

Chapter 1

Literary Theory

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→ Introduction

Literary Criticism refers to the various critical lenses used to analyse literature. Each lens is sensitive to point of view, symbol, tone, irony, and other literary techniques, but each also casts those elements in a special light.

Each lens raises its own types of questions and issues and therefore each approach has its advantages and disadvantages; what is left out of an interpretation is as significant as what is included.

→ The different strategies used by writers in order to critically examine a text is known as literary theory. These ideas act as different lenses critics use to view and talk about art, literature and even culture. It also allow critics to focus on particular aspects of a work they consider important.

→ It is the study of principles which informs how critics make sense of literary work.

→ Purpose of Studying Literary Theory

→ one of the view is solely to affirm your perspective and speak to what you see in the literature you are studying.

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→ Studying a view different from yours not to disagree with it, but to understand it, it helps you understand those who hold that view.

→ Studying a work from more than one view gives you deeper understanding of the author's work and a better appreciation for the richness of it.

We have Total & literary theories, they are the following:

- 1) → Feminism
- 2) → Marxism
- 3) → Formalism
- 4) → Structuralism
- 5) → Deconstruction
- 6) → Psycho-analysis
- 7) → Post-Colonial
- 8) → Post Modernism

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1. Feminism :

→ Feminism comes from the latin word "femina", meaning woman. This term is coined by Charles Fourier in 1937. He termed it as Feminist.

★ → Definition :

→ The most common and understandable definition of feminism "To look upon women as human beings". So

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From this definition we can further explain it is to give equal rights to women and men. It includes liberty women and supremacy of women.

→ Feminism is a collection of movements and ideologies establishing, depending political, socio-economic rights for women. Women Suffrage.

→ Feminism is the ideology that believes in the equal rights and opportunities for women in education, employment and in the cultural and social life.

→ According to Pamela Anderson: "The True meaning of feminism to use your strong womanly image to gain strong results in society."

→ According to Tyson: "The ways in which literature reinforces or undermines the economic, political, social and psychological oppression of women."

→ In simple words feminism is radical notion that women are people, a body of ideas that aims to enhance women status and power, affirms women equality with men and rejects patriarchy.

→ The concept of feminism in general has been concerned to an analysis of the trend of male domination of the society; the general attitude of male towards female; the ways of improving the condition of women. In literature it emerged in 1960.

★ Waves of Feminism

ω First Wave of Feminism

- 19th and 20th Century
- UK and USA
- Period of activity, equal contract,

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- Marriage
- Parenting
- Property rights.

→ At the end of 19th Century &

- political powers
- Women Suffrage
- Women's reproductive
- Economic rights.

→ Feminism is the social notion that women are people. In 1st wave of feminism driven by the combination of social and economic forces. The first organized "feminists" political activism involved campaigns for "Vote" and "equality".

→ It leads to United National Suffrage in 1920 with the passing of 19th amendment.

→ It focused on the promotion of equal rights for women, by the end of the 19th century, the focus was more on political rights, particularly the rights of women's suffrage.

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(2) Second Wave of Feminism :-

- 1960s - 1970s
- America - US
- spread over western countries after ww-II
- In 1960, during the 2nd wave of feminism a remarkable event in human history had happened - the end of patriarchy.
- Suddenly women become active in politics, demanded and won the rights to university education, to a career, to easy divorce.
- Suddenly women began voting differently to men.
- The 2nd wave is largely concerned with social and economic equality and with ending discrimination and inequality of laws.
- The national organization for women (NOW), formed in 1966, where feminist political activism.

(3) Third wave of feminism :-

- 1990s - till 2000
- Third wave of feminism is described as a sudden representation of women at all government.
- Third wave of feminism deals with issues which appears to limit or oppress women.
- Gender Violence has become a central

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Issue for 3rd wave feminists.

→ It focused on body, gender, sexuality and hatred. Roles are defined by society while gender is defined by biology. The must (world) be genderless.

→ Types of feminism :

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(1) Radical feminism :

→ It is a movement that believes sexism is so deeply rooted in society that the only cure is to eliminate the concept of gender completely.

→ Radical feminism believes in eliminating the concept of gender entirely. It rejects the traditional family system.

(2) Socialist feminism :

→ The second type of feminism, called socialist feminism, is slightly less extreme but still calls for major social change.

→ Socialist feminism is a movement that calls for an end to capitalism through a socialist reformation of our economy. Basically, socialist feminism argues that capitalism strengthens and supports the sexist status quo because men are the one more willing to share their who currently have power and money. These men are more willing to share their power and money with

other men, which means that women are continually given fewer opportunities and resources. This keeps women under the control of men.

→ Socialist feminism calls for an end to capitalism.

→ In short, socialist feminism focuses on economics and politics. They might point out the fact that in US women are typically paid only \$0.70 for the exact same job that a man would be paid a dollar for.

3) Maxxist feminism

→ Maxxism feminism is a feminism focused on investigating and explaining the ways in which women are oppressed through the system of Capitalism and private property. In Capitalist system two types of labor exist:

• Reproductive or paid:

→ It is productive because labours have monetary value in this upon goods and services from the producers.

• Reproductive or unpaid:

→ It is unpaid, which is associated with private or personal sphere. They perform domestic needs of current workers and care for old homes and family members and production of present future workers needed for the Capitalist system.

4) Libexal feminism

→ A movement that believes all individuals

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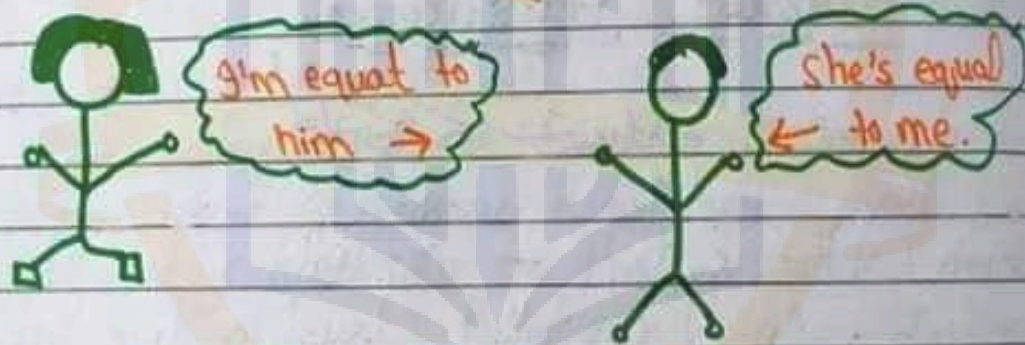
should be free to explore equal opportunities and rights.

→ Liberal feminists argue that society holds the false belief that women are, by nature, less intellectually and physically capable than men.

→ Liberal feminism fights for complete gender equality through social, political and legal means.

→ Liberal feminists say:

"Every individual should have liberty".



Equality \Rightarrow Equal opportunity

→ Islamic feminism :

→ It is form of feminism concerned with the role of women in Islam. It aims for the full equality of all Muslims, regardless of gender in public and private life. Islamic feminists advocate women's rights, gender equality and social justice grounded in an Islamic framework.

→ Aims of feminism :

→ Attempts to show the ignorance of women in the traditional literature.

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- Stimulates the creation of a critical environment.
- Expansion of the literary canon of women writers.
- Urges language transformation.
- To demonstrate the importance of women.
- To reveal that historically women have been subordinated to men.
- To bring about gender equality.
- To eliminate patriarchy.

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History of Feminism

→ Charles Fourier (1837) is credited with having coined the word "Feminism".

Feminist theory

→ Feminist theory aims to understand gender inequality and focus on gender politics, power relations, while providing a critique of these social and political relations, much of feminist theory also focuses on women interest and rights.

Feminism in Literature

→ The doctrine and the political movement based on it - that ~~movement~~ women should have the same economic, social and political rights as men. Examines ways in which literature reinforces or undermines the oppression of women.

• Traditional Gender Roles :

↳ Patriarchy : Any culture that privileges men by promoting traditional gender roles.

- "Men"
- Rational
 - Strong
 - Protective
 - Decisive

- "Women"
- Emotional (irrational)
 - Weak
 - Nurturing
 - Submissive.

• Roots of Feminism :

↳ Men have oppressed women, devalued, de-valued and trivialized the women, non-significant 'other'.

→ According to Aristotle : The man is by nature superior, and the female inferior and the one rules and the other is ruled.

★ → Religious Leaders :

↳ Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine :

"Women were merely imperfect men".

- Spirituality weak creatures.
- Possessed a sensual nature that lures man/women away from spiritual truths, thereby preventing males from attaining their spiritual potential.

• Darwin (The Descent of man: 1871)

↳ Women are of a characteristics of a past and lower state of Civilization. They are inferior to men, who are physically, intellectually and artistically superior.

→ Opposition : (1700)

• Mary Woolstonecraft

→ A vindication of the rights of women (1792)

→ Women must stand up for their rights and not allow their male-dominated society to define what it means to be a woman.

→ Women must take the lead and articulate who they are and what role they will play in society.

→ Women must reject patriarchal assumptions that women are inferior to men.

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1900s

↳ • Women gained the right to vote.

• Women become prominent activists in the social issues of the day:

- (1) Health care
- (2) Education
- (3) Politics
- (4) Literature

→ Feminist Criticism

↳ 1. Virginia Woolf (1929)

↳ "A room of one's own" hypothesizes the existence of Shakespeare's sister, equality as gifted a writer as he.

Gender prevents her from having of her own
 • She cannot obtain an education or find profitable employment because she is a 'woman'.

• Her innate artistic talents will therefore never flourish, for she cannot afford a room for her own.

2) • Simone de Beauvoir - (The Second Sex - 1949) *

↳ • Foundation work of 20th century Feminism.

• Declares that French society (and western society in general) are patriarchal, controlled by males. Like Woolf, believed that the male defines what it means to be human.

• Since, the female is not the male, she becomes the other.

3) • Kate Millet - (Sexual Politics - 1970) *

↳ • Women and men (consciously and unconsciously) conform to the cultural ideas established for them by society.

• Cultural norms and expectations are transmitted through media, television, movies, songs and literature.

• Boys must be aggressive, self-assertive.

• Girls must be passive, meek.

★ → Criticism of 1980s:

↳ Elaine Showalter

↳ A Literature of their own (1977)
Chronicles three historical or evolutionary phases of female writing:

• **Feminism phase (1840-1880)** :

↳ Wrote an essay to equalize their intellectual achievements with male culture - Imitation.

• **Feminist phase (1880-1920)** :

↳ Dramatise the ordeals of wronged womanhood, protest.

• **Female phase (1970 - present)** :

↳ Uncovering of misogyny in male texts - neither imitation nor protest.
discovery

★ → Features :

↳ It grew out of women's movement following w.w.2, this approach analyses the representation of women in literature.

↳ It is a movement that advocates the rights of women on the ground of sexual equality.

↳ It is concerned with less obvious forms of marginalization such as the exclusion of women writers from the traditional literary canon.

↳ All the Feminist activities, including Feminist theory and literary criticism has as its ultimate goal to change the world by prompting gender equality.

↳ In any way it does not mean to be feminist to hate men.

*→ Major Feminists ✓

Feminist
writers in
English literature

- Jane Austen
- Francis Burney
- Virginia Woolf
- George Eliot
- Aphra Behn
- Kate Chopin
- Angela Carter

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- Julia Kristeva
- Anetta Kellodny
- Sandra Gilbert
- Camille Paglia
- Mary Wollstonecraft
- John Stuart Mill
- Margaret Fuller
- Kate Millet

Feminist
critics in
English
literature

*→ Feminism In Hamlet line 2

"Fooly! Thy name is women"

4 The above quote is taken from Hamlet which shows Hamlet's prejudice against women. He observes that Gertrude and Ophelia show several types of weaknesses, of course in varied degrees. Gertrude does not understand the wicked tricks Claudius plays upon her nor does she understand Hamlet's ulterior motive behind his prolonged mourning and delicate aloofness from his uncle.

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Company. It is true that Gertrude lacks common sense. She is an utter failure in understanding human nature, she is only puppet guided by Claudius in all affairs. So Ophelia even her love affair, she is guided by her father and brother. She does not understand that she is a play thing in the hands of her father, who is appointed by Claudius to discover the true cause of Hamlet's madness. She does not betray any independence of thinking. The resemblance between Ophelia and Gertrude confirms Hamlet's tendency to generalize about feminine weakness ("Frailty, thy name is women") and promote his misogynistic outburst against Ophelia, Gertrude.

→ Feminism in Pride And Prejudice:

→ During the 18th century, feminism was a subject that was scarcely considered in society, as it was defined the theory of the political, economic, and social equality between the sexes. The concept of feminism did not gain the comprehensive structure until the late 20th century. As not being widely known for during her time period, Jane Austen uses the concept of feminism to be portrayed a discreet technique in her novel "Pride and Prejudice". Furthermore, she displays her perspective on the admissible issues such as