**Difference Between Sexes in Writing**

According to De Beauvoir, writing is considered as an action of a male. For women, it is a way of self-expression and analysis. Therefore, according to the author, the approaches of men and women towards writing, self-expression and confession are completely different. This might be a result of the difference in socialization patterns between men and women, or in personality traits. Feminist approaches towards literature conflict each other, however, the below essay will be based on the writing of De Beauvoir, investigating the author's opinion on sex-based differences in writing.

From the psychoanalytic point of view, (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 69) the way of seeing the world appears in literature. And because of the personality trait and socialization differences of males and females, there is a difference in the description. A woman is considered a woman to an extent they feel their femininity, and this can differ based on personality traits, socialization, family background, social status and beliefs. Bennett (1989, p. 254) describes the relationship of feminism and history as a complicated one: featuring women in history, as well as writing has long been marginalized. Women and heroes where not to be mentioned on the same page.

**The Definition of a Woman**

According to De Beauvoir, the old thesis that sets women apart because they “have a womb” (De Beauvoir, p. 13) is denied by many women around the world. While feminist approaches are on the rise, values of being a woman are on the decline. Womanhood cannot be defined simply by one's sex. Femininity is more and less than being a woman. It is an essence of a human being that is present in their personality, beliefs, socialization and attitude. According to the author, (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 14), “conceptualism has lost ground”. Characterization is something that is simply putting human beings into small boxes they do not fit into. Quoting Quoting Dorothy Parker, (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 13) she states that femininity does not exist any more in the concept of previous categories. Indeed, the author attacks humanist approaches that appeared after the enlightenment. (Moi, 2001, p. 141.) She states that women and men should all be regarded as human beings first, before differentiating between sexes. The definition of a woman, as simply “not a man” is not adequate. (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 14) Therefore, indeed, in masculine society has its limits. The book of De Beauvoir admits that there are limits to feminist approaches towards equality and difference of women as well.

The difference between attitudes is often described by the terms: masculine and feminine. According to De Beauvoir, (1949, p. 15), there is no balance between the two expressions, while they are used in symmetry in legal papers. Still, one should not forget about the question of subjectivity. While people assume that masculine and feminine characteristics are like positive and negative poles, the question is more complicated. Women, indeed, are considered as a “minority”, even though they make up half of the population.

**Feminism and Writing**

The female perspective of writing has been examined by several authors in recent years. There are “feminist writing workshops” supporting various gender theories. Lange (2008, p. 3) concludes that women approach writing about other women in a different way than men. Men do rarely write novels based on solely women's viewpoint. This might be the result of women's higher level of empathy in general. The author (Lange, 2008, p. 5.) states that this might be also because men would have difficulty with taking on a female perspective. Another possibility is that men would consider women to be experts in emotional and life experiences of females, therefore, they would think they are unable to accomplish the task as well as an author who is a woman. Still, gender ideologies in both male and female writing are present in current and 20th Century literature.

Feminist writing, according to De Beauvoir, (1949, p. 16) is a way to fight for rights. Just like proletariat, feminist authors are looking for ways to address the question of equality in rights and opportunities. Emotional struggles are also often displayed by the authors, just like in *The Raisin in the Sun.* The language of men and women are different in many forms: this is also visible in writing. Women focus on details, moods, emotions, while men are founding their books on actions, cause- effect relationships and logical approaches. A feminist woman who is also a writer would certainly depict the struggle of a female with conventional roles in their lives, the limitations set by the society and the stereotyping patterns.

**Women's Approach towards Writing**

Women cannot fight for their rights in an organized way, according to De Beauvoir, (1949, p. 17). They, unlike Negroes or proletariat do not have a history, religion or solidarity as a group, therefore, the individual approaches, like writing work the best. Women were too long considered as “the other type” and have not had a chance to express their real self. Men created unions, organizations, took part in politics, but women have no past in these activities. The authors of the current review, based on the writings of De Beauvoir, (1949) consider every piece of writing that comes from a woman's hand is a type of “reinventing women's identity”. Still, the new approach of Simone De Beauvoir states that women of the 20th Century should demolish the stereotypes of female characters and replace them with real women, readers can relate to. If we look back at Aristotle's definition of a woman, stating that a woman is just a woman, without male qualities, it is easy to understand what the author means. The fight is to break down the rule of male-centered writing in literature and add value to readers by balancing out the roles. Strong women appear and the weak, emotional characters start to become more distinguished, complicated and complex. Women's writing is about “recording their lives” while men describe events and connections between them. Males usually have superiority and they make decisions not only for women in writing, but themselves as well. This is what (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 25) describes a males' independence in contrast with females' dependence.

**Men's Approach Towards Writing**

Men's writing often depicting women's inferiority. (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 23.) In some cases, men grant them “equality in difference”, but this is only true for modern literature. This is something De Beauvoir calls “equality in difference”, which she still considers discrimination. Men, indeed are having the “upper hand”, just like the bourgeoisie over proletariat. Men feel like “demigod” compared to women, (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 24) and women can never be equal. They are often depicted as “strong women” not based on their values, but their feminine power that helps them manipulate men. Therefore, even if women get the “upper hand” in novels and male writing, they do so because of their negative qualities, not because of their virtues. The status of women is determined by men, most of the time. They are described as wives, mothers, sisters in classic literature, as well as later novels, while men are heroes of many virtues. While some male authors assume the equality of women, they never acknowledge their independence of categories, social status and males, most importantly.

**Conclusion**

Feminist literary criticism is not simply a post structuralist ideology. (Moi, 2009, p. 189). It is indeed the rediscovery of the power of writing. Simone De Beauvoir understands that writing and speaking are actions that exist in the context of our world and society. Her definition of literature can be concluded as “unveiling the world”. She also states that literature can be a way of unfolding reality, which is not fixed, and is determined by perception. This would also lead the authors to the conclusion that while female writers describe “perception” and the process of feeling, understanding, men feature description of the world, as it is. Not changeable, fixed and solid. This, according to Moi (2009, p. 195) is the essence of feminist literary criticism. Moi (2009, p. 193) concludes that literature is the only way that makes readers “change universes”, therefore, it is the only way to change perceptions of male and female roles, categories and stereotypes. According to the author, women's voices, just like the voices of other minorities: Blacks, Indians, the oppressed should be heard by the society, and the best way to make these views visible for others is to write. (Moi, 2009, p. 195)

References

Beauvoir, De Simone (1989) {1949} *The Second Sex.* Translated by H. M. Parshley. New York: Vintage Books.

Bennett, J. (1989) Feminism and history. *Gender & History.* Vol.1 No.3 Autumn 1989

Lange, C. (2008) Men and women writing women: The female perspective and

feminism in U.S. novels and African novels in French by male and female Authors. UW-L *Journal of Undergraduate Research* XI

Moi, T. (2009) *What can literature do? Simone de Beauvoir as a literary theorist.* Modern Language Association of America

Moi, T. (2001) *What is a woman? And other essays.* Oxford University Press.