personal career concerns. Little by little, her mind awakens from a slumber when she allows herself to feel depressed, and she is able to see herself clearly in the mirror. Or, perhaps it is more fitting to argue that Monique needed to live in a world of fantasy in order to understand eventually the reality around her. Besides the therapeutic benefits of living in a world of lies, it might also be a natural course or progression in order to achieve a more complete understanding of reality. How is such a transformation possible? How could a woman go from acting in such bad faith, to descending into an abyss of despair during her melancholia, to an admission that she might have been at fault? Does the psychiatrist assist her with her depression? She might react so negatively toward him, lest she lose her ideal image of the Mater Dolorosa and therefore become a rejected self. Or, perhaps she fears that the psychiatrist could help her to see reality, and she would discover that she and her husband are in fact mediocre like everyone else. Or, does she worry about being left an empty shell, with no more lies to embellish her? Is this a question of fear of the unknown? Does she want to remain ill? For she deserves nothing better than the neurotic state she has created for herself? He coaches her on how to construct her

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self-image and advises her to take up her diary again. More importantly, she seems to harbor a deep and fundamental resentment for the psychiatrist: I was sent to the psychiatrist. I was made to recover a little strength before the final blow was struck. Really it was he who was the victim. Have pity on me! She finds her voice by yelling at an authority figure, a doctor, who symbolizes her husband and father. By insulting him, she is able not only to express her emotions to an authority figure, but also to purge herself of the frustration of being deprived of the means of her voice, let alone her angry voice. Hence, her experience with the psychiatrist is cathartic in the strictest sense of the term.

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### Chapter 3 : Making a mountain out of a molehill in French. “ Le chemin de l'escargot |The snail's way

*This article aims to account for the 'misreading' of 'La femme rompue' by the readers of its serialized publication in French Elle magazine. It offers a close reading of the parallels between the protagonist's strategies for self-deception and Beauvoir's own attempts to deceive the reader as she.*

In France, however, linguistic, psychoanalytic, and philosophical interrogations during the last two decades have placed the emphasis elsewhere: These new emphases might well seem incompatible with 1. See Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, eds. University of Massachusetts Press, As an American feminist working in contemporary French theory - a problematic position further complicated by my personal admiration for Beauvoir “ I felt it increasingly important to elicit her reactions to some of the issues which mark the new feminisms in France. From our first conversation in , it became clear that Beauvoir had not essentially changed her position since *The Second Sex*. Are there any groups which you consider particularly important? Nonetheless, because it is rich, it is also exploitative. Unfortunately, the other side is divided. But I would say that right now the most important groups are those working on the issues of rape and battered wives. You know, despite the enormous effort that was made for abortion, very little was gained. This interview is part of a larger project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Ellen Evans translated from the French. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 4, no. See Burke for a discussion of the group, *Psychoanalysis and Politics*. Perhaps the battered wives are even more important. There are a lot of committed militants who are working on this problem. I left *Choisir* a long time ago, for a number of reasons. I think *Choisir* is in trouble. It may be breaking up, because of problems of authoritarianism. In any event, the last news I had was that there was major dissent at the heart of the group. Are you actively involved in protests against the government, for example? Not much, because not much is possible - of course, there are always petitions, signatures, conversations with people, with the opposition. But, at the moment, there essentially is no left - I mean the extreme left, not the socialists or the communists. To come back to the feminist movement “ As we said, there are great divisions. And there is always a certain feminism which is quite easily co-opted, as your interview with Betty Friedan has shown. It is very striking in Betty Friedan: What she wants is for women to have as much power as men do. Obviously, if you are truly on the left, if you reject ideas of power and hierarchy, what you want is equality. On the other hand, there are women who work on the margins of the society “ as Marxists or not “ who work toward a subversion, an explosion of the dominant ideology. How do you see the function of marginality in the movement? That again is a difficult point. I reject the word marginality. I would rather say revolutionary, radical, whatever. The group *Choisir* grew out of the effort for an abortion law in France. Random House, , pp. Do you have to join the system or not? But if you do, from that moment on, you place your feminism at the service of a system which you want to take apart; because for me and my friends at least, feminism is one way of attacking society as it now exists. By that I mean at the extreme left, a movement working to overthrow the whole society. Besides, if women really did have complete equality with men, society would be completely overturned. For instance, there is the problem of unpaid labor, such as housework, which represents millions and millions of unsalaried work hours and on which masculine society is firmly based. To put an end to this would be to send the present-day capitalist system flying in a single blow. So a certain alliance with revolutionary systems is necessary, even masculine ones. So this is certainly a very tricky point: How to ally yourself to other leftist forces without losing your feminist specificity. For example, there are women who work for leftist newspapers, like *Liberation*, a newspaper for which I have a certain sympathy, despite some reservations. Anyway, these women felt crushed, as women, whatever other good work they were doing, so about two years ago they were successful in shifting the newspaper to a much more feminist perspective. And about accepting positions? Well, if you accept certain situations, you become a token. So it all depends on the particular case. Sometimes you can accept an important post, on condition that it really puts you in a position to help women. Unfortunately,

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women who have important posts very often adopt masculine standards-power, ambition, personal success-and cut themselves off from other women. There is a problematic, a very difficult dialectic between accepting power and refusing it, accepting certain masculine values, and wanting to transform them. Does the same problem exist with systems of thought? For example, women who reject Marx or Freud because they were men? I think that Freud understood absolutely nothing about women-as he himself said. I admire Freud a great deal as a person and thinker. Despite everything, I find his work very, very rich, but I think that for women he has been absolutely disastrous. And even more so, everyone who came after him. All of that stuff still minimizes women. I would certainly like to see some young women take up psychoanalysis seriously and reconstruct it from an absolutely new viewpoint. There is a woman in France named A. But she is trying to construct a psychoanalysis which would be feminist. On the whole, however, I am interested in the kind of work she is doing and I found her book very interesting. Still, she seems to lack audacity, which is necessary to demolish the ideas of Freud on feminine psychoanalysis. Along the same line, what do you think of the people involved in the antipsychiatry movement? At bottom, antipsychiatry is still psychiatry. But then, there have been 8. Jacques Lacan-French psychoanalyst, interrogator of Freud, and founder of the Freudian School in Paris-is now a somewhat legendary figure whose work is fundamental to debates among French feminists. Editions de Minuit, As soon as a woman re- fuses to be perfectly happy doing housework eight hours a day, society has a tendency to want to do a lobotomy on her. I have seen such things, perfectly horrible things. The renewed use of lobotomy today is particularly applicable to women: Because they do routine things, it is possible to take away their spirit of revolt, of debate, of criticism, and still leave them perfectly capable of making stews or washing dishes. Only it has usually translated itself into solitary, individualist, disagreeable manifestations-the whole history of the taming of the shrew, the woman-shrew. But I think that feminism permits women to speak among themselves, instead of simply being resentful, having personal complaints, which get them nowhere and which make them sick and ill-tempered, depressive and poison the lives of their husbands and children. So, you have to work first of all in the world as it is, before dreaming up a scenario a la Deleuze or Guattari where there would no longer be a division between the sexes. You have to start from where you are today and from what can be done. Do you know the work of Laing with Mary Barnes? What do you think of it? I find it an interesting revolt against classical psychiatry. And yet, the denouement has been bizarre, for Laing went to India and fell into Zen but on the whole I agree with his position. I also like Cooper a great deal-I liked Family Life-I like everyone who tries to show that madness is, in large part, conditioned by society and particularly by the family, and therefore, strongly affects women. Do you know the work of Helene Cixous? There is something false in this search for a purely feminine writing style. Language, such as it is, is inherited from a masculine society, and it contains Journal of Women in Culture and Society 1, no. We must rid language of all that. Women can do that as well, enrich their language, clean it up. But the original givens of this science are the same for men and for women. Steal it and use it for their own good. Do you see language only as a social practice, as communication, or is there possibly something else? For instance, how do you see the role of the unconscious in the production of language? I believe that we must use language. If it is used in a feminist perspective, with a feminist sensibility, language will find itself changed in a feminist manner. It will nonetheless be the language. If the writer is a woman, feminist or not, it will give the language something that it would not have if it had been used by a man. For me, it comes from the social situation.

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## Chapter 4 : Simone de Beauvoir, Les belles images, La femme rompue - Terry Keefe - Google Books

*1 Gillian ni CheallaiGh BeaUVOiR'S MaD "MOnOIoguE": Re-ReaDinG The DiSCOURSe OF MaDneSS aT The CORe OF SiMOne De BeaUVOiR'S LA FEMME ROMPUE Abstract: This article re-examines the language and content of Simone de Beauvoir's nouvelle "Monologue" in light of a number of re-cent re-readings, such as those of Ursula Tidd () and.*

It is impossible to do that without looking at the background in which they have been written. The essay will be divided into two main parts. In the first one, it will be examined the role of women in the Spanish literature of the Golden Age, specially, in the work of the feminist writer Maria de Zayas. The second part will include the analysis of the French author Simone de Beauvoir in one of the little stories of her work *The Woman Destroyed*. To finish, we will conclude with a feedback trying to unify relevant characteristics of our both authors and the importance and influence they marked in the history of feminism and feminist literature. This period of brightness was interrupted by a period of crisis that affected all the scopes of society. The literature of Maria de Zayas is dominated by these feelings and in her works she reflected all her outrage and discomfort of society. Therefore, her books principally contain stories of chaos, conflicts, violence and poverty, features perfectly observables in the story we are going to analyse. The traitor of his own blood is included in one of her major masterpieces called *The Disenchantment of Love*. In this work, Zayas defends the capacity of women to act according to their thoughts. In a world dominated by a patriarchal and imperialistic 1 Foa, Sandra M *Feminismo y forma narrativa: As a powerful element in society, the first point of the analysis is occupied by money. Women in that time have no right to decide for themselves the person they wanted to marry and for that reason their families decided for them. If in any case they decided to oppose the decision of their families, they were killed or send to a convent. The deaths of these women are really particular since they were brutally killed. This technique of cruelty and brutality is close to grotesque. They are being raped, killed and humiliated by a group of sexist and brutal men. In order to increase the atrocity against women, she associates the innocence of women to pure animals like lambs or pigeons and the roughness of men to fierce and dangerous creatures. World is falling apart; Fathers against daughters, brothers against sisters, husbands against wives* All this shows how the real love does not exist, how love has being replaced by lasciviousness, violence and perversion. Although in *Traitor of his own blood* the love between Mencia and Enrique might be considered as real, this one is outshone by the great amount of hatred surrounding it. This degeneration in love is reflected in a negative vision of marriage. Real love does not exist, and therefore, happiness is impossible in a married couple. It can be seen very clearly in this tale how the marriage of Mencia and Enrique never took place. They were separated by death, the power that everything destroys. For this reason, she is more than a heroine. By marking parallelism, we can find very similar figures of heroines from ancient works as *Antigone* by Sophocles to the French realism of XIX century in *Madame Bovary* where the figure of women has been highlighted as an example of rebelliousness and defense against the misogynous, patriarchal and traditional view. She was one of the most representatives of the feminist movement in France of XXth century, a really advocator of the feminine emancipation from the view of the Marxist ideology, by stating that the fight for emancipation was similar to the fight of classes. We will focus on *The Monologue*, the story of a woman consumed by the bitterness and loneliness of her life that are killing her little by little. As an abused woman in her childhood, our protagonist spent through difficult moments in her life. She was used and manipulated and then, threw away like rubbish. In addition, their children were separated from her and she was blackmailed with money to keep silent. Love of men always ends in sadness, suffering and loneliness and all together with a pessimist vision of life and negative expectations of the future, she feels completely depressed. Women in XIXth French society were not allowed to work and they were like slaves of men when it comes to economical matters. When her daughter dies, society and even her own mother accuse her. However, she fights harder to counteract the hatred she is receiving. It seems a fight between the

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vulnerable woman and oppressing society. In some passages, she shows a strong character and strength enough to face up problems, but in others, she cannot support more pain and she breaks down. She is dying inside and sometimes this inner hatred and bitterness lead into a mad and desperate behavior. However, she defends herself by saying and repeating she is neither mad nor hysteric. Is it a coincidence that the word hysteria is a derivation of the Greek word uterus? Is there any correlation between madness and women? Sometimes what can be considered as madness it has only been the reaction of women against male dominancy. A woman is first daughter, mother and wife and if she goes against any of this conventional stereotypes, society might label her as mad. In our novella, the main character is mad and hysteric because she claims her children and what belongs to her. The idea of woman as the other and this desire of domination of human beings are the consequence of this degeneration and misogynist vision of feminine sex. In The Monologue, three topics are the major treated worries: Our character is bitter because she has nobody to share her life with; she is getting older and older and she has fear to die in her home alone and finally, she is hurt because nobody " and more emphatically her own mother" has ever cared about her. Both authors, from a didactic and revolutionary approach, denounces the situation of women in their times. However, while Zayas tries to stress the cruelty of men and brutal abuses against women through exaggeration, De Beauvoir" from a existentialist 15 Evans, Mary, Simone de Beauvoir, a feminist mandarin London: Considered as two of the major exponents of the feminist tradition, their influence and impact on society have been undeniable. Through this and other kinds of deception,[â€]don Alonso continued wooing the tender and unsuspecting lamb until he caught her and led her to the slaughterhouse. There is nothing to do against this disgusting blackmail: I am at his mercy. You have killed her! My mother, my own mother. They are who killed her. They have killed Sylvie, my Sylvette, my little loved one. I have been the best of the mothers. I am not a hysteric; I did not feel down on my knees in front of him. State University of New York Press 21 These translations from French into English have been made by the student, therefore they are not official. Tavistock Foa, Sandra M , Feminismo y forma narrativa: Maclean, Ian Woman triumphant: Clarendon Press Morris, Pam Literature and feminism: Greenwood Schneir, Miriam Feminism:

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### Chapter 5 : Beauvoir, Simone de | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

*La femme rompue: L'ère de discrétion, Monologue (French Edition) by Simone de Beauvoir () [Simone de Beauvoir] on www.nxgvision.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers.*

Selected Books on Beauvoir in English 1. Her father, George, whose family had some aristocratic pretensions, had once desired to become an actor but studied law and worked as a civil servant, contenting himself instead with the profession of legal secretary. Despite his love of the theater and literature, as well as his atheism, he remained a staunchly conservative man whose aristocratic proclivities drew him to the extreme right. Her religious, bourgeois orientation became a source of serious conflict between her and her oldest daughter, Simone. His interest in her intellectual development carried through until her adolescence when her future professional carrier, necessitated by the loss of her dowry, came to symbolize his own failure. Beauvoir, on the contrary, always wanted to be a writer and a teacher, rather than a mother and a wife and pursued her studies with vigor. She remained an atheist until her death. Her rejection of religion was followed by her decision to pursue and teach philosophy. Only once had she considered marriage to her cousin, Jacques Champigneulle. She never again entertained the possibility of marriage, instead preferring to live the life of an intellectual. She then studied mathematics at the Institut Catholique and literature and languages at the Institut Sainte-Marie, passing exams in for Certificates of Higher Studies in French literature and Latin, before beginning her study of philosophy in 1929. For the rest of their lives, they were to remain "essential" lovers, while allowing for "contingent" love affairs whenever each desired. Adding to her unique situation with Sartre, Beauvoir had intimate liaisons with both women and men. Some of her more famous relationships included the journalist Jacques Bost, the American author Nelson Algren, and Claude Lanzmann, the maker of the Holocaust documentary, Shoah. In 1944, the Nazis occupied Paris and in 1945, Beauvoir was dismissed from her teaching post by the Nazi government. Following a parental complaint made against her for corrupting one of her female students, she was dismissed from teaching again in 1946. She was never to return to teaching. Although she loved the classroom environment, Beauvoir had always wanted to be an author from her earliest childhood. Her collection of short stories on women, *Quand prime le spirituel* When Things of the Spirit Come First was rejected for publication and not published until many years later. This novel, written from 1937 to 1940 and read by Sartre in manuscript form as he began writing *Being and Nothingness* successfully gained her public recognition. The Occupation inaugurated what Beauvoir has called the "moral period" of her literary life. From 1942 to 1944 she wrote her novel, *Le Sang des Autres* The Blood of Others, which was heralded as one of the most important existential novels of the French Resistance. Together with Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Raymond Aron and other intellectuals, she helped found the politically non-affiliated, leftist journal, *Les Temps Modernes* in 1945, for which she both edited and contributed articles, including in 1946, "Moral Idealism and Political Realism," "Existentialism and Popular Wisdom," and in 1947, "Eye for an Eye. Although she was never fully satisfied with this work, it remains one of the best examples of an existentialist ethics. In 1949, she published, "Must We Burn Sade? Although previous to writing this work she had never considered herself to be a "feminist," *The Second Sex* solidified her as a feminist figure for the remainder of her life. By far her most controversial work, this book was embraced by feminists and intellectuals, as well as mercilessly attacked by both the right and the left. This fame resulted both from her own work as well as from her relationship to and association with Sartre. For the rest of her life, she lived under the close scrutiny of the public eye. The former was written following her lecture tour of the United States in 1953, and the latter following her visit with Sartre to communist China in 1955. Her later work included the writing of more works of fiction, philosophical essays and interviews. It was notably marked not only by her political action in feminist issues, but also by the publication of her autobiography in four volumes and her political engagement directly attacking the French war in Algeria and the tortures of Algerians by French officers. In 1970, she published an impressive study of the oppression of aged members of society, *La Vieillesse* The Coming of Age. This work mirrors the same

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approach she had taken in *The Second Sex* only with a different object of investigation. A Farewell to Sartre. Following the death of Sartre, Beauvoir officially adopted her companion, Sylvie le Bon, who became her literary executor. Beauvoir died of a pulmonary edema on April 14, 1989. For most of her life, Beauvoir was concerned with the ethical responsibility that the individual has to him or herself, other individuals and to oppressed groups. This essay was well-received as it spoke to a war-torn France that was struggling to find a way out of the darkness of World War II. It begins as a conversation between Pyrrhus, the ancient king of Epirus, and his chief advisor, Cineas, on the question of action. Each time Pyrrhus makes an assertion as to what land he will conquer, Cineas asks him what will he do afterwards? Finally, Pyrrhus exclaims that he will rest following the achievement of all of his plans, to which Cineas retorts, "Why not rest right away"? The essay is thus framed as an investigation into the motives of action and the existential concern with why we should act at all. This work was written by a young Beauvoir in close dialogue with the Sartre of *Being and Nothingness*. The external world can often manifest itself as a crushing, objective reality whereas the other can reveal to us our fundamental freedom. Lacking a God to guarantee morality, it is up to the individual existent to create a bond with others through ethical action. This bond requires a fundamentally active orientation to the world through projects that express our own freedom as well as encourage the freedom of our fellow human beings. Because to be human is essentially to rupture the given world through our spontaneous transcendence, to be passive is to live, in Sartrean terminology, in bad faith. Although emphasizing key Sartrean motifs of transcendence, freedom and the situation in this early work, Beauvoir takes her enquiry in a different direction. Like Sartre, she believes that that human subjectivity is essentially a nothingness which ruptures being through spontaneous projects. This movement of rupturing the given through the introduction of spontaneous activity is called transcendence. Beauvoir, like Sartre, believes that the human being is constantly engaged in projects which transcend the factual situation cultural, historical, personal, etc. In addition, rather than seeing the other who in his or her gaze turns me into an object as a threat to my freedom as Sartre would have it, Beauvoir sees the other as the necessary axis of my freedom-without whom, in other words, I could not be free. However, Beauvoir is as critical of these philosophers as she is admiring. For example, she criticizes Hegel for his unethical faith in progress which sublates the individual in the relentless pursuit of the Absolute. She criticizes Heidegger for his emphasis on being-towards-death as undermining the necessity of setting up projects, which are themselves ends and are not necessarily projections towards death. The end, therefore, is not something cut off from activity, standing as a static and absolute value outside of the existent who chooses it. Rather, the goal of action is established as an end through the very freedom which posits it as a worthwhile enterprise. All world-views which demand the sacrifice and repudiation of freedom diminish the reality, thickness, and existential importance of the individual existent. This is not to say that we should abandon all projects of unification and scientific advancement in favor of a disinterested solipsism, only that such endeavors must necessarily honor the individual existents of which they are composed. Additionally, instead of being forced into causes of various kinds, existents must actively and self-consciously choose to participate in them. Because Beauvoir is so concerned in this essay with freedom and the necessity to self-consciously choose who one is at every moment, she takes up relationships of slavery, mastery, tyranny, and devotion which remain choices despite the inequalities that often result from these connections with others. Despite the inequity of power in such relationships, she maintains that we can never do anything for or against others, i. However, we are still morally obligated to keep from harming others. Echoing a common theme in existentialist philosophy, even to be silent or to refuse to engage in helping the other, is still making a choice. Freedom, in other words, cannot be escaped. Yet, she also develops the idea that in abstaining from encouraging the freedom of others, we are acting against the ethical call of the other. Without others, our actions are destined to fall back upon themselves as useless and absurd. However, with others who are also free, our actions are taken up and carried beyond themselves into the future-transcending the limits of the present and of our finite selves. Our very actions are calls to other freedoms who may choose to respond to or ignore us. Because we are finite and

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limited and there are no absolutes to which our actions can or should conform, we must carry out our projects in risk and uncertainty. But it is just this fragility that Beauvoir believes opens us up to a genuine possibility for ethics. Beauvoir continues to believe in the contingency of existence in that there is no necessity that we exist and thus there is no predetermined human essence or standard of value. Of particular importance, Beauvoir expounds upon the idea that human freedom requires the freedom of others for it to be actualized. Although Beauvoir was never fully satisfied with *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, it remains a testament to her long-standing concern with freedom, oppression, and responsibility, as well as to the depth of her philosophical understanding of the history of philosophy and of her own unique contributions to it. She begins this work by asserting the tragic condition of the human situation which experiences its freedom as a spontaneous internal drive that is crushed by the external weight of the world. Human existence, she argues, is always an ambiguous admixture of the internal freedom to transcend the given conditions of the world and the weight of the world which imposes itself on us in a manner outside of our control and not of our own choosing. In order for us to live ethically then, we must assume this ambiguity rather than try to flee it. In Sartrean terms, she sets up a problem in which each existent wants to deny their paradoxical essence as nothingness by desiring to be in the strict, objective sense; a project that is doomed to failure and bad faith. For Beauvoir, an existentialist conversion allows us to live authentically at the crossroads of freedom and facticity. This requires that we engage our freedom in projects which emerge from a spontaneous choice. In addition, the ends and goals of our actions must never be set up as absolutes, separate from we who choose them. In this sense, Beauvoir sets limits to freedom. To be free is not to have free license to do whatever one wants. Rather, to be free entails the conscious assumption of this freedom through projects which are chosen at each moment. The meaning of actions is thus granted not from some external source of values say in God, the church, the state, our family, etc. Each individual must positively assume his or her project whether it be to write a novel, graduate from university, preside over a courtroom, etc. Thus, we act ethically only insofar as we accept the weight of our choices and the consequences and responsibilities of our fundamental, ontological freedom. As Beauvoir tells us, "to will oneself moral and to will oneself free are one and the same decision. Although Hegel is not the only philosopher with whom she is in dialogue she addresses Kant, Marx, Descartes, and Sartre, as well he represents the philosophical crystallization of the desire for human beings to escape their freedom by submerging it into an external absolute. Thus Hegel, for Beauvoir, sets up an "Absolute Subject" whose realization only comes at the end of history, thereby justifying the sacrifice of countless individuals in the relentless pursuit of its own perfection. Only a philosophy which values the freedom of each individual existent can alone be ethical. Philosophies such as those of Hegel, Kant, and Marx which privilege the universal are built upon the necessary diminution of the particular and as such, cannot be authentically ethical systems. Beauvoir claims against these philosophers of the absolute, that existentialism embraces the plurality of the concrete, particular human beings enmeshed in their own unique situations and engaged in their own projects. However, Beauvoir is also emphatic that even though existentialist ethics upholds the sanctity of individuals, an individual is always situated within a community and as such, separate existents are necessarily bound to each other. She argues that every enterprise is expressed in a world populated by and thus affecting other human beings. In order to illustrate the complexity of situated freedom, Beauvoir provides us with an important element of growth, development and freedom in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*. Most philosophers begin their discussions with a fully-grown, rational human being, as if only the adult concerns philosophical inquiry. However, Beauvoir incorporates an analysis of childhood in which she argues that the will, or freedom, is developed over time.

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*In an interview with Jessica Benjamin and Margaret Simons in , Simone de Beauvoir identified the problem that had preoccupied her across her lifetime, that is, "her" problem, as the problem of the "the consciousness of the other".*