

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT'S REVOLUTION IN
MANNERS AND THE KICKBACK OF
CONSTRUCTED FEMININITY

A Master's Thesis

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To women all over the world...



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The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
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By Sena Çiftci

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT'S REVOLUTION IN MANNERS AND THE KICKBACK OF CONSTRUCTED FEMININITY

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In my thesis, by using Simone De Beauvoir's concept of '*the other*' from her book *Second Sex*, I attempt to solve the issue of how some features of produced femininity, such as submission, caretaking, sentimentality, and so forth, increase women's oppression. I argue that discriminatory practices that are explicitly gendered and imposed on a single gender have been producing negative outcomes, regarding the problem explained. Also, it should be acknowledged that adhering to these practices should not be promoted as necessary to be identified as a woman. I propose to follow the revolution in female manners advocated by Mary Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* as a plausible and effective answer to 'the otherness' of women in society. Here I argue that the main reason for the plausibility is the said revolution's inclusivity. Since Wollstonecraft argues that the revolution in female manners can be attained only by equal distribution of knowledge of the right kind of virtues and national education to all genders, inclusivity should be a given.

Keywords: Otherness, Manners, Femininity, Submission, Care



ÖZET

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT'IN GÖRGÜ DEVRİMİ VE YAPAY FEMİNENİTENİN GERİ TEPMESİ

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Tezimde Simone De Beauvoir'ın *İkinci Seks* adlı kitabında yer alan 'öteki' kavramını kullanarak, sonradan oluşturulan feminenliğin teslimiyet, bakım yeteneği, duygusallık gibi bazı özelliklerinin kadınlar üzerinde oluşturulan baskıyı artırışını sorun olarak ele alıyorum. Açıkça cinsiyetlendirilen ve tek cinsiyete dayatılan ayrımcı uygulamaların, tezin konusu olan soruna ilişkin olumsuz sonuçlar doğurduğunu savunuyorum. Ayrıca bu uygulamalara bağlı kalmanın kadın olarak tanımlanmayı sağlayacak öğeler olarak kabul edilmemesi gerektiğini vurguluyorum. Mary Wollstonecraft'ın *Kadın Haklarının Korunması* kitabında kadınların toplumdaki 'ötekiliğine' makul ve etkili bir yanıt olarak savunduğu kadın tavırlarındaki devrimi takip etmeyi öneriyorum. Bu öneriminana sebebinin devrimin kapsayıcılığı olduğunu da eklemek istiyorum. Wollstonecraft tarafından sunulan kadın görgü devrimi ancak doğru türde erdemler ve ulusal eğitim bilgisinin tüm cinsiyetlere eşit olarak dağıtılmasıyla elde edilebileceğinden kapsayıcı bir çözüm

olarak kabul ediyor ve tezimde sorun olarak ele aldığım duruma bir çözüm önerisi olabileceğini savunuyorum.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ötekilik, Görgü, Feminenite, Teslimiyet, Bakım



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INTRODUCTION

Women do not have to be feminine. It does not mean that they shouldn't be feminine. They can be masculine. It does not mean that they should be masculine. The problem is that there has been this equation made by society that women should be feminine, and men should be masculine. Moreover, this equation comes with some further consequences, which is that women should follow some rules of femininity. However, in some cases, following these rules has deeply problematic implications, which Simone De Beauvoir describes by appealing to the concept of 'otherness' in her book *Second Sex*. In my thesis, I will try to establish to what extent it is possible or desirable to resist following these rules.

This is not a work aimed at celebrating masculinity and criticizing femininity. The aim is to gender-neutralize manners and choose to perform and habituate the ones that are virtuous and rational by following arguments made by Mary Wollstonecraft in her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. In my dissertation, I plan to focus on certain aspects of femininity such as submission, sentimentality, caregiving, passiveness, and so on, and emphasize the ways in which they are oppressive and discriminatory. The main question of this dissertation is whether a revolution in

manners in the Wollstonecraftian sense would be enough to slow down the power of constructed femininity or not. In other words, the question is can sexist oppression be reversed or minimized through what Wollstonecraft calls a 'revolution in female manners'?

To start with, in the first chapter, I will concentrate on the idea of 'otherness' within the context of *The Second Sex*, a book by Simone De Beauvoir. Throughout *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir argues that femininity is a fake image that causes women to be perceived as 'the other.' (Beauvoir, 1949). Further, she argues that a woman's role in society is not determined by her biological, psychological, or financial status; rather, the society as a whole develops this product, 'the feminine' (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 330). This section can be perceived as explaining how the notions of otherness and femininity affect each other.

Further, in the second chapter, the idea of female submission, as a first example of constructed femininity, will be examined. Such examination will be made with a focus on Manon Garcia's book *We Are Not Born Submissive: How Patriarchy Shapes Women's Lives*. The idea that submission, passivity, masochism, and so on are essential characteristics of women comes from early gender essentialist studies. Manon Garcia presents Beauvoir's gender theory which essentially falls between essentialism and strong constructivism. According to Beauvoir, being a woman puts one in a position where submission is not her essence but rather a matter of destiny. Following the information given in the first and the second chapters, the overall idea

is to show that even though women become the other as their destiny, it is not in their essence to be that way and it is possible to attain alteration.

In the third chapter, I shall address the ‘revolution in female manners’ drawing on the ideas put forth by Mary Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* as a solution to Beauvoir’s ‘the other’. The primary reason I do not follow Beauvoir’s suggestion is that, while she provides valuable solutions for white middle-class women in *The Second Sex*, it seems to be incompatible when applied to, for instance, Black women who are economically disadvantaged. Here, my claim is that, because the revolution in female manners is more inclusive than Beauvoir’s possible solution, it offers an improved approach to overcoming women’s oppression.

Lastly, in the fourth chapter, the idea of care as it is presented in Carol Gilligan’s book *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* will be the subsequent consideration. In my dissertation, I have mainly highlighted the negative features of femininity and its associations. I argue that these associations are not fundamental to being a woman and most of them should be abandoned in order to transform women’s status from ‘the other’ to ‘the equal’. On the other hand, Gilligan and others who have pursued care ethics have some interesting thoughts about the significance of caring, thus caring as a feminine manner is challenging and different from the others that I will discuss. Here, the main argument is that when practicing care ethics, it is important to recognize that providing care should be a gender-neutral role.

Overall, the problem that I am working on is how some aspects of constructed femininity such as submission, caretaking, sentimentality, and so on worsen women's oppression. I thought that a good way to explain women's position in society is by using the notion 'the other' explained by Simone De Beauvoir in '*Second Sex*' and I connect these two ideas and argue that expecting that women should be feminine and that they should follow some ascriptions of femininity to be women strengthens women's position in society as 'the other' thus threatens gender equality. My dissertation's main contention concerning the problem explained is that discriminatory practices that are explicitly gendered and imposed on a single gender have been producing negative outcomes, and what should be recognized is that sticking to these practices should not be promoted as necessary to be identified as a woman.

The solution that I am presenting is that a plausible way to solve 'the otherness' of women in society is by following the revolution in female manners presented by Mary Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. At the end of *Second Sex*, Beauvoir also proposes a possible solution to women's position in society as 'the other' 'but, as I argued, her solution can only work with a restricted class of women, i.e. middle-class women'. I will also argue that Wollstonecraft's concept of a revolution in manners (which I will discuss in Chapter 3), is more inclusive than Beauvoir's solution. According to Wollstonecraft, the revolution in female manners can be attained only by equal distribution of knowledge of the right kind of virtues and national education to all genders. The hope and suggestion are that through the

revolution the 'otherness' of women will fade into equal and knowledgeable genders
as harmonious peers in society.



CHAPTER 1

OTHERNESS

Perhaps because attributes of femininity, such as submission, sentimentality, caregiving, passiveness, and so on, have positive but mostly negative effects on women's lives, women have been oppressed as 'the other' for a long time. Thus, to understand the possibility of attaining progress in decreasing the effects of women being perceived as 'the other,' in the first chapter, I will make an investigation, starting with the state of 'otherness' of women. I will begin, in the first chapter, with a focus on the concept of 'otherness' within Simone de Beauvoir's framework and discuss the question: what does she mean when saying one cannot be born as a woman but becomes a woman (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 330)? Throughout *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir argues that femininity is a fake image that causes women to be perceived as 'the other' (Beauvoir, 2011). Also, she adds, a woman's role in society is not determined by her biological, psychological, or financial status; rather, it is the society as a whole that develops this product, 'the feminine' (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 330). Here, I contend that the expectation that women should be feminine and adhere to certain definitions of femininity endangers gender equality by strengthening women's status as 'the other' in society.

Simone de Beauvoir proposes that when we speak about humanity, we mean men. A woman is, therefore, a human being that is not a man; women are relative beings who must be defined in relation to men, while men do not need anything besides themselves to be defined (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 26)! As Beauvoir famously puts it: *'He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other'* (Beauvoir, p.26).

First, Beauvoir introduces the notion of being 'the other' in terms of explaining women's position in society. Beauvoir states that women are defined as being women, which further causes them to face different consequences from that; while men are obviously men without needing an introduction, so she says they are not participants of a certain sex; they are just men (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 25).

Throughout the paper to exemplify what I mean, I will use a character, who is called Forrest Sasha Fiercely. She prefers to call herself Forrest rather than Sasha. People who know Beyoncé Knowles will probably have an idea of who Sasha Fierce is. As Beyoncé identifies, Sasha Fierce is her alter ego. She is her stage character. Sasha, unlike Beyoncé, is unapologetic, fearless, not afraid to make a statement, and free to be as sexy as she wishes. So, Beyoncé states that as she enters the stage to perform in front of millions, her alter ego shows up and rocks the performance, doing all the things Beyoncé would normally be afraid of doing. It all sounds pretty cool to me, but Forrest does not like Sasha Fierce, and that is why she does not want people to know her as Sasha Fiercely. The reason why she does not like Beyoncé's alter ego is

that Forrest thinks she is quite too much. All the things women should be, Forrest thinks, Sasha Fierce is the opposite!

Forrest is in a loving relationship, as she accepts, with Mark Cheaterman. She thinks he is the man who she is supposed to end up with. She is quite submissive towards him. Forrest thinks Mark can experience all the lady-like qualities with her, and that will make him want to marry her. Throughout the thesis, I will present Forrest and Mark's story to exemplify the points I aim to make. The story will start with a woman who is okay with being the 'other' and then hopefully ends with a woman who understands it is better to be independent since there is no real prize for being submissive towards someone who is nowhere better than her independent self. Her fiercely independent self!

Someone like Forrest might argue that men and women are complementary parts of each other. So, both are the other, and both can be understood in relation to each other. Forrest thinks that she and Mark have different duties in life. Forrest thinks, for example, that she is better at accepting Mark's ideas and following commands, while Mark, on the other hand, is better at making decisions. This division of labor, Forrest thinks, makes everything easier. Her idea of women is mostly someone like herself. Someone who can deal with a man's anger, someone who can accept what has been decided for her, and someone who can carry out the things said by her father, brother, husband, or lover. This makes sense to her since if everybody acts harmoniously with each other and follows their own natural duties, there needs to be

no fight, and accepting one's own duties, Forrest thinks, would not make anyone less valuable.

Well, I disagree with Forrest. If the division of labor is mostly made by men, and if women are the ones who end up being forced to take the jobs men do not prioritize, which is mostly related to power relationships, then can we really talk about being complementary parts of each other and having harmony between each other? Cannot we say that having the chance to choose makes one's position in society superior?

Then, cannot we also say that not having the chance to be an active, independent, fearless, decision-maker would make the left-out party be 'the other' by herself? Not only, do I think that these questions make sense against Forrest's position, but I also think that the argument that men and women are complementary parts of each other is an extremely exclusionary and binary way of thinking.

Beauvoir, after introducing the notion of 'otherness,' articulates about different kinds of 'others' in society and explains how women are different from them. Beauvoir states that Proletarians, Black people, and Jewish people can also be seen as others in society; however, they have a sense of 'us' within them (a sense of being in a group), and throughout history, they tended to act together. On the other hand, women do not have the sense of 'us' as the other groups have, and they perceive themselves as men perceive them, as women (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 28). So, in a way, it can be argued that women are estranged from themselves. Furthermore, Beauvoir states that women, in general, do not have a unique history, a religion to connect them, a race, a color, and

so on. What they have in common is that women are mostly tied to a man with an economic, social, or biological bond (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 28). This is why it is harder for women to think of themselves as a group.

Here, I should raise the following criticism against Beauvoir's arguments on different kinds of others. She has been criticized for referring to, for example, Black people as Black men only. In an interview called 'Simone de Beauvoir, Analogy, Intersectionality, and Expanding Philosophy,' made by Edward O'Byrn, Kathryn Sophia Belle states that when making distinctions between women and other groups, Beauvoir gives gender inequality more weight than other forms of oppression, such as racism, antisemitism, class oppression, slavery, and so on. This implies that the subordination of women is a more significant form of oppression than the other kinds of oppression (O'Byrn, 2023, p. 222). What is missing here is Beauvoir's ability to look at this distinction from an intersectional point of view. This means that when she is suggesting that women as a whole face a more significant kind of oppression than the different 'others' in the society, she actually fails to point out that, for example, a person who is both Black and a woman is facing a type of oppression that is exponentially increasing, and therefore, clearly worth discussing.

It seems like, against this type of argument, that once gender is mentioned, race should also be mentioned (so we should be inclusive); one can argue that it is just the angle that Beauvoir chooses to talk about. So, accordingly, it can be argued that this

does not show that she thinks that gender is more important than other forms of oppression like race and so on. It sounds like a valid counterargument, yet I disagree.

To show my disagreement and exemplify what I mean when I say, '*clearly worth discussing*,' I want to appeal to Amia Srinivasan's book *The Right to Sex*. Srinivasan, in some parts of her book, talks merely about Black women and the oppression that they face. She states that Black women are frequently harassed by police and mistreated when they report domestic abuse. Black women's vulnerability to 'intimate-partner violence' is a direct result of state power, according to Srinivasan, since higher rates of unemployment among Black men are responsible for the higher numbers of black women murdered by their partners (Srinivasan, 2021, p. 14). This specific example aims to play the role of showing the doubled oppression Black women face when facing certain types of oppression. So, for example, as stated in Srinivasan's book, due to higher rates of unemployment among Black men, Black women encounter higher amounts of domestic violence, yet when they face domestic violence, police officers tend to prefer to ignore or belittle their troubles. It is a multi-storey oppression that they face. One layer comes from their race, one layer comes from their gender, and possibly one layer comes from socioeconomic position (again, in some cases due to their race and gender). So, since it is a multi-storey oppression that Black women face, it seems one should specifically mention their oppression rather than separating Blackness and womanness and not specifically mention the ones that are in the intersection of them.

Another way of understanding ‘otherness’ is by Beauvoir’s idea of the duality of ‘being the thing that I am,’ and ‘the being is seen from the outside.’ To explain what such duality means, I will introduce Kate Kirkpatrick’s arguments and narratives from her book *Becoming Beauvoir*. Following those arguments, it can be argued that women have been treating themselves as ‘the being seen from the outside’ rather than ‘being the thing that I am’ (Kirkpatrick, 2019, p. 32). Through the filters of the male gaze (or we can call it the societal gaze!), women have been alienating themselves even from their own perspective. They are ‘the other’ to themselves. So, I am, as a woman, see myself as an object of observation, which means that I am ‘a being seen from the outside’ by myself. I am a stranger to myself; I am judgemental, cruel, and sometimes fake to myself.

‘A being seen from the outside’ by me! This is exactly how Forrest has been threatening herself since the day she found out that Mark Cheaterman, the man whom she dreamt of getting married to, was a big cheater! Who would have known? Forrest, rather than accepting that it is just Mark’s character, blames herself for not being a better lady for her former lover. So, the other woman whom Mark cheated on Forrest with, Forrest thinks must be a perfect woman. Her name is Mandy Madonny. We do not know much about her, but in Forrest’s mind, she has all the qualities a woman should have. Forrest thinks that Mandy is probably better at pleasing Mark and treating him the way he is supposed to feel. This all shows that Forrest’s judgments of herself are as cruel as it gets. Only an enemy of hers would blame her

for getting cheated on. So, as if she is her own enemy, she goes on and on about all the ways she should have acted better.

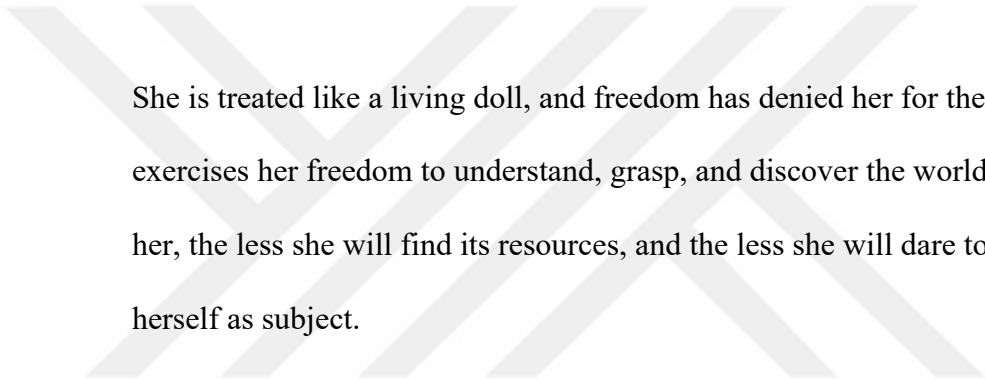
In the second volume of her book, Beauvoir takes the concept of 'otherness' and 'becoming to be a woman' and explains it through what she calls the 'lived experience.' Passiveness, Beauvoir argues, defines the 'feminine' woman, and that is a quality that she develops from a younger age. But it is inaccurate to suggest that this is a biological fact; rather, society has forced her into this fate. On the other hand, men benefit much from the fact that they establish themselves for themselves as a result of their style of existing for others (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 341).

I should briefly explain how, according to Beauvoir, a woman becomes a woman and what 'lived experience' means. First, 'lived experience' is a study of modern women as they experience living in society from childhood through adolescence and sexual initiation to maturity and old age (Beauvoir, p.12). 'One is not born, but rather becomes a woman.' as Beauvoir puts it. This famous phrase suggests that a woman's role in society is not determined by her biological, psychological, or financial status; rather, it is the society as a whole that develops this product, 'the feminine' (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 330). Here, Beauvoir claims that despite biological distinctions between the sexes, women become women due to social circumstances. It can be argued that what Beauvoir is doing here is making one of the earliest arguments that distinguish the concepts of sex and gender. Having identified as a woman of her

gender, she has experienced the world in a particular manner different than men, and what makes her a woman is that lived experience and specific type of oppression.

In contrast to men, women experience a tension between their autonomous existence and their 'being other' from the beginning. According to Beauvoir, women are taught to give up on their autonomy starting from a very early age.

Beauvoir powerfully asserts that (2011, p. 342):



She is treated like a living doll, and freedom has denied her for the less she exercises her freedom to understand, grasp, and discover the world around her, the less she will find its resources, and the less she will dare to affirm herself as subject.

It is obvious, Beauvoir states, that if a woman's biological position causes her a disadvantage, it is because of how it is seen by society. Further, Beauvoir reminds us that it has been reported frequently that women, starting from the earlier times of their lives, become farther behind in academic and creative pursuits. The reason is that woman is not given the same support as men. Women are, Beauvoir adds, expected to add feminine responsibilities to their professional tasks (Beauvoir, p.400). One of the most important feminine responsibilities asked by a woman according to Beauvoir is that she should raise desire in her husband. Because he is a judge, the sexual lover is far scarier than just a male gaze (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 451).

Throughout the days of healing (emotional healing from getting cheated on), Forrest started to realize valuable lessons one can get from reading Beauvoir. She was experiencing her life's worst dilemma. She was feeling ugly and stupid, and she imagined Mark as the most handsome and smart man in the world. Yet, she started to understand that she was always defining herself from the sight of her lover. Now that he is gone, what was left for her, she was asking herself. She was a great painter before she became Mark's lover. She stopped painting since, she thought, time is precious, and it should be spent with her man! The man who gave her meaning...

She was starting to realize now that she did not need Mark's perspective to be something. She was already something. She was all the things people like Mark accepted her to be. She did not need Mark; she had society to completely superimposed on her, actively limiting her and defining her within these limits, so she had to become passive and submissive. She can now understand what it is to be 'the other' in society, and she knows now that she is 'the other' just like many other women are, just because they are women! As if their being 'the other' is what made them women.

To sum up, I have begun, in the first chapter, with a focus on the concept of 'otherness' within Simone De Beauvoir's framework and discuss the question: what does she mean when saying one cannot be born as a woman but becomes a woman? According to Beauvoir, a woman's role in society is not determined by her biological, psychological, or financial status. Instead, society is what develops this product, 'the feminine' (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 330). So, a possible argument is that women and men

are each other's complementary equal parts fails both because it cannot explain women's position in society, and it fails to be inclusive. In the following chapter, I will work on submission as a constructed feminine manner to discuss how it would work in a way to make women 'the other' in society.



CHAPTER 2

SUBMISSION AND ITS VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS

In the second chapter of my dissertation, I will emphasize how submission as a feminine manner causes women to be oppressed and discriminated against. The idea that submission, passivity, masochism, and so on are essential characteristics of women is stated by early gender-essentialist studies. One example is some of Freud's studies, which had a significant impact on how women's behavior was analyzed throughout the 20th century (Garcia, 2021, p. 26). Moreover, the opposite picture of gender essentialism can be said to be strong constructivism or skepticism of gender, which argues that gender is just an arbitrary collection of words and ideas, that gender is not a single thing but rather how we choose to 'perform' in response to 'sex-based stereotypes,' (Barnes, 2019, p. 2). At this point, in *We Are Not Born Submissive*, Manon Garcia introduces Beauvoir's picture of gender, which is basically somewhere in between essentialism and strong constructivism. Beauvoir argues that being a woman places one in a position where submission becomes a matter of destiny rather than an essence (Garcia, 2021, p. 42). Overall, I argue that an investigation of femininity and its attributions is necessary to address the issue of

women's 'otherness' in society, and in this chapter, the concentration will be mainly on submission.

Manon Garcia, in her book *We Are Not Born Submissive: How Patriarchy Shapes Women's Lives*, claims that submission has feminine connotations in popular culture, classical culture, the media, and so on. This has the following implication: submissive men are being criticized for their lack of masculinity (Garcia, 2021, p. 22). Society strongly aligns femininity (which is traditionally ascribed to women) with submission. Thus, to further explore this tie between women and submission and to constitute a realization that submission that is perceived as a feminine manner causes women to be further oppressed, Garcia and Beauvoir's related argumentations will be explored.

Garcia explains and meanwhile criticizes Freud's theories on masochism and its relation to sex and gender, mainly to women. According to Freud, the masochism of women is different from the masochism of men since masochism is essentially feminine (Garcia, 2021, p. 25). Here, I think we can take submission, passiveness, and masochism as all essentially feminine (so there is a feminine essence according to Freud) and that they nourish each other, and they are in harmony with each other.

Through the observations he makes, Freud basically argues that it is normal for a woman to be a masochist while being a masochist would make a man (especially concerning sexual fantasies) a pervert (Garcia, 2021, p. 25). So, there is a widely

held belief that women are essentially masochistic, which means they enjoy being mistreated, and that this would account for both domestic abuse and work-life mistreatment (Garcia, 2021, p. 23). It is crucial to note that Freud's analysis also plays a significant role in this widely held belief since, as Garcia notes, it had a significant impact on how women's behavior was analyzed in psychology as well as in social and cultural studies throughout the 20th century (Garcia, 2021, p. 26).

As Forrest gets better and better after her heartbreaking breakup, she becomes more and more like Sasha Fierce. She even started to address herself as Sasha, so I should be doing that, too. Now that she is okay with her name being Sasha Fiercely, she also enjoys being fiercely independent. That was a tough road, though. Trying to be independent, fierce, and unapologetic as a woman in a patriarchal society where misogyny is praised is not impossible, yet almost as hard as to be impossible. The change she had was tangible and took quite an effort. An effort to understand that, like hypnosis, patriarchy has imprinted certain beliefs on her mind. Those imprinted beliefs were a set of lists that describes what it is to be a feminine woman in a correct way. This description, she realized, mostly served the powerful one. She remembered trying to make herself accept that she should be submissive so that she could keep the harmony going. Deep down, she never enjoyed that, though! She only enjoyed being praised by her lover for making him satisfied. So, being a submissive, passive lover was not in itself enjoyable; the enjoyment was the happiness it brought to the man she loved. Thus, it sounds like, following Sasha's internal flashbacks, the Freudian idea that women enjoy mistreatment fails.

As a critique, it can be argued that Freud's studies are no longer relatable since there are a whole bunch of neuroscientific studies that are made comparatively up-to-date. I want to state that it is a valid argument yet we should remind ourselves that there are still up-to-date studies that follow the Freudian essentialist path. One example is Simon Baron-Cohen's studies and his paper 'Empathizing, Systemizing, and the Extreme Male Brain Theory of Autism.'

In his paper, Baron-Cohen argues that since research, in general, shows that females have a stronger tendency to empathize and males have a stronger tendency to systemize, and further people with autism spectrum generally tend to have a lower ability to empathize and a higher ability to systemize; thus, it can be argued that brains of people with autism spectrum condition can be perceived as an extreme type of male brain (Baron-Cohen, 2010, p. 167). According to Baron-Cohen, autism spectrum condition (ASC) is far more common in males than in females, which is an important clue that the study of sex can be relevant to the research of ASC (Baron-Cohen, 2010, p. 168).

Baron-Cohen states that people with ASC, in general, lack the two components of empathy (two social components), which are, first, developing the theory of mind (the ability to understand other people's feelings and thoughts, further understanding role-playing, lies, jokes, sarcasm, and so on), and, second, developing an accurate emotional response to other people and their behaviors (Baron-Cohen, 2010, p. 168, 169). Further, he states that people with ASC, in general, tend to have superior

abilities when it comes to systemizing, which is one's ability to analyze and construct certain systems that follow unchanging or regular rules (Baron-Cohen, 2010, p. 169, 170). Finally, according to Baron-Cohen, because there are clear sex differences in empathy and systemizing, and since the majority (65%) of people with ASC are Extreme Type S (which occurs when that person's ability to systemize above average but faces problems with empathy), and further because Type S is generally considered to be male; therefore Extreme Type S can probably belong to an extreme male brain (thus the equation is Extreme Type S = ASC = Extreme Male Brain) (Baron-Cohen, 2010, p. 171).

Here, I argue that the distinction between men and women, considering their ability to make empathy and systemization, is not as clear distinction as it is to Baron-Cohen. In general, I argue that differences between sexes are rather social constructions that occur due to the expectations of society and their stereotypes. For example, Carol Gilligan, in her book *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, states that according to research, males play outdoors more often than girls do, they play in big, heterogeneous age groups more often, and they play competitive activities more frequently and for longer than girls do (Gilligan, 1993, p. 9).

Furthermore, Gilligan states, it appeared that boys liked the legal arguments just as much as they did the game itself, and even minor participants of smaller sizes or abilities took an equal part in these ongoing disputes (Gilligan, 1993, p. 9).

Numerous more examples can be given to the practical differences between the lifestyle of men and women from 7 to 70; however, as I have argued, these differences are mostly due to how society expects sexes to be. Because families mostly care about how their daughter looks and how their son acts, this way of parenting can further cause more women to be rather passive and more men to be relatively active; however, this difference is not due to the essence of being women or men, it is socially constructed and then perceived as our destiny.

As a response, Baron-Cohen can probably state that people with ASC have smaller brain parts than men in areas of the brain that, on average, are smaller in men than in women (such as the anterior cingulate, superior temporal gyrus, prefrontal cortex, and thalamus) (Baron-Cohen, 2010, p. 171, 172). In comparison, people who have ASC have even larger brain parts than normal in areas of the brain that are typically larger in men than in women (such as the amygdala, cerebellum, total brain size/weight, and head circumference) (Baron-Cohen, 2010, p. 171, 172). Thus, as a possible response to my argument, Baron-Cohen may answer with his empirical data concerning the brain structures of people with ASC, and further, men and women, to state that the difference of sex concerning its relation to ASC is not just observable through behaviors but also visible in the physical brain.

In order to reply to this critical point, I will use Cordelia Fine's paper 'Explaining, or Sustaining, the Status Quo? The Potentially Self-Fulfilling Effects of 'Hardwired' Accounts of Sex Differences.' According to Fine, there is a self-fulfilling side of,

arguments that there are ‘hardwired (essence-like, unchanging)’ sex differences, thus arguments that are made (on the topic of essential sex differences) with generalizations and inadequate (also personally interpreted) research carry an unethical aspect to it (Fine, 2012, p. 285). Fine argues that the argument that there are hardwired differences between the brains of men and women is just evidently invalid (Fine, 2012, p. 285, 286). She further sorted numerous examples that show that gender stereotypes influence social perception, thus fulfilling itself (Fine, 2012, p. 289). Thus, we can interpret that Baron-Cohen’s arguments, rather than explaining the situation, actually sustain the status quo that is created via social structures/conditions by possibly affecting/influencing people’s behaviors. Further, as I have already stated, the essentialist tradition (by looking more scientific yet still biased) is still actively decreasing the possibility of gender-equal understanding in society.

In addition to Freud's or Baron-Cohen’s essentialist arguments, there are also religious writings reinforce the association between femininity and submission. For example, Garcia reminds us that some passages of the Quran also call for a specific submission of a woman to her husband (Garcia, 2021, p. 28). Such a reminder emphasizes that women’s submission to their husbands is a tradition that is essentialized by connection to God’s wishes, thus a powerful cultural (well-seated) tradition.

So, from science to religion (and many other tools like, for example, media),

women's proper way of acting is to submit, and that is clearly to a man or to a system that is being created and managed by men. Since it is natural for a woman to be submissive, explaining the domination of men upon women in society also can be made with essentialist argumentation on sex, which further opens a way to argue that, according to Garcia, men's social superiority is not unjust (Garcia, 2021, p. 32).

In the following sections of *We Are Not Born Submissive*, Garcia explores an alternative picture to essentialism in gender without accepting strong constructivism by following Simone de Beauvoir's arguments from *The Second Sex*, which works on the question 'What is a woman?' (Garcia, 2021, p. 40, 42). Having a certain framework while minding this question is meaningful because if we have an idea of what a woman is, then we can notice women's relationship with submission and with other kinds of negative traits that are ascribed to femininity, which can further assist us in comprehending whether or not a revolution in women's manners would be possible and effective in solving the problem of 'otherness' of women in society.

Before explaining Beauvoir's position further, I should first explain the contrary extreme side of gender essentialism, namely the strong constructivism of gender. The basic idea of strong constructivism is that no biological or psychological foundation determines what it is to be a woman. In her paper 'Gender and Gender Terms,' Elizabeth Barnes states that skeptics, which I think means strong constructivism, argue gender is just an arbitrary collection of words and ideas. They argue that gender is not a single thing but rather how we choose to 'perform' in response to

‘sex-based stereotypes’. Also, it is unlikely that there is a stable gender concept (Barnes, 2019, p. 2).

Accordingly, Garcia states that Beauvoir argues, although it is false to claim that the only thing that distinguishes women from men is the name given to them, there is no unchangeable essence to a woman. So, she rejects both essentialism and strong constructivism and argues that women are the ones who are ‘in a certain situation’. Being a woman places one in a position where submission becomes a matter of destiny rather than an essence. It is a force made upon women by society through historical processes that is almost inescapably strong (Garcia, 2021, p. 42). These statements argue that there is a possibility that women can escape from submission since it is not their nature to be submissive, yet it is extremely challenging to escape from.

So, Beauvoir rejects biological determinism, which means that even though she accepts that there is a biological difference between men and women, that difference does not entirely determine their fate (Garcia, 2021, p. 45). She further rejects that there is a necessary distinction between femininity and masculinity. Yet she suggests that it is crucial to ask the question ‘What is a woman?’ since such a question examines differences between men and women throughout the ‘situation’ (Garcia, 2021, p. 47).

To understand what she means by the ‘situation,’ I will present Beauvoir’s following

arguments. According to Beauvoir, an answer to the question 'What is a woman' cannot be derived from an inherent essence, but rather, it can be derived from how a woman interacts with the outside world. Social interactions play a far more significant role than biology concerning sexual differences. Thus, women's existence in the world (by the way they live and the way they are perceived, so their engagement) shapes their identity (Garcia, 2021, p. 49). In other words, being a woman differs from being a man in many ways, but that does not occur because there is a difference in their essence. Rather, such difference occurs due to their place in society since both are situated in different manners, which further makes it impossible for them to exercise their freedom in the same manner (Garcia, 2021, p. 54). Here, Beauvoir contends that in order to understand the foundations upon which women's freedom can be affirmed, it is vital that we closely examine 'women's traditional destinies' (Garcia, 2021, p. 67).

There is an important aspect of society that binds femininity to women with certain types of manners, and that aspect is patriarchy. Garcia uses Beauvoir's definition of patriarchy, which is 'the social oppression of women by men', and states that through patriarchy, women become 'the other' and can mostly function as a man's object of admiration and desire (Garcia, 2021, p. 132). Kate Manne's famous book *Down Girl*, and her arguments on misogyny, patriarchy, and femininity are quite related to what we are dealing with here, so it would be beneficial to investigate. Manne, in general, states that patriarchy is a set of rules and institutions that require women to be feminine. In other words, according to Manne, to achieve its general goal, patriarchal

ideology needs all or most men to be patriarchs, that is, dominating over at least some women (Manne, 2018, p. 46). Moreover, misogyny can be viewed as the mechanism that sustains male domination and forces women to submit within a patriarchal social structure (Manne, 2018, p. 33). In patriarchal societies, Manne argues, misogyny would be less visible since women are most likely to play the roles that men want them to play (act submissive, acting in a way to serve men's interests); thus, there would be less reason for men to hate women (Manne, 2018, p. 47, 48). So, it seems like women's submission creates a momentary likeability towards them from men's perspective.

Moreover, according to Garcia, Beauvoir highlights how femininity is implanted in women's bodies in a patriarchal society. She claims that before women can even get to know and experience their own bodies, they already bear social meaning within. In other words, Beauvoir states that learning that our own body belongs to men's gaze before it truly belongs to us is a part of being a woman (it is part of women's 'situation' in the world.). So, a woman's body, according to Beauvoir, is that *'it is a social body before being a lived body and therefore functions as a destiny'* (Garcia, 2021, p. 133).

The concept of 'lived body,' Garcia states, was adopted by Beauvoir through her readings of Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty. The idea is that according to Beauvoir, 'the body' is a 'situation'. Thus, 'the idea of lived body' serves as both our system of thought for the world and the framework we use for things we do (Garcia,

2021, p. 141). As Garcia states, the concept of 'lived body' refers to the sense of 'being' a body rather than just 'having' one. As an outcome, it can be argued that women lack authority over their bodies, and that may be the reason why, as Garcia argues, women frequently view their bodies as a burden, a source of pain, or a danger, whereas men see theirs as a tool for climbing, playing, or exploring the world (so being active with their body) (Garcia, 2021, p. 142). As Beauvoir said, to understand what a woman is to comprehend what it is like to exist in a body that has already been made into an object through the male gaze (Garcia, 2021, p. 154).

Here, I want to emphasize more on the topic of 'being-becoming women' by introducing Natalie Stoljar's paper "*Essence, Identity, and the Concept of Woman.*". The aim is to offer a more contemporary picture of gender that seems to be suitable for the idea of becoming a woman. Stoljar, in her paper, aims to offer a theory that is anti-essentialist, yet allows one to talk about women as a subject. She follows two anti-essentialist arguments and aims to check her account with them after offering an account. The first one is called 'the naturalizing argument' which explains essentialism in terms of attribution of nature to all women that are 'fixed and unchanging', and such attribution is criticized for many reasons such as its assumption that women are in nature weaker than men. So, Stoljar stated that 'the naturalizing argument' offers a socially constructed account of gender thus certain qualities of being a woman are not fixed but occur through social events (Stoljar, 1995, p. 262). The second one is called, Stoljar argues, 'the diversity argument' which argues against implicit universalism in essentialist arguments. So, there are no

‘common identities’ among women that all women certainly share since there are obvious differences between women in race, class, tradition, and so on (Stoljar, 1995, p. 262).

There are different kinds of arguments that can be made to suggest that while following ‘the naturalizing argument’ and ‘the diversity argument’ one can point out a class of women so that feminism as a political movement can have a subject and one such way is to follow the idea of ‘resemblance nominalism’ (Stoljar, 1995, p. 263). Stoljar’s aim is to argue for an account that follows ‘resemblance nominalism’ for the type of women. The idea of ‘resemblance nominalism’ is that women as a type can be constituted of different tokens as its members, and such tokens are unified not through sharing the same universal but through being parts of the same resemblance structure (Stoljar, 1995, p. 263).

To be clearer, Stoljar’s positive account suggests that a ‘cluster concept’ is one in which our conception of a woman consists of a collection of distinct qualities; therefore, to meet the requirements of the concept, an individual must meet a significant number of these features. Further, ‘the resemblance structure’ that develops among specific members of the type makes the ‘woman’ type what it is (Stoljar, 1995, p. 282).

Stoljar states that there are four features in the ‘concept of women’. The first one suggests that the definition of being a woman is based on the ‘female sex’ which

requires carrying traits associated with 'human females', such as the XX chromosome, general form, sex characteristics, and so on. The second one suggests that what it means to be a woman is characterized by a variety of elements such as menstrual cramps, childbirth and breastfeeding fear of rape, (or at least having the possibility to encounter those experiences), and so on (Stoljar, 1995, p. 283).

Moreover, the third one suggests that what it is to be a woman includes roles like dressing in a typical feminine manner experiencing sex-based oppression, and so on. The fourth one suggests that because physical characteristics and other qualities allow for identification, there are self-attributions as well as other people's attributions (Stoljar, 1995, p. 284). Therefore, Stoljar concludes, that 'woman' is a cluster idea that applies to a similarity class. When a person possesses enough of the attributes necessary to apply the previously discussed idea, they are considered women (Stoljar, 1995, p. 288).

After clarifying what it means to 'become women', in the following chapter of my thesis, I will work on Mary Wollstonecraft's idea of revolution in female manners. Here, I should state why I aim to work on Wollstonecraft's solution to the oppression of women rather than Beauvoir's solution. The general reason is that Beauvoir's solution in *'The Second Sex'* is mostly located around possible solutions for white middle-class women and seems to be dysfunctional regarding, for example, economically less advantaged black women.

The fourth part, namely the part called '*Towards Liberation*' and the conclusion of '*Second Sex*' is where Beauvoir offers solutions to the problem of 'otherness'. One important solution she suggests comes with the ability of one's transcendence. If one has the ability to foresee oneself while in an X position, to a better-X position, and be able to pass negative daily situations then we can say that person has the ability to transcendence. The very opposite of transcendence is immanence. For example, imagine Sasha Forrest's situation when she was in a relationship with Mark. She, for a long time, lived her life without the ability to foresee a better future for herself, including her further education, her career, her future economic freedom, her reputation, and so on. Instead, her priorities were mostly related to benefiting Mark. Thus, she failed to free herself from the restrictions of her relationship which can be seen as an example of immanence. As Beauvoir puts it, the main thing that women need, in terms of attaining freedom, is the ability to learn from the experience of transcendence (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 843).

Moreover, Beauvoir gives a picture of gender equality as follows (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 856):

A world where men and women would be equal is easy to imagine because it is exactly the one the Soviet Revolution promised: women raised and educated exactly like men would work under the same conditions and for the same salaries; erotic freedom would be accepted by custom, but the sexual act would no longer be considered a remunerable 'service'; women would be

obliged to provide another livelihood for themselves; marriage would be based on a free engagement that the spouses could break when they wanted to; motherhood would be freely chosen—that is, birth control and abortion would be allowed—and in return, all mothers and their children would be given the same rights; maternity leave would be paid for by the society that would have responsibility for the children, which does not mean that they would be taken from their parents but that they would not be abandoned to them.

Despite her clear expression of what it would be like to see women and men as equals in society and her critical explanation of the importance of transcendence, she does not offer ways in which how such a situation can be attained other than saying that participating in work life would be helpful and one's peer should be able to see her as equals. For example, she states many women nowadays have achieved financial and social independence in their careers. When it comes to women's possibilities, they are the ones who are in dispute (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 815). Further, according to Beauvoir, women would become less fixated on their femininity if men were satisfied to love a peer rather than a slave (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 819).

However, these suggestions when said to a, for example, economically disadvantaged, Trans, and Black woman it seems like the possibilities of such suggestions to work seem unlikely. Since it seems easy one can imagine a woman in an economically hard situation who has been working for years yet her working even

makes her life worse off in terms of equality and freedom. Thus, that is why in the following chapter, Wollstonecraft's revolution in female manners will be investigated. Nevertheless, I must state that even though I think that there are many cases where Beauvoir's solution might not practically affect the problem of 'otherness', I still think that the general existentialist project that Beauvoir offers can be understood from a more inclusive and eye opening perspective. The reason I wanted to focus on Wollstonecraft is not that I think Beauvoir and Wollstonecraft should be compared but because I think from a perspective of practical experience, Wollstonecraft offers a more detailed solution.

In the second chapter, I have examined the concept of female submission. In particular, I have emphasized how some aspects of femininity that are ascribed to women, submission in this case, are causing women to be oppressed and discriminated against. In *We Are Not Born Submissive*, Manon Garcia states that the idea that submission, passivity, masochism, and so on are essential characteristics of women comes from early gender essentialist studies (Garcia, 2021, p. 26). Other than essentialist explanations, one can go two ways: strong constructivism or Beauvoir's theory on what it is to be a woman. I argue that one needs to have a sense of what it is to be a woman to further understand its connection with femininity and submission. Beauvoir makes a non-essentialist, yet biology-considered explanation of what is to become a woman. In that explanation, being a woman is being in a certain 'situation' in society that can be changed yet hard to change. Thus, Beauvoir argues that women's existence in the world (by the way they live and the way they

are perceived, so their engagement) shapes their identity (Garcia, 2021, p. 49).

Overall, I argue that to solve the problem of the ‘otherness’ of women in society and to achieve a revolution in manners, the nature of femininity and its social attributions should be investigated, and in this chapter, the focus is on submission. Finally, in the following chapter of my dissertation, I will work on Mary Wollstonecraft’s idea of revolution in female manners. Overall, I argue that to solve the problem of the ‘otherness’ of women in society and to achieve a revolution in manners, the nature of femininity and its social attributions should be investigated, and in this chapter, the focus is on submission.

CHAPTER 3

WOLLSTONECRAFT'S REVOLUTION IN FEMALE MANNERS AS A SOLUTION TO BEAUVOIR'S 'OTHERNESS'

The third chapter concerns Wollstonecraft's revolution in female manners. The general aim is to see if Wollstonecraft's revolution in female manners is more effective at solving the problem of otherness in comparison to the open-ended solution Beauvoir offers. To start with, I will first explain what Wollstonecraft means when she says manners and revolution. Basically, following Wollstonecraft's writings, it seems like we can count manners as actions that reflect the value of morals. Further, a Wollstonecraftian revolution suggests that knowledge and education are the means by which such a revolution and liberty can be attained. Moreover, in this chapter, I will concentrate on two of the numerous manners that Wollstonecraft discusses throughout her book that need to change which are called sentimentality and obsession with physical beauty. Following my explanation and illustration of Wollstonecraftian manners, I would like to investigate if Beauvoir and Wollstonecraft differ in any way regarding potential solutions for women's oppression. Beauvoir's arguments were presented in the first section; hence, a detailed examination of Wollstonecraft's arguments will be given throughout the

third chapter. Overall, the main argument of this section is that in terms of eliminating women's oppression, the revolution in feminine manners is a better answer than Beauvoir's suggestions because it is more inclusive.

Before trying to get an answer to the question of whether Wollstonecraft's revolution in female manners is more effective at solving the problem of otherness in comparison to the open-ended solution Beauvoir offers at the end of the *Second Sex*, I think it would be useful to clarify what Wollstonecraft means by manners and revolution. Wollstonecraft argues that morals and manners are so closely related that they are frequently confused. It should be remembered that manners are merely morals' '*natural mirror*' (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 22). Furthermore, morality becomes hollow when multiple factors have led to '*factitious and corrupt*' manners (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 22). So, if manners are '*natural mirrors*' of morals, then, for example, if honesty is a moral value, then telling the truth can be seen as acting in a certain manner. So, it seems like we can count manners as actions that reflect the value of morals. They are not purely actions since we seek to see a reflection of morals from them, and they are not purely morals since we seek to see some kind of a change in the world as people perform manners. However, it should be stated that manners can reflect the wrong kind of morals, and these are the manners that need to be changed.

Further, Wollstonecraft states that it is time to bring forward a revolution in manners to women. It's time to give women back their lost dignity and encourage them to

change themselves in order to change the world (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 71).

Knowledge and education are the means by which such a revolution and liberty can be attained in the Wollstonecraftian framework (Fjørtoft, 2014, p. 257). Here, I want to focus on the notion of the Wollstonecraftian revolution and how it is supposed to work in a more detailed way. In chapter twelve, namely 'On National Education,' Wollstonecraft offers a way of attaining her kind of revolution through a changed national education.

According to Wollstonecraft, boys and girls who start school should be educated in the same classes so that in this way, girls and boys can communicate with each other more often, get to know each other instead of alienating, and learn to establish good relationships at an earlier age while learning same subjects rather than being forced to pursue different interests (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 196). Wollstonecraft also suggests that it is really important for children to spend some time (at times when they are not supposed to be at a class like evenings and weekends) with their parents since the education that children get from their parents on how to pursue good manners and how to be properly domesticated carries enormous importance (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 192).

Wollstonecraft states (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 192):

Public education, of every denomination, should be directed to form citizens;
but if you wish to make good citizens, you must first exercise the affections

of a son and a brother. This is the only way to expand the heart; for public affections, as well as public virtues, must ever grow out of the private character.

One other important aspect of the Wollstonecraftian revolution that needs to be mentioned is the similarities it holds with the French Revolution and Aristocratic manners. The editor of the book (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*), Eileen Hunt Botting, even informs us that as a proponent of the French Revolution, Wollstonecraft's writings were presented to the public as potential causes of chaos in politics (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 2). Further, the very beginning of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, is a dedication to Talleyrand-Perigord who is one of the followers of the French Revolution and the Late Bishop of Autun. Wollstonecraft states that she wishes that Talleyrand-Perigord would carefully read and consider her book for the sake of women's well-being (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 21).

According to Wollstonecraft, morality becomes meaningless when a variety of factors have led to '*factitious and corrupt*' manners as I have already stated but what is important to focus on here is that this occurs especially if one accepts such manners at a young age (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 22). So, the right kind of education that is given at an early age carries enormous importance in creating and habituating the right kind of manners and a meaningful moral ground for one to act.

Wollstonecraft further states that for there to be a real change in society, women should also be a part of that change. Since women constantly interact with men and

raise children a change without women would constantly cause problems and eventually fail (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 22).

Wollstonecraft rightfully states (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 23):

If indeed this be their destination, arguments may be drawn from reason: and thus augustly supported, the more understanding women acquire, the more they will be attached to their duty—comprehending it—for unless they comprehend it, unless their morals be fixed on the same immutable principle as those of man, no authority can make them discharge it in a virtuous manner. They may be convenient slaves, but slavery will have its constant effect, degrading the master and the abject dependent.

She points out to the Bishop that this constant discrimination being continued in the *New Constitution* is a flaw of the very constitution which seems like a powerful move for one to ask for change (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 23).

Wollstonecraft adds (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 24):

I wish, Sir, to set some investigations of this kind afloat in France; and should they lead to a confirmation of my principles, when your constitution has revised the Rights of Woman may be respected, if it is fully proved that reason calls for this respect, and loudly demands justice for one half of the

human race.

Meanwhile, Sasha Fiercely, who now enjoys being fiercely independent after a terrible breakup realizes that she also needs to understand what manners are and how the right kinds of manners can be habituated so that she will not find herself as weak as she was in her past relationship ever again. It seems like what she needs to do is to form the right kind of moral values with the help of reason, education, and knowledge and rightfully act upon them to reflect them as actions. However, it is important to realize that such a form of change that one people aim to achieve herself requires a great amount of effort and patience since it seeks attention to the inner self and also being conscious of one's actions while there needs to be a great amount of time to pass so that learning of right manners can start to be part of a personal trait. I should remind the fact that what Sasha is after is more of a personal level change while what Wollstonecraft is after is more of a societal change so while Sasha mostly needs personal effort what needs to be is greater time and also institutional support so that what Wollstonecraft seeks can be attained.

So, knowledge and education that are equally given to all genders are supposed to reshape our manners in the right way so that we can get rid of the wrong kinds of manners and emotions and act more rationally. By far, I have discussed how certain kinds of attributions to femininity can be destructive towards gender equality and the liberation of women. One important example was submission. We can understand submission as a manner that is associated with femininity and then women, and that

association weakens women on the path to empowerment. It is clear to me that particular manners need revolution if we seek liberation. Throughout her book, Wollstonecraft mentions many manners that should be changed, and I will focus on two of them in this section, namely sentimentality, and obsession over physical appearance, since both of them are still pretty relevant today in being associated with femininity.

First, I will start with sentimentality. Wollstonecraft continuously fights against the social acceptance that women are supposed to be and naturally are extremely emotional and romantic. As stated by Claudia L. Johnson, Wollstonecraft argues that sentimentality, dependence, and weakness (of bodily power and health) are what humankind should avoid, which I think is born from the wrong kind of manners and emotions, while reason, independence, and physical health suits human nature, which I think is born from the right kind of manners, emotions, knowledge, and education (Johnson, p.24). What should be noted here is that Wollstonecraft is against sentimentality and extreme (unrealistic) romantic writings not only for women but for men. Johnson, for example, reminds us that Wollstonecraft contends in the first vindication (*Rights of Men*) that the practice of masculine sentimentality naturalizes class and sex subordination (Johnson, 1995, p. 25).

Second, I will continue with the obsession with physical appearance. One thing that Wollstonecraft repeatedly argues throughout her book is that women should not possess and develop their one-sided and overly intense goal to please men by being

pretty and sweet. Wollstonecraft suggests that when women only consider their physical beauty, the pleasure that they give to men, their situation becomes ridiculous (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 68). She argues that one should educate herself with virtue and reason and educate her body to be strong and healthy, not pretty and weak (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 77). Also, Wollstonecraft states that physical illusions that occur from a distorted perception of education have likely caused the false system of feminine manners to demean the entire sex (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 80).

Reading through her arguments, it almost sounds like when women are concerned with their physical appearance, it is a sin in the Wollstonecraftian sense. But in society, women constantly face the opposite pressure. What I mean is that not being concerned about physical appearance is almost sinful within social norms (and the same thing can also be argued for being emotional!). For example, if you are hairy, without makeup, a little overweight, or too masculine due to your muscles, you get blamed for not looking womanly. So, a woman would face different kinds of pressures and negative responses from both caring about physical appearance and not caring about physical appearance.

I understand that Wollstonecraft is mostly angry about women ‘only’ caring about physical appearance and about people expecting women to ‘only’ care about their physical appearance, so it might be okay if they care about how they appear if they also care about their physical and mental health and most importantly about improving their virtue and reason. However, it is not clear how one can attain a

balance so that both sides can be satisfied. Here, I should note that women should not feel obligated to satisfy either expectation. What I want to show is that if we accept that Wollstonecraft's ideas are correct (so if women choose not to only care about their physical appearance, it will benefit them), then it is not really clear how a woman should balance her efforts on physical appearance and personal growth.

First, one way to answer such a question is that she should not consider physical appearance at all, which I would disagree with. I think that as long as there are other things that a woman also improves herself at, she should be at least free to fancy styling, makeup, and so on. By free, I mean free from any worry that, for example, by wearing pretty dresses, she will be banned from feminism. Second, one other way to answer such a question is that she should find a way to moderate between physical appearance and personal growth, which is problematic without considering the right way of such moderation. I guess that what Wollstonecraft has in mind is that a person with a good sense of understanding would end up having a personal degree for oneself that works best in terms of moderating between physical appearance and personal growth.

To make further suggestions on the matter, Wollstonecraft's intentions should be more clearly stated. She uses a birdcage analogy to express herself. According to Wollstonecraft, women have been taught that beauty is a woman's most important aspect since birth. As a result, the mind of a woman finds itself inside a cage that confines it to only wonder about the way the body looks. Lucky to them,

Wollstonecraft adds, men engage in a variety of jobs and hobbies that focus their attention and shape their open minds. On the other hand, sadly, women have their minds fixed on the smallest aspect of themselves all the time, namely the way that they look (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 70). Further, Wollstonecraft asks why women are so blind to the fact that they are treated like queens, but that is only fake respect when they are '*in the noon of beauty's power*'. Then she influentially adds, '*Confined then in cages like the feathered race, they have nothing to do but to plume themselves, and stalk with mock majesty from perch to perch*'. (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 83).

The bird in a cage analogy, or the idea of being imprisoned, I think, is a helpful way to show how sometimes being obsessed with how valuable you are on the scale of the male gaze can make one feel. Considering the fashion trends and social positioning back in Wollstonecraft's times, it seems only fair to remind ourselves that while puffy long dresses and corsets forced the women who wore them to stand like motionless ornaments all day long (causing them to end up not being able to run, exercise, so they end up being weak and unhealthy), they also made them economically dependent on men due to their high expense and the fact that women were not part of working life. Not being able to move freely and being more and more dependent on a male figure daily initiates two stages of dependence, both physical and physiological. Both stages feed each other, which makes the dependence even deeper, which turns into one of the strongest and everlasting oppressions that women have been facing.

Similar to Wollstonecraft, Marilyn Frye, in her paper on 'Oppression,' explains the concept of oppression with the analogy of a birdcage. According to Frye, oppression can be described as oppressed people's lives being shaped by certain barriers that are not avoidable. She argues that those barriers systematically restrict any motion of the so-called prison (Frye, 2000, p. 12).

The analogy of birdcage aims to demonstrate that there are two levels of seeing things: in a microscopic and in a macroscopic way. She states that if we look at a birdcage in a microscopic way, we may not understand that the bird is behind bars and is trapped. However, Frye argues if we look at the birdcage in a macroscopic way, in other words, if we look at the bigger picture, we can understand that the bird is in some sense imprisoned. Similarly, Frye argues oppressed people are like birds in a cage, and we cannot understand that they are oppressed unless we look at the bigger picture (Frye, 2000, p. 12).

Just like Frye's birdcage of oppression, Wollstonecraft's birdcage and the oppressed part can be better understood if we can look at it in a macroscopic way. Sasha remembered the times when she was constantly changing herself so that she would fit into Mark's life better. She remembered all the times she could not wear what she wanted as she wished because she thought the only way to look good enough next to Mark was to have a smaller waist, longer legs, prettier dresses, priced bags, and shoes. When she followed all the rules that she thought she should follow, she was still feeling lacking. Next to the feeling of insufficiency, she was also always

uncomfortable, unable to act freely but what was worst was that she was going through so much pain to have fuller lips, upturned eyebrows, and a small nose. While looking back at that times, Sasha thought, that even though today women have more options and freedom in the choice of how they want to look, there are cases where more choice brings greater suffering.

After explaining and exemplifying Wollstonecraftian manners, I would like to see if there is any difference between Beauvoir and Wollstonecraft in terms of a possible solution to the oppression of women. So, to start with, Wollstonecraft suggests that if gender differences were not established way before natural differences, girls and boys would interact in a genuine and innocuous way (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 68). According to Wollstonecraft, one of the examples that can be given of the unnatural distinction created between women and men is as follows: men, she states, have a variety of jobs and interests that occupy their time and give the character of their minds. However, she adds, women are mostly limited to focusing only on themselves (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 70). Furthermore, Wollstonecraft states that she sincerely hopes that the lines between the sexes in society will be blurred and that the weak character attributed to women is due to the lack of understanding. Moreover, she adds, the same factor can explain women's preference for elegance over 'heroic virtues' (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 84). Thus, the revolution in manners is supposed to happen due to poor education and can be reversed into a better state with accurate education that all genders can be exposed to equally and freely.

Wollstonecraft further argues that women have missed out on the beneficial pursuits of civilization and have inherited all its useless habits and errors by becoming the prey of their senses since their sensibility gets fired up and their understanding is ignored (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 88). “*Educate women like men, and the more they resemble our sex, the less power will they have over us,*” says Rousseau, and by using this quote, Wollstonecraft states that the goal is to see women empowered in a way that they would have power over themselves, which can be achieved by giving them the same educational opportunities as men (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 90).

Without attaining a certain kind of equality between the sexes in society, one cannot expect morality to flourish. In Wollstonecraft’s words, ‘*Virtuous equality will not rest firmly even when founded on a rock if one half of mankind be chained to its bottom by fate, for they will be continually undermining it through ignorance or pride*’ (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 171). Similarly, Wollstonecraft asserts that it is pointless to anticipate virtue from women until they are, to some extent, independent of men (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 171).

Moreover, according to Wollstonecraft, the best type of education consists of studying exercises that are optimally designed to protect and strengthen the body and virtuous habits (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 47). Furthermore, Wollstonecraft adds that a woman who follows certain mental and physical strength training will manage to cultivate many qualities, making herself into a friend rather than a submissive wife in her relation to her husband (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 56). Wollstonecraft states that women are only taught to find happiness in love, participate in sensual feelings, and

embrace ideas about passions. This leads them to ignore their responsibilities in life (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 215). In order to be able to one day see women as truly beneficial contributors to society, Wollstonecraft reasons that they should be led to develop a logical, knowledge-based love for their nation through the cultivation of widespread understanding (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 224).

After explaining the general lines of Wollstonecraft's theory, we should remind ourselves that the question of this chapter was whether or not Wollstonecraft's revolution in female manners is more effective at solving the problem of 'otherness' of women than the open-ended solution Beauvoir seems to offer at the end of *Second Sex*. When comparing Beauvoir and Wollstonecraft's grasp on a possible solution, it could be immediately argued that as Beauvoir does, Wollstonecraft fails to refer to women outside the scope of white and middle-class.

At first glance, it seems fair to argue as such since Wollstonecraft starts her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, by remarking that those in the middle class capture her interest the most since they seem to be in their most authentic self (Wollstonecraft, 2014, p. 31). Yet, I understand this sentence's aim to state that because people in the middle class are the ones who are most open to change and education, the start of the revolution would work best for the middle class, while the revolution itself is for all women. The reason why I understand that the revolution itself is for all women is because the general idea of her solution lies around the ideas of the power of the mind, virtues, equality, and education, which would only really

work when applied by most of the society rather than some part of it. Thus, it seems to me that since the revolution in female manners is more inclusive and would only work if applied inclusively, it is a better solution than what Beauvoir suggests in terms of solving the oppression of women.

In the third chapter, I argued that Mary Wollstonecraft's revolution in female manners offers a successful solution to the 'otherness' of women especially when compared to Beauvoir's possible solution. In *Second Sex*, Beauvoir concludes with a potential solution for women's oppression. However, I contend that Wollstonecraft's framework can be understood in a far more inclusive way when compared to Beauvoir's since Beauvoir's solution could only be effective for middle-class white women. According to Wollstonecraft, a national education program and a fair distribution of virtue knowledge among all genders is the only way to bring about a revolution in feminine manners. Through the revolution, it is hoped and suggested that women's 'otherness' will diminish, and they will become equal, knowledgeable parties living peacefully beside one another in society.

CHAPTER 4

THE QUANDARY OF CARE: A GOOD THING OR A BAD THING?

In the fourth chapter, care as a manner will be investigated. I will first introduce Wollstonecraft's arguments on motherhood. Wollstonecraft suggests that women are the ones who are supposed to be the ones to carry the heavy portion of the care work of their children. Further, to explain Carol Gilligan's work on care ethics, I will introduce Caterina Botti's paper 'Feminine Virtues or Feminist Virtues? The Debate on Care Ethics Revisited.' As Botti points out, Gilligan's primary point is that traits like empathy and care, which were once thought to be barriers to women's moral potential, should instead be emphasized and viewed as strengths. Botti argues that Gilligan's conception of care should be viewed in various ways rather than looking at care as a simple capacity. Up until this point in my dissertation, I took a similar approach to Beauvoir when it came to some of the associations of femininity, such as submission, obsession with physical beauty, and sentimentality. I argued that these associations are not inherently part of being a woman and should be abandoned in order to revolutionize women's status from 'the other' to the equal. Yet, care is difficult, and Gilligan and those who have followed care ethics since then have some insightful ideas about the importance of caring. Here, Sandrine Bergès' in her book *A*

Feminist Perspective on Virtue Ethics, offers the possible scenario where such a problem may be solved. She states since they are a part of society (without discrimination between men and women), people should be obligated to engage in caregiving. Overall, the main argument of this chapter is that when practicing care ethics, it is important to recognize that providing care should be a gender-neutral role.

First, it is a good idea to start the discussion on care from Wollstonecraft's arguments on motherhood to further be able to decide whether or not care is a sort of manner in which women should proudly count as part of their lives or is it sort of a manner which should be changed throughout a revolution in manners proposed by Wollstonecraft and explained in the previous chapter. In 'Wet-Nursing and Political Participation: The Republican Approaches to Motherhood of Mary Wollstonecraft and Sophie de Grouchy', Sandrine Bergès states that according to Wollstonecraft, if a woman is also a mother, she should follow all the duties of motherhood. One of the duties can be exemplified by breastfeeding (Bergès, 2016, p. 203). Further, Wollstonecraft suggests that women are the ones who are supposed to be the ones to carry the heavy portion of the care work of their children. Yet, since virtues are driven by reason and reason is genderless, men and women are equal in terms of possessing virtues in the Wollstonecraftian framework, so how come when it comes to care, one gender is more responsible than the other is an important question to be asked (Bergès, 2016, p. 203).

Bergès states that it is clear in Wollstonecraft's writings that she views mothering duties as mostly a duty of women due to the natural abilities of women (for example, being able to feed the baby by breastfeeding). What follows, according to Bergès, is that first Wollstonecraft believes the physical and emotional nurture of infants is essential to raising morally upright adults. Second, she is limited in some ways by the expectations of eighteenth-century England on what it meant to be a mother (Bergès, 2016, p. 205). So, it seems to me that according to Wollstonecraft care as a manner, especially when given from the mother to the child, is an important kind of a manner in which women should proudly count as part of their lives. However, it should be noted that this is all the good qualities of care and the negative social aspects it brings to women should also be considered; thus, further investigation is required.

In A Different Voice, Carol Gilligan introduces her book by stating that it documents several ways of thinking about relationships and how these ways are connected to male and female voices in literary and psychological texts (Gilligan, 1993, p. 1). Despite the earlier scientific ignorance of women's voices, Gilligan sees something valuable in listening and introducing what women have to say about their own experiences. It should be important to state that at the very introduction of her book, she states that the different voice that she is focusing on is associated with women throughout her empirical observation (Gilligan, 1993, p. 2). Such an explanation can, I think, mean that she is not aiming to introduce this different voice as an essence of women but rather as something we can observe from their engagements and could be

occurring due to social order.

Gilligan states that early childhood care is mainly the responsibility of women worldwide (Gilligan, 1993, p. 7). Gilligan explains further things on this, such as that men and women perceive relationships and dependency in different ways. Since the development of masculinity depends on separation from the mother, individuation, and separation are closely related to gender identity in boys and men. Male gender identity is challenged by intimacy, and female gender identity is threatened by isolation, Gilligan adds. Masculinity is characterized by separation, while femininity is defined by attachment. As a result, she argues women typically struggle with independence, whereas men typically struggle with relationships (Gilligan, 1993, p. 8).

To further explain Gilligan's work on care ethics, I will now introduce Caterina Botti's paper 'Feminine Virtues or Feminist Virtues? The Debate on Care Ethics Revisited,' since I think her grasp of Gilligan's theory is deeply insightful. The main argument put up by Gilligan, as Botti notes, is that qualities like empathy and care that were previously seen as constraints to women's moral potential ought to be highlighted and seen positively (Botti, 2015, p. 112). From this point, with many later followers, something called care ethics was brought to life with the insight of seeing this capacity not as a flaw but as a moral capacity to be '*attentive, caring, and responsive in relation to the needs of others.*' (Botti, 2015, p. 112).

According to Botti, the feminist strategy that Gilligan holds when introducing this different new voice is not to suggest that men and women are equal and that the appearing difference in equality is due to the constant discrimination and oppression that women have been facing (so, if such oppression can be eliminated, differences in men and women can also be eliminated.). Instead, it suggests that men and women are equal and that the appearing difference in equality is due to constant ignorance of women's ways of experiencing and expressing themselves (so if such ignorance can be eliminated, differences in men and women can also flourish but both be equally heard). Thus, Botti states that Gilligan acknowledges women's differences but not as inferiority and that morality needs to be rearranged in a manner that recognizes such differences (Botti, 2015, p. 113).

Sasha used to believe something similar to this. She used to think that there are different roles assigned to different genders and to keep the harmony going each gender should follow their own assigned role. However, as cruel as it seems, she realized that many of the roles assigned to women are just works on behalf of the patriarchal system by weakening women and strengthening men and their position over women. She thought maybe accepting that there are different voices of different genders is just a mythology of patriarchal traditions. Maybe everybody has different voices but that cannot be categorized into genders, races, ages, colors, or sexual orientations of people, and doing so does not represent those groups of people but just stereotyping them without letting them express who they are. Sasha was confused back then, and she is confused now but she wanted to give further

understanding of care as a manner to see if it is some kind of a voice that is good for humans, not just women.

Botti argues that one crucial aspect of Gilligan's theory, as I have already slightly mentioned, is that she is not, for example, like Freud, offering an essentialist theory on gender. Botti emphasizes that by pointing out Gilligan's idea that the different voice Gilligan is introducing is an '*empirical and not absolute*' voice (Botti, 2015, p. 115). Botti adds that this is more evident in her later works when Gilligan asserts that '*difference is a marker of the human condition and not a problem to be solved*' (Botti, 2015, p. 116).

One other element that I want to mention is that according to Botti's reading of *In a Different Voice*, the idea of care can and should be seen in a broader range and in a more complex form than just, for example, nurturing (Botti, 2015, p. 125). The very suggestion Botti gives is that the meaning of care should be redesigned (Botti, 2015 p. 143). As I understand, this is Botti's way of seeing care as a feminist virtue rather than a feminine virtue, and she states that care ethics should be seen as feminist ethics (Botti, 2015, p. 147). The way to understand care in a more complex form or, in other words, to see care ethics as feminist ethics, Botti offers, is being formed by including the grasp of one's own limits, which is broadened with '*imagination, attention to details or through listening and dialogue*' rather than just understanding care in terms of '*sympathetic or empathic psychological mechanisms*' (Botti, 2015, p. 147, 148). According to Botti, in this case, imagination is employed as a tool that

can change and broaden our sensitivity to the needs and sufferings of others, as well as open up our '*mental landscape*' by enabling us to recognize even the most minor elements crucial for a particular need's being successfully taken care of (Botti, 2015, p. 148).

Moreover, Botti goes on to say that all of those instances that we can include inside the notion of care, such as '*sentiments, feelings, sympathy, imagination, attentiveness, communication, and dialogue,*' are generally regarded as valuable resources that may help us expand our understanding and experience, which will allow us to engage with others' suffering and overcome our '*egoism and biases*'. Put another way, these instances facilitate constructive communication between ourselves and others. Finally, she suggests that care is also a capacity to be able to develop attention to the instability of one's own '*mental contents or feelings*' alongside other people's sufferings and needs (Botti, 2015, p. 150). I consider that maybe thinking about care as a complex manner may not solve the social burden it brings to women, but it can help us understand its value.

Further, Botti states that in *Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir asserts that men and women are equal, but her kind of equality does not have fixed limits and includes differences between the sexes. So, following such way of argument, certain feminine virtues are only associated with women due to the patriarchal form of society and its oppression, which finds such associations as harmful to women and should be reduced (Botti, 2015, p. 136). It is clear that Gilligan holds a different manner and

counts certain virtues as something to be recognized and represented. Until this stage of my dissertation, concerning certain associations of femininity, like submission, obsession with physical beauty, and sentimentality, I followed a similar path to Beauvoir and argued that such attributions of femininity actually are not naturally a part of being a woman and should be concerned as the manner to be abandoned to revolutionize women's position from 'the other' to the equal. However, care is tricky; further, Gilligan and people who have been following care ethics after her have some good insights concerning the value of care and the value of letting women express their caring side. What I also consider as an important question is whether or not one looking at the case of care (counting it as a feminist virtue rather than a feminine virtue, as Botti suggests) in a more complex manner would really solve the possible oppression that occurs by counting care as being associated with women as a voice.

To have a better grasp of the topic, I would like to introduce Sandrine Bergès' book *A Feminist Perspective on Virtue Ethics*. The book, in general, and especially the sixth chapter, which is called 'Care, Gender, and the Public Life,' offers an emphasis on the possible oppressions that could occur by care being strongly associated with women and, further, a possible solution to it. Bergès states that different than other kinds of virtues, care is mainly practiced inside the home rather than outside, so it is mostly a private activity, not public (Bergès, 2016, p. 129).

Bergès continues by stating that '*the caring universe*,' namely inside the home, tends

to be a closed one, while '*the public universe*' does very little to meet the needs and wants of caregivers. This is how the public universe has been arranged over the centuries by the ones who are not caregivers or caretakers. As Bergès states, for example, due to white middle-aged men's dominance in academic philosophy, schedules are arranged accordingly with the way they live. For example, it might be possible for a white man to hang out with a guest speaker in a bar after their talk, but a caregiver will probably have to be at home right after the working hours are over (Bergès, 2016, p. 140).

The way public activities are being normalized since arranged without taking into account, for example, mothers who are taking care of their children while trying to engage in work life, either excludes or makes it really hard for such women to attend those public activities which have been an enormous problem for caretakers (especially women since care is very much gendered in the perception of society) who both have to take care of others and wants to be part of public affairs (Bergès, 2016, p. 133).

Further on, Bergès offers the possible scenario where such a problem may be solved. In a nutshell, she states that since there is value in being a caregiver and since there will always be people who need to be cared for, and also since only a certain group of people is being excluded from society because they are caring for someone is not fair and should be changed the perception of care should be changed accordingly (Bergès, p.134). Bergès argues that '*caring should be central to moral theory, not*

simply something women are expected to do but something that needs to be done, that matters, that is morally valuable' (Bergès, 2016, p. 134). So, since they are a part of a society (without discrimination between men and women), people should be obligated to engage in caregiving.

As military work is being forced on young people, caregiving can be made obligatory, Bergès reminds us. People can learn how to take care of and give the people who are in need of their educated care as a part of social duty (Bergès, 2016, p. 142, 143). Also, to make people gain something from caring for others, the role that they played as a caregiver, if positive, then could participate as a bonus to their education life so that their engagement in care could help them find jobs, be accepted for academic positions, and so on (Bergès, p.144).

Here, I think one important suggestion is that what needs to be done while engaging in care ethics is to see care as a genderless capacity. Women can be good at caring more than men, but that does not entail that we should see care as associated with being a woman. However, following Gilligan, Bergès, and Botti's arguments on care, it seems clear that care is a positive attribution to have, especially if we perceive it in its complex version, as Botti suggests. What follows is that Bergès' suggestion of adding care to public life as a learned and practiced capacity (and even in some sense forced, like military service and maybe like school education) and making it by perceiving care as genderless seems to be a very beneficial practice to society. If what Botti suggests is correct with the limits of care, then publicly learned and

experienced care as a virtue can even be part of a solution to women's position as the other since, as I have stated, Botti suggests that this complex form of care encourages people to be in better communication with themselves and 'the others' (Botti, 2015, p. 150).

Concerning the suggestion, I made that care should be perceived from gender-free lenses, Gilligan argues something relatable in her book *Joining the Resistance*, which was written and published later than her famous book *In A Different Voice*. Basically, Gilligan suggests that this different voice that is mostly observable from women (so as stated it is an empirical observation) should be generalized and observed from men too but difference in voices occurs not due to natural gender differences but due to social themes (Gilligan, 2011, p. 24). It follows from her suggestion that men should be more caring, and feminine, and they should aim to sustain the different voices women have so that the world would be a better place and in that version of society care would not count as a different voice, but it would count as a general voice. According to Gilligan caring is a feminine virtue in a patriarchal society. Caring is a human virtue in a democratic society. So, within a patriarchal setting, a feminist ethic of care is a different voice (Gilligan, 2011, p. 22).

In the fourth chapter, I overall argued that it's critical to understand that giving care should be a gender-neutral function while implementing care ethics. It should be stated that care as a manner has valuable aspects to it; thus, it is a manner to be preserved and performed. Yet it may cause negative effects if only one gender would

carry the heavy load which shows that despite the fact that women socially became more compassionate than men, caring should not only be in women's domain.



CONCLUSION

In summary, my research has focused on the ways that certain features of constructed femininity deepen the oppression of women. I argued that Simone de Beauvoir's explanation of 'the other' in *Second Sex* is useful for understanding women's place in society. As a result, I made the connection between Beauvoir's concept of 'otherness' and the potential problems of constructed femininity. I suggest that expecting women to live up to certain expectations of femininity strengthens their role as 'the other' in society, which compromises gender equality. My proposal is to adopt the revolution in female manners advocated by Mary Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* as a possible solution to 'the otherness' of women in society since the Wollstonecraftian framework meets the inclusiveness principle successfully.

According to Wollstonecraft, a national education program and a fair distribution of knowledge among all genders are the only ways to bring about a revolution in female manners. Through the revolution, it is hoped and suggested that women's 'otherness' will decrease, and they will become equal, knowledgeable peers living peacefully in society.

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