

## TRACING FEMINIST BELIEFS OF AN AMERICAN WOMAN WRITER THROUGH HER WELL-KNOWN NOVEL

Thida Soe<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

This research explores radical feminist beliefs injected by an American woman writer Marilyn French in her well-known novel *The Women's Room* which was first published in 1977. The objectives of this research are to investigate types of feminist beliefs found in the novel, to find out which type of belief is the most dominant in the novel, and to examine whether the writer's beliefs reflected her society at that time. The investigation was conducted mainly based on Willis' (1984) feminist radicalism, focusing on core beliefs of radical feminists, and some American scholars' social texts that revealed the conditions of women in the mid twentieth century. The findings showed that of all types of beliefs, political beliefs occurred most in the novel. Moreover, the research proved that Marilyn French's feminist beliefs reflected the bitter experiences of women in the patriarchal society in America at her time.

**Keywords:** radical feminist beliefs political beliefs patriarchal society

### Introduction

With the recognition of discrimination and oppression in society, women have become interested in claiming their rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes. Feminists who believe that women should have the equal rights and opportunities as men have taken part in campaigns for reforms on different issues under the label of feminist movements. At different times in history, feminist groups with different goals and beliefs were actively involved in feminist movements to change women's lives and to create the new world for women where they could enjoy freedom and human rights as men. Before the 1960s, feminists were despised as women almost nearly as man-haters or witches (Walters, 2005). An American woman writer, Marilyn French, was a radical feminist and she was accused of a man-hater by critics who were shocked by her radical views presented in her well-known novel 'The Women's Room'. Radical feminists were regarded as extremists because of their strong radical ideologies. The goal of radical feminists was 'to eliminate male supremacy in all areas of social and economic life' (Willis, 1984). As a radical feminist, how French presented her feminist beliefs in her novel through the voice of the characters she created is an enthralling work. The aim of the research is to trace Marilyn French's feminist beliefs injected in her novel and to explore whether these beliefs genuinely reflected oppressions, restrictions and inequalities women suffered in the patriarchal society of America. Synthesizing and analyzing data presented in the extracted texts and also examining the real-life situations of women living in that period, American culture and American way of life in 1950s and 1960s could be understood.

### The adopted theory for the research

The research was done based on radical feminists' beliefs discussed by Willis (1984) in her social text 'Radical Feminism and Feminist Radicalism'. Feminist theorists' concepts of power differed, and their aims and attitudes also differed. Among them, the attitude of radical feminists towards unequal power relationships between men and women was serious. Their aim was to abolish the patriarchy in order to change the life of women experiencing social, sexual, intellectual and political injustice. Montoya (2016) comments that 'for radical feminists, gender is a system of male domination, a fundamental organizing principle of patriarchal society, at the root of all other systems of oppression'. Radical feminism challenged the patriarchal domination in society that

---

<sup>1</sup> Lecturer, National Centre for English Language

made women feel inferior and subservient. After careful and serious consideration, radical feminists' firm beliefs discussed by Willis (1984) were categorized into three types: *Political Beliefs*, *sexual beliefs* and *gender-role beliefs*. In the book 'Sexual Politics', Millet (1969) defines the term *politics* as 'power-structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another'. Therefore, in this research, the term '*political beliefs*' refers to beliefs concerned with power relations between the sexes. Next, the term '*Sexual Beliefs*' is used with reference to beliefs about 'sexuality' of men and women. In the field of women's studies, the term 'sexuality' represents 'biological, physiological and sociological aspects of human existence involving sexual experience and expression' ([grccwomen.files.wordpress.com>2010/09>a-glossary-of-women](http://grccwomen.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/a-glossary-of-women)). '*Gender-role beliefs*' are those concerning 'opinions about males and females and about the purported qualities of masculinity and femininity' (Deaux & Kite, 1987). Radical feminists' beliefs drawn from ideologies discussed by Willis (1984) were categorized as follows:

### ***Political beliefs***

- Male supremacy exists in all areas of social and economic life.
- Male superiority is not a biological fact, and the patriarchal and sexual repression are not prerequisites of civilization.
- Men have always had more license to be 'bad' than women and have ever been required to be 'bad' to prove their manhood.
- Women do not enjoy equality in family and home: 'equal sharing of housework and child care, equal attention to emotional and sexual needs.'
- Women must have reproductive rights, including freedom to make choices to give birth, have an abortion, use birth control, or get sterilized. Abortion should be legalized.
- Women suffer from economic inequality in the patriarchal family system. Women are denied access to men's incomes'
- Different forms of male aggression are weapons used by males to enforce male dominance.

### ***Sexual beliefs***

- Pornography is an industry and practice leading to harm to women.
- Prostitution under patriarchy is oppression of women sexually and economically.
- Rape is not sex and (different forms of male aggression are weapons used by males to enforce male dominance.)
- Men are free of sexual guilt and repression, but women are not.
- Lust is male' and women's lust was ignored. Women were sexually repressed and frustrated.
- Women have right to be lesbian and celibate by their own choice.
- Women have equal rights for sexual pleasure.
- The body was integral to both women's oppression and their shared identity.

### ***Gender-role beliefs***

- Men are active agents whereas women are 'passive recipients of social indoctrination'.

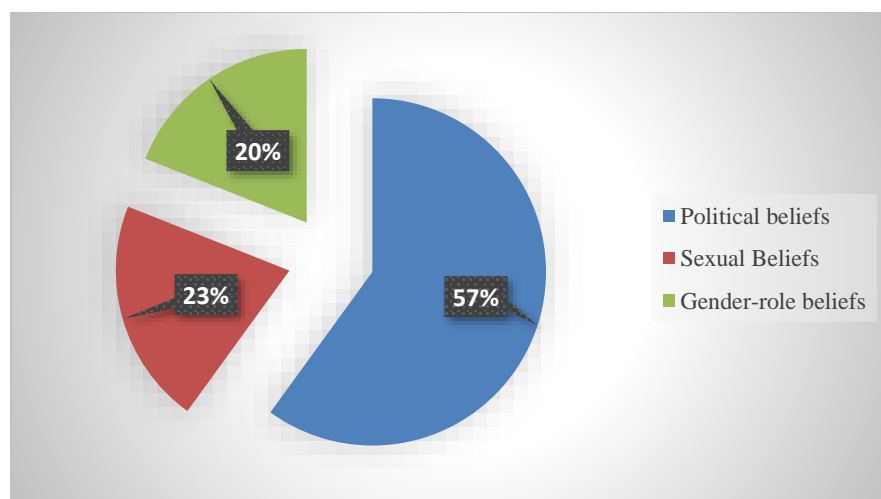
- Feminine behaviour was both enforced and internalized: women were trained from birth both to conform to the feminine role and to accept it as right and natural.

### Materials and Method

The material used for this research is Marilyn French's well-known novel *The Women's Room* which focused on issues of inequities and discrimination between men and women. As a radical feminist, to what extent Marilyn French injected her feminist beliefs into her immensely popular novel was traced with enthusiasm. In tracing data, radical feminists' beliefs discussed by Willis (1984) were followed. First, the novel was read repetitively and thoroughly, exploring the area which revealed French's feminist beliefs. Next, the texts that reflected the author's radical feminist beliefs were collected. Then, the beliefs instilled in the extracted texts were identified and classified into different types of feminist beliefs. In identifying feminist beliefs and categorizing them into different types, it was noticeably found that some excerpts reflected two beliefs at the same time. In such case, both types of beliefs were included in the tabulation. Beliefs in each type were also counted to find out which type of belief occurred most in the novel. After that, interpretations for some excerpts that reflected different types of feminist beliefs were given. Moreover, the genuineness of Marilyn French's radical feminist beliefs about women's condition and experience depicted in her novel was discussed based on the writings of famous scholars at that time. Finally, how the insertion of these beliefs added to the meaning of the novel and how it had great effect on women audience were discussed.

### Findings

After tracing radical feminists' beliefs of Marilyn French injected into her well-known novel, the findings revealed that of all the three types of feminist belief, the most dominant type of belief found in the novel was the political belief. The reason why political beliefs concerning power relations between the sexes were mostly found was that the goal of radical feminists was to eliminate firmly established male superiority over females in authority, power or status in all domains of social and economic life in the unjust male-dominated society (Willis, 1984, p- 229). The second prevalent type of feminist belief found in the novel was the sexual belief concerned with male and female sexuality. The gender-role belief reflecting the qualities of masculinity and femininity was found as the least dominant type. The following pie chart shows the frequency percentages of types of feminist belief found in the novel. (See detailed results in the Appendix Section).



**Figure 1** Frequency Percentages of types of Feminist Beliefs Found in the Novel

Moreover, French's radical feminist beliefs were found to be genuine to a certain degree on the evidence of some famous scholars' writings about women's unfavourable conditions in the mid twentieth century.

### Discussion

Marilyn French's feminist beliefs that reflected in the extracted texts were of three types: political beliefs, sexual beliefs and gender-role beliefs. As radical feminists were those who totally rejected the male supremacy, it was not surprising that political beliefs highlighting men's use of power as oppressors were mostly found in the novel. One of the political beliefs held by radical feminists was that **'women suffer from economic inequality in the patriarchal family system. Women are denied access to men's incomes (Willis, 1984).** In the patriarchal society, power was in the hands of men and women were said to be oppressed in all spheres of their life. A woman's bitter experience concerning her lack of power in treating the income of her husband was depicted by French in the novel to inject the aforementioned political belief. She made the readers visualize the unequal economic status between males and females through the dispute between the main female character Mira and her husband Norm. Mira's friend Samantha was in an economic disaster as her husband lost his job. When they were in great debt, her selfish and irresponsible husband left her and the kids to stay in his mother's house. As a brave mother, Samantha tried her best to cope with this unpleasant situation. However, she urgently needed three hundred dollars for one month's mortgage payment to avoid moving out on the street at once. Mira wanted to help her friend though she was not requested to do so. She thought this amount of money was not much as she knew her husband spent that amount every month at the golf club. However, as a money maker for the family, Mira's husband did not agree with her strong desire to help her friend. Trying to control her anger at her husband's refusal to lend Samantha some money, Mira asked him if she was not an equal participant and contributor in their marriage. Her husband answered, *'You contributed different things' but 'You don't contribute money.'* In fact, Mira was in great surprise as she realized that her husband did not recognize her supporting role that enabled him to make that money. He despised her as the one who could not contribute money to their marriage. She started to notice her lack of power in the household. *'She (Mira) felt that he had eradicated her. He was annoyed that she did not understand her powerlessness. (.....). She could not give that money to Samantha without his permission.'* (p-208). Mira had to work from dawn to dusk, caring all the things necessary for their children and home, but her job at home was unpaid. Therefore, she did not have her own money. The money in the bank account was not hers and it belonged to her husband only. Although she assumed she had right to use that money as her own will, in practice she was not allowed to use it. She needed to get permission from her husband to spend the money for helping her friend in need. Despite her husband's denial of lending Samantha some money, Mira drew the required amount of money from the bank and gave it to Samantha to be able to cope with her state of emergency. Taking the role of a decision maker in the household, she used money as she wished without caring her husband's refusal. When her husband found out her conduct later, he treated her coldly as if she were a total stranger. His pride seemed to be hurt by Mira's 'declaration of independence' for the first time in their marriage. In the patriarchal system, it seemed that women did not have full right in managing men's incomes in marriage and their right to use the money was restricted. Therefore, the main female character Mira's request for allowing her to use three hundred dollars to save the life of her close friend who was experiencing the financial crisis was instantly turned down by her husband, Norm. When Mira complained about her right in using this money, the remark he gave was her lack of contributing money in their marriage. According to rigid gender roles set by society, 'men were breadwinners and women were wives and mothers.' (DuBois & Dumenil, 2016). For a woman who took the role of a perfect wife and mother at home, it was impossible for her to contribute money in marriage as she could not

work outside to make money. However, the universal truth is 'Money is power'. In the case of Mira and Norm, Mira's powerlessness as a homemaker could clearly be seen. Not having opportunity to earn money in the role of mother and housewife caused women to lack authoritative voice in the household. Therefore, it seemed that women had no voice to make major economic decisions in marriage. In the book '*The American Woman*', Chafe (1972) described that **'the housewife who provided no monetary assistance to the household improbably had the right to demand for major economic decisions'**. His writing proved the real-life situation of American women in the mid twentieth century. It was also the evidence for the genuineness of one of French's beliefs. In the novel, Norm denied Mira's claim to use his money in helping her friend who was in great trouble. This might be due to the relationship between power and money. Allowing a housewife to manage money as she desired could be assumed as sharing the power. In a patriarchal family system, it seemed that power was not easily shared to women. Mira's experience of economic discrimination was an example of women's suffering of economic inequality in the patriarchal society where men exercised their absolute power over women.

Marilyn French's injection of her sexual beliefs into the novel was also interestingly apparent. She depicted a rape scene and the unfair court judgment on it in the novel to make the readers aware of one of the sexual beliefs of radical feminists: **'Men are free of sexual guilt and repression, but women are not.'** (Willis, 1984). Her strong opinion about male sexuality was injected into the novel through the words of Valarie, a helpless mother of a rape victim who could not protect her daughter from unfair and harsh treatments of the male lawyer and the judge at the court. Valarie's daughter, Chris, was raped by a 21-year-old black boy on her way back home one night. As the streets were deserted at that time, she was pitifully helpless. She was in a terrible panic and she did not dare to scream and fight him back. Having experienced a terribly disgusting sexual assault, she was extremely scared as she knew that she might be killed by the rapist. Therefore, she managed to outwit her enemy by convincing him that she wanted to be his friend and also had the interest to meet him again another night. When the rapist asked her to exchange their names and addresses for the next encounter, she gave him the wrong name and address. Using her sharp wit, she saved herself and could go back home at that night. However, when Chris brought the rape case to the trial for justice later, the way the state male attorney tossed questions was very cruel and he treated her as if she was a criminal. Valarie, Chris's mother, assumed that the attorney was bullying her daughter by asking leading questions to cause her to be the one who 'had the will in the case'. He also insulted Chris with a sneer comment on her disgusting experience: *'You may find it shocking, but lots of pretty little white princesses want to try a little black meat.'* Moreover, the policemen at the station did not behave in the appropriate manner in dealing with Chris. Even the lawyer showed no enthusiasm in handling her case. It showed that no one believed Chris as they completely believed the rapist's words 'she is his friend', not knowing his ulterior motive in not telling any of the details. No one had interest in Chris's mental and physical sufferings. All the males at the court showed no sympathy for Chris. They regarded Chris as a problem maker and they mocked Chris's attempt to fight for the safety of women in the world. Even at the trial, the judge's facial expression of contempt was unbearable for her. After hearing the rapist's admission that he was guilty, the judge and the lawyers were greatly surprised as his response did not meet their expectation. Then, the boy was sentenced to only 6 months' imprisonment. As a rape victim, Chris assumed that the punishment did not fit the crime. The judge gave a verdict in favour of the black boy though he was *'a member of species they heartily despised'*. Chris noticed the eyes of males at the court which expressed their doubt that the black boy might be the victim of a wicked woman. Although the rapist was on the trial for the sexual assault he committed, the male lawyer and the male judge at the court showed irrational understanding to him. On the other hand, they treated the rape victim with disrespect. Men at the court assumed that the boy was not guilty, and it was Chris who created him as a debauched person. The black boy was considered to be less guilty than a powerless and helpless female victim. After

seeing the miserable and disgusting conducts of all men at the court, Chris's mother 'Valarie' described her bitter feelings towards men as "[A]ll men are rapists and that's all they are. They rape us with their eyes, their laws and their codes (p-476)." The judgement on the unpleasant occasion made by a black character in the novel was that black men's feelings of hatred for white people were strong and white women were their targets to retaliate against white people for the racial discrimination black people suffered. It could be interpreted that the source of Chris's case was a black man's revenge against white men by exercising the power and strength of a man over a white woman. It was sure that the black boy was the victim of discrimination in American society. It seemed that by means of his sexual misconduct towards a white woman, he conquered his fear of the whites. Despite his inferiority complex as a member of the oppressed group, the black boy exercised his male power to defeat a white female who was a weak member of the group of oppressors. Therefore, radical feminists seemed to claim that rape is not sex and it is the male's weapon that represents the male's power and dominance. They believed that rape was a powerful weapon used by males in the oppression of women in American society. 'Women's fear of rape at that time kept them off the streets at night and kept them at home. This fear caused women to be passive and modest as they may be thought provocative.' (Griffin, 1971, cited in Martinez, 2012). According to a feminist author Brownmiller (1975), rape is merely a process of deliberate coercing used against all women by all men. She also claims that it is a typical act done by a male to show a female that 'she is conquered by his superior strength and power and it is not an act of the uncontrolled sexual desire by a man'. During the 1970s, radical feminists argued that rape was not a biological predisposition among men but the socialization of men that projected women as objects (Doude & Tapp, 2014). In the second-wave feminist movement, violence against women became the major theme and during this period, rape was viewed as a weapon driven by men's desire to exert control over women. 'Rape shield' laws were adopted by Congress in 1975 in the United States of America (Bishop, 2018).

Concerned with the gender role, one of the radical feminists' belief was that 'feminine behaviour was both enforced and internalized: **women were trained from birth both to confirm to the feminine role and to accept it as right and natural**' (New York Radical feminists, cited by Willis, 1984). This ideological belief was highlighted by French in her novel through the attempt of the main character Mira's traditional and conservative mother to train her daughter to be able to display feminine behaviours for drawing the admiration of males.

*Mrs Wards had loved the novels of Jane Austen in her youth. At home, Mrs Wards taught her (daughter) not to cross her legs at the knee, not to climb trees with boys, not to play tag in the alley, not to speak in a raised voice not to wear more than three pieces of jewelry at a time, and never to mix gold and silver. When these lessons had been learned, she considered Mira "finished". (p- 10)*

In her youth, Mira's mother seemed to be influenced by Jane Austen's novels that portrayed the lives of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. 'The common theme of her novels was the trying experiences of young ladies on the path to marriage' (Brody, 1995). Mrs Wards taught her daughter Mira feminine behaviour in her early teen-age. In her eyes, Mira needed to have womanly qualities as she was a girl with rebellious nature who was not interested in displaying feminine behavior to the opposite sex. At that period, it seemed to be necessary for a woman to make a good impression on men so that she could choose a good man to marry. The aforementioned excerpt from the novel drew attention to women's traditional subservient role in the male-dominant world. Marilyn French's dissatisfaction with women's condition in 1950s America can clearly be seen through the narrator's explanation about Mira's condition in her youth. The main character Mira's mother, Mrs Wards, taught her teen-aged daughter the old taboos about how to dress and how to behave. As a woman who accepted the traditional norms, Mrs Wards gave guidance to her daughter to have typical qualities of a true woman which would be of useful help for her to be a proper life partner

of a man. French pointed out women's desperate condition at that time and described her attitude towards women in the novel through the voice of the narrator:

*'If the men think they (women) are attractive, they are; if they don't, they aren't not. They give men the power to determine their identities, their value, to accept or reject them. They have no selves.'* (p-246)

French expressed her opinion about the condition of women in the middle of the twentieth century. In fact, men and women were expected to take their respective gender roles set by society. An American historian, Chafe (1972) describes, '(F)or women, the maternal and homemaking roles were a *near-universal*'. He also restates the view of Montagu that 'being a good wife, a good mother, in short a good homemaker is the most important of all the occupations in the world.' In the mid twentieth century, the image of American women presented in magazines was how they worked to get and keep a man. The purpose of girls' going to college was to get a husband and the reason why 60 percent of women left college in the mid-fifties was to marry. They assumed that education might be a hinderance to marriage (Friedan, 2001). To fulfill women's dream of being a happy housewife in their married life, it seemed to be necessary for women to consider men's view on every move they made and everything they did. It could be assumed that women's circumstances had relations to the ways they had to live at that time. Feminists believed that it was absolutely unfair to force women to control or exhibit their manners and behaviours to be favoured and well-liked by men. However, 'most middle-class women in America were brainwashed by the traditional belief to have the ultimate goal of raising the status of their husband or families 'through setting proper standards of behavior, dress and literary tastes' (Lerner, 1979, cited in Cruea, 2005). The experience of Mirra Komarovsky, an American pioneer in the sociology of gender, concerned with a woman's tension to be feminine at every stage of her life was reiterated by Chafe (1972) in his book 'The American Woman'. To her experience as a child, she was urged to choose girls toys, and she was trained to be more restrained, sedentary, quiet and neat. Later, when she reached college, her parents stressed her to get achievement in academic field, but warned her not to be too smart to avoid scaring off prospective suitors. These social conventions drew attention to women's traditional subservient position in the male-dominant world. Komarovsky's experience as a woman highlighted the world's treatment of injustice to women in the olden days in America and woman of her time were sufferers of discrimination in society. Therefore, it was clearly seen that French's belief about women and femininity genuinely reflected the situation of American women at that time.

The author's injection of feminist beliefs could draw the attention of women readers to their subservient role in society. The novel became more meaningful and eminently readable due to the striking presentation of her beliefs that shockingly threatened the men who were endowed with power and authority in society. With this novel, French seemed to highlight female subservience and male centrality. In fact, she was brave enough to make a great challenge to male dominated society with the belief that men are not entitled to absolute power by nature. Through her novel filled with feminist beliefs, the core message French wanted to give the readers seemed to be that both males and females must have equal rights though they may have different values and women's empowerment is crucial for the development of women's situations. As a feminist writer, French presented her bitter beliefs so wonderfully that her novel became the centre of attention among women readers and critics at her time.

## Conclusion

Through an in-depth analysis of French's radical feminist beliefs injected into her novel 'The Women's Room', her efforts to raise awareness about women's miserable conditions in her time could clearly be seen. In tracing her feminist beliefs in the novel, most of them were found to be political beliefs based on power relations between the sexes. Being a radical feminist, French was disgusted at male supremacy and she challenged male dominated society by presenting harsh realities of women's lives openly in her novel. Women's suffering in Patriarchal society in the mid twentieth century could be understood due to her dexterity in portraying women's sufferings. Some evidence found in the writings of scholars in that period proved that the subjection and oppression of women and sexual assaults on women unquestionably existed in America. French's some radical feminist beliefs were too strong for general audience to accept. However, women audience at her time were moved by her philosophy boldly presented in the novel. Although it is difficult to concede that all her beliefs are undoubtedly rational, most of them are agreeable to a certain degree. It is undeniable that women were victimized in the patriarchal society in the past era of America. However, there might have been women who led their lives happily according to the biblical teaching without having any inferiority complex. Such women might be far away from accepting the challenged ideas about women's liberation as they had been friendly with conventional feminine norms. In the book '*Radical Womanhood, Feminine Faith in a Feminist World*', McCulley (2018) describes that the emergence of rebellious ideas of feminists is not because of concocted schemes to give offence. She claims that some men's sexual assault to women, some men's act of abusing their wives and children and many men's misconduct to degrade women actually occur in the real world. Men commit sins to devalue womanhood and to control women's liberation for their egocentric reasons. In her opinion, feminism is not totally wrong, but feminists condemn others for desperate troubles in life. Her personal opinion may partially be true, but the views of people may not always be the same. Different people see the world in different ways. It can be considered that radical feminists' ideological beliefs are mostly rational, but some are likely to be erroneous assumptions. For example, French bitterly claims that 'all men are rapists'. Such accusation is extremely wild. It is not reasonable to sweepingly assume that all men are sexual assaulters. Moreover, all men are not bad oppressors and all women are not pitiable victims. However, firm beliefs declared by Marilyn French as a feminist in her novel seem to be reasonable. Unless feminists made efforts to arouse the awareness of women, there would be no one who recognized the practical sufferings of most women in the male dominated society to sum up, women in the world may have different opinions about their suffering and their experience in life. However, women's situations are still under discussion as the world's topical issue up till now.

## Acknowledgements

First, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Professor Dr Poe Poe, Head of department of English, University of Yangon and Director of National Centre for English Language, for her invaluable guidance. Then, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Professor Dr Naw Ju Paw for her invaluable suggestions. Next, my special thanks go to Dr Thida Aye and Dr Aye Moe Moe, Professors of National Centre for English Language, for their insightful comments and advice for this research. Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all those who helped me to complete this research.



## References

- Bishop (2018). *A Reflection on the History of Sexual Assault laws in the United States*. The Arkansas Journal of Social Change and Public Service. socialchange@ualr.edu
- Brody, A. E. (1995). *The Condition of Women in Jane Austin Novels*. Seisen Women's Jun. Col., No 13
- Brownmiller (1975). *Against Our Will*. Men, Women and Rape. Fawcett Columbine, New York.
- Chafe, W. H. (1972). *The American Woman*. Her Changing Social, Economic, and Political Roles, 1920-1970. Oxford University Press.
- Cruea, S. M. (2005). *Changing Ideals of Womanhood During the Nineteenth-Century Woman Movement*. General Studies Writing Faculty Publications. Bowling Green State University. Ohio, USA.
- Deaux, K., & Kite, M. E. (1987). *Thinking about gender*. in B. B. Hess & M. M. Ferree (Eds), *Analyzing gender: A handbook of social science research* (pp. 92-117). Newbury Park, CA:Sage.
- DuBois & Dumenil (2016). *Through Women's eyes*. An American History with documents. Fourth edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, A Macmillan Education Imprint. Boston. New York.
- French, M. (2014). *The Women's Room*, Virago Press, London. (original work published 1977)
- Friedan, B. (2001). *The Feminine Mystique*. W.W. Norton & Company, New York, London. (original work published 1963)
- McCulley, C. (2008). *Radical Womanhood. Feminine Faith in a Feminist World*. Moody Publishers, Chicago.
- Millet, K. (2000). *Sexual Politics*. University of Illinois Press. (Original work published 1969)
- Montoya, C. (2016). *Institutions*. (Chapter 18) in Disch, L & Hawkesworth, M. (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*. (pp.367–384). Oxford University Press.
- Walters, M. (2005). *Feminism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press. Inc, New York.
- Willis, E. (1984). *Radical Feminism and Feminist Radicalism* in Aronowitz, N. W (Ed.), *The Essential Ellen Willis*. (pp.229-255). University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London.

## E-Sources

- Doude & Tapp (2014). *Radical Feminism*. The Encyclopedia of Theoretical Criminology. Wiley Online Library. online library.wiley.com. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/grccwomen.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/a-glossary-of-women>. *A Glossary of Women's Studies Terms*.
- Martinez, (2012). *Feminism and violence: the Hegemonic Second Wave 's Encounter with Rape and Domestic Abuse in USA (1970-1985)*. <http://www.sagepublication.com>

## APPENDIX :

Table 1 Excerpts from the novel in which Feminist beliefs of Marilyn French could be traced

Sr No	page no	Excerpts	political beliefs	sexual beliefs	gender-role beliefs
1	3	The school had been planned for men, and there were places, she had been told, <b>where women were simply not permitted to go</b> . It was odd. Why? She wondered. <b>Women were so unimportant anyway</b> , why would anyone bother to keep them out?"	√		√
2	8	Women are capable of anything. It doesn't really matter. <b>Wife or whore, women are the most scorned class in America</b> . You may hate niggers and PRs and geeks, but you are a little frightened of them. <b>Women don't even get the respect of fear</b>	√		√
3	10	Mrs Wards had loved the novels of Jane Austen in her youth. At home, Mrs Wards taught her (daughter) not to cross her legs at the knee, not to climb trees with boys, not to play tag in the alley, not to speak in a raised voice not to wear more than three pieces of jewelry at a time, and never to mix gold and silver. When these lessons had been learned, she considered Mira "finished".			√
4	16	<b>When Mr ward came home from work</b> , even though he was the gentlest man in the world, <b>all Mrs Ward's friends would scurry home, their cups of coffee still half full</b> .	√		
5	19	She tried to read Nietzsche again and found that he said <b>women were liars, calculating out to dominate the man</b> . He said <b>you should take a whip when you go to woman</b> .	√		√
6	20	..that a lot of them (magazines) <b>had pictures of women in black underwear on them, or women chained up and naked and a man standing over them with a whip</b> .	√	√	
7	22	That was the great secret, that was what boys knew and laughed at, that's why they were always poking each other and looking at girls and laughing. That was why they were the conquerors. <b>Women were victims by nature.</b>		√	
8	27	<b>Marriage and a child make her totally dependent on the man</b> , on whether he is rich or poor, responsible or not, where he chooses to live, what work he chooses to do.		√	
9	29	<b>Sex meant surrender to the male</b> . If Mira wanted the independent life, she would have to give up being sexual.		√	
10	36	That a woman was not <b>marked as the property of some male</b> made her a bitch in heat to be attacked by any male, or even by all of them at once.'	√	√	
11	38	She had no choice but to protect herself against a savage world she did not understand and by <b>her gender alone was made unfit to deal with</b> .	√	√	
12	39	<b>Armed by the title of, property of some man, she felt stronger in the world</b> . They would be less likely to attack her if they knew some man had her under his protection.	√		
13	43	<b>[H]e, like them, believed he had innate rights over her because he was male and she was female</b> ; he, like them, believed in things they called virginity and purity, or corruption and whoredom , in women.		√	

Sr No	page no	Excerpts	political beliefs	sexual beliefs	gender-role beliefs
14	75	<b>Why have women no money?</b> Haven't they, throughout time, worked as hard as men, labored in vineyard and kitchen, in field and house? How is it the men ended up with all the pounds and pence?	√		
15	128	It doesn't seem so important to men. <b>Women, victims again.</b> Why should men be so important to us and we not to them? Is that nature too?		√	
16	162	Lily and Carl became engaged . At that moment, things changed. <b>She was permitted more liberty, her father stopped beating her, although he might slap her around a little.</b> She understood that <b>she was now seen as the property of another man.</b>	√	√	
17	165	A child would mean the end of his life. (.....) <b>He insisted she have an abortion.</b>	√		
18	184	She was a full-grown woman of thirty-two, but <b>needed permission to do something just as if she were a child.</b>	√		
19	206	Yes. It's because they don't care about their kids. They just's don't care about them. So they're free. <b>Women are victims.</b> All the way through," Mira heard herself say.		√	
20	207	"Am I not an equal participant in this marriage? Don't I contribute to it?..... <b>'You don't contribute money.'</b>	√		
21	208	She felt that he had eradicated her. He was annoyed that she did not <b>understand her powerlessness. (.....) She could not give that money to Samantha without his permission.</b>	√		
22	216	The assumption that the <b>men are the ones who matter, and that the women exit only in relation to them,</b> is so silent and underrunning that even we never picked it up until recently.	√		
23	225	<b>Women and men. They played by different rules because the rules applied to them were different.</b>	√		
24	239	We understood that the <b>laws were all for THEM,</b> that <b>the setup of society was all for Them,</b> that <b>everything existed for THEM.</b> But, we didn't know what to do about it. We half believed there was something terribly wrong with US. We crept into our holes and learned to survive.	√		
25	246	If the men think they are attractive, they are; if they don't, they aren't not. <b>They give men the power to determine their identities,</b> their value, to accept or reject them. They have no selves.	√		√
26	255	Ever since the divorce, <b>she had grown more and more bitter at that injustice,</b> at that injustice of the way the world treats women, at Norm's injustice to her.	√		
27	267	They (men) can't help it, <b>they are trained to be bastards. We 're trained to be angles</b> so they can be bastards. <b>Can't beat the system.</b>			√
28	286	And the goddeamned school is <b>antifemale, they look down on women,</b> especially women my age. It's a goddamned monastery that's been invaded by people in skirts, and .....	√		
29	348	Castraters and smotherers, they were unpaid servants of the Evil One. It is true that men are responsible for much of the pain in women's lives -- one way or another , whether personally or as part of a structure that refuses to <b>let women in at all, or keeps them in subordinate positions.</b>	√		√

Sr No	page no	Excerpts	political beliefs	sexual beliefs	gender-role beliefs
30	382	"That's what it was, although it would never stand up in court. <b>Rape is the right of husbanda and lovers'.</b>		√	
31	385	Mira's divorce was a terrible blow to them. They could not forgive Mira for <b>being the first member of the family so to disgrace it</b> . Although they knew that it was Norm who wanted the divorce, and that Mira had been an exemplary wife , they still believed deep down that <b>a woman's first job is to hold on to her husband, ,.....</b>			√
32	410	Because what we threaten is male legitimacy itself. (.....) <b>Men always seem to think power is more attractive than lovingness."</b>	√		
33	425	They demoralized me, <b>they had the kind of power.</b> (.....) I can't feel legitimate in the face of them. (.....) I am sick of trying to prove Harley that <b>I'm as rational and intelligent a humanbeing as he, I'm sick of trying to prove to Harvard that I too can write disembodied intellectual tours de force.</b>	√		
34	444	And <b>the man will be seen as serious , and the woman as trivial, no matter whar she does or tries to do."</b>	√		√
35	444	And <b>when a man loses his sense of legitimacy, what he is really losing is a sense of superiority.</b> He has come to find superiority over others necessary to his very existence. (.....) <b>When a man loses superiority, he loses potency.</b>	√		
36	476	Whatever they may be in public life, whatever their relations with men,in their relations with women, all <b>men are rapists and that's all they are. They rape us with their eyes, their laws and their codes."</b>	√		
37	476	That guy -- the minister -- and the way Tad treated Chris, the kid who raped her , the lawer who raped her soul, the courts and the way they treated her, the cops with their guns hanging down and the way they looked at her , and the men on the streets, one after another , looking at her, making remarks. <b>There was no way I could protect her from it,</b> the way she is feeling now, no way I can't help her to bear it.	√		
38	476	<b>Women are invisible,trivial, or demons, castraters; they are servants or cunt, and sometimes both at once.</b>	√		√
39	508	The major issue in the trial was whether or not Anita was educable. If she was attending school simply to find more trade, then <b>she was a prostitute, and prostitutes can't be raped. These things were not stated but implied.</b>	√	√	
			29	12	10