

SOCIALIST FEMINISM

↪ is a very broad tendency within modern feminism with a general commitment to socialism

BUT ↪ *also to the transformation of existing socialist organizations in order to make them more responsive to and representative of women's interests*

↪ *is a creative synthesis of Marxist feminism and radical feminism*



A SOCIALIST FEMINIST THEORY

↳ *develops and expands the argument of the Marxist feminists that capitalism plays a significant role in the oppression of women and the radical feminists' contention that patriarchy is the primary source of oppression of women*



FOR THE SOCIALIST FEMINISTS,



women became oppressed because of their financial dependence on men



women became "*subjects*" of male domination within a capitalist system because of uneven balance in wealth



THE SOCIALIST FEMINISTS ARGUE THAT:

↳ ***the liberation of women "must be sought in conjunction with the social and economic justice of all people"***

FOR THE SOCIALIST FEMINISTS,

↳ **the fight to liberate women from male supremacy as the key to social justice**

↳ ***must be accompanied by the fight to liberate women from economic dependence on men***





there has never been any single manifesto of socialist feminism and it can take many different forms



most of those involved argue for some combination of the socialist and feminist traditions

Whilst radical feminism tends to view all men as the main enemy of all women and to operate with a biological definition of both masculinity and femininity,



most forms of socialist feminism look to social structures and ideologies to explain the existence of a male-dominated society

The existence of mass socialist organizations

the fact that many involved in the early women's liberation movement came from the New Left

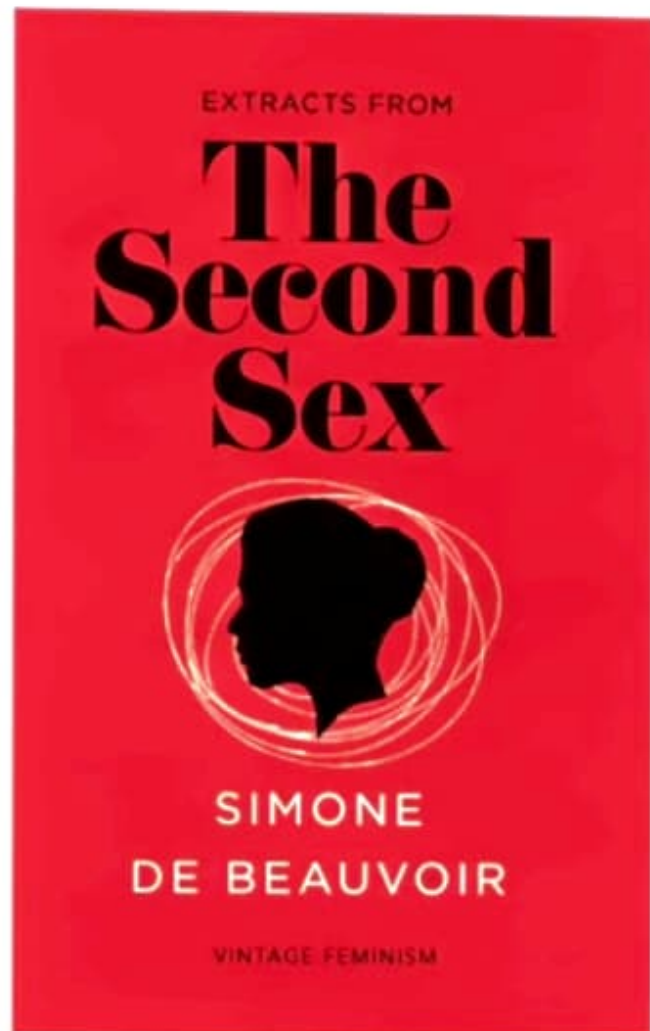
made socialist feminism much important in Britain and Europe than in the United States



**One of the classic statements
of socialist feminism is:**

↳ *Simone de Beauvoir's*
The Second Sex ↷

**but by the 1970s few agreed with
her surprisingly traditionalist claim
that socialism would automatically
lead to the liberation of women**



IN BRITAIN,

↪ *Juliet Mitchell's* pioneering article titled:

"Women: The Longest Revolution"

↪ **is widely regarded as one of the founding statements of both socialist feminism and the women's movement itself**

WOMEN:
THE LONGEST
REVOLUTION

Juliet Mitchell



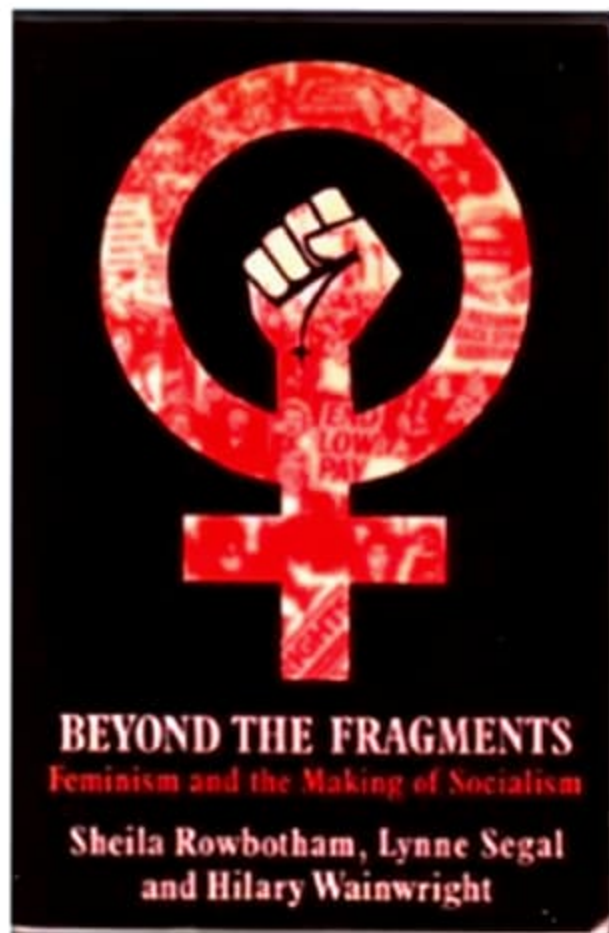
Essays in Feminism,
Literature and Psychoanalysis

In their seminal work titled:

Beyond the Fragments

Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright

provide an eloquent account of the difficulties faced by women working in or with male-dominated socialist organization



Feminism

As a Movement

1st Wave

2nd Wave

3rd Wave

Scope Limited to some countries and a fixed period

As an Ideology

Scope is Broad and extend across time and Space

Classification of Alison Jagger (1983)

1. Liberal

2. Socialist

4. Radical

3. Marxist

Liberal Feminism

Follows Liberalism and Liberal Frame work

Individualism

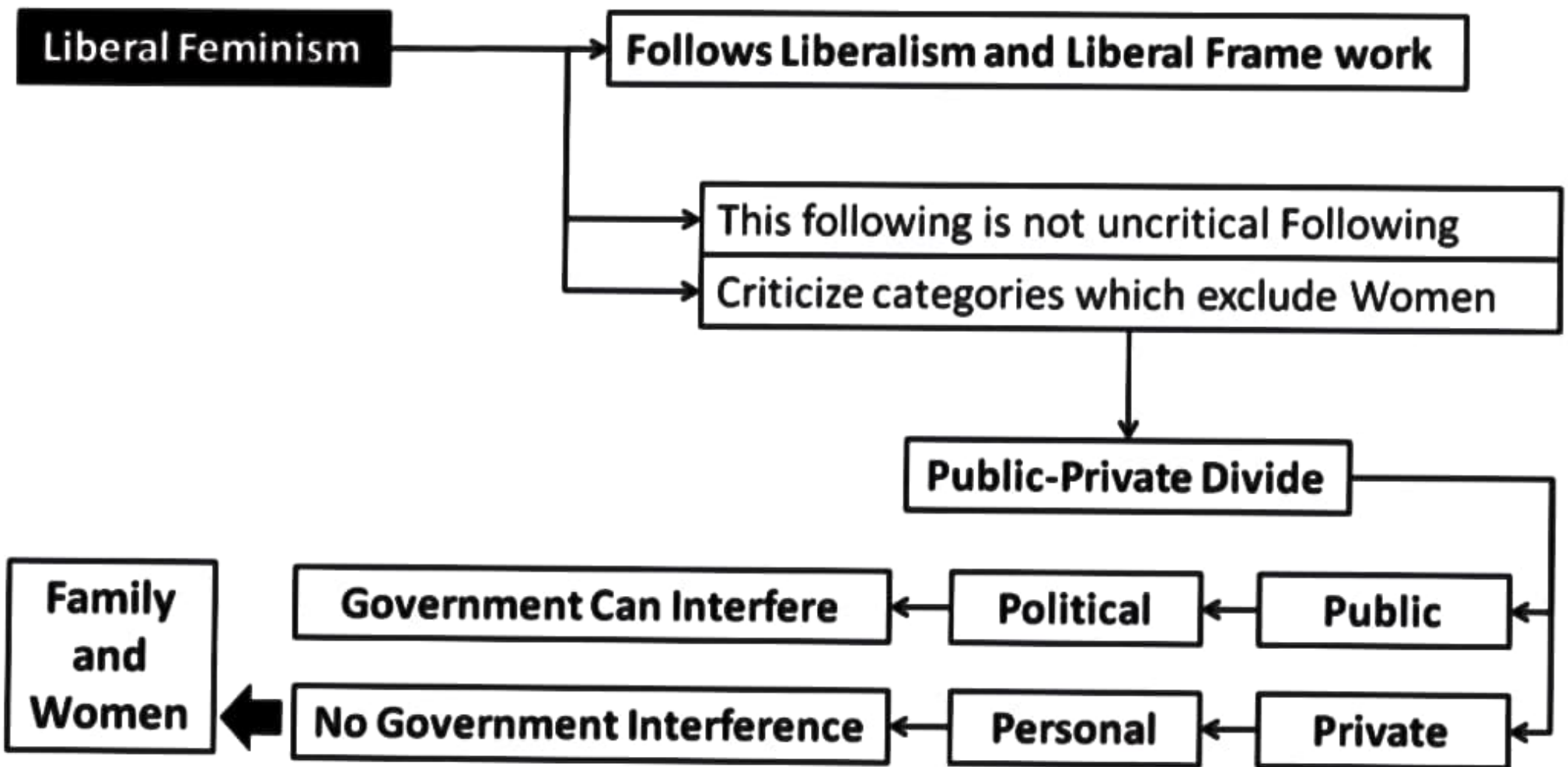
- **Include Women in the Category of Individual.**
- **Men and Women both Possess 'Reason' and 'Rationality.'**
- **No Discrimination on the basis of 'Sex' anywhere.**
- **Liberal Feminism is Egalitarian and Reformist in nature .**
- **Not against the established basic Structures of Society.**

Mary Wolstonecraft

J S Mill

Martha C Nussbaum

Susan Moller Okin



Liberal Feminism

Criticism

Radical Feminists

Treating People equally mean treating Women like Men

Stress on Individualism makes Collective effort Difficult.

No attention given on **Patriarchal** Structure.

Demands represents the Interests of White-Middle-Class Women of Developed Societies.

Socialist Feminism

Follows Socialism and Socialist Frame work.

Capitalism : Root Cause of Women's Oppression

Women Under Capitalism

• Maintain and Reproduce the Workforce in Cheap Way.

• Act as a 'Reserve Army of Labor' .

• Treated as a 'Slave of the Slave' .

August Bebel

Alexandra Kollantai

Friedrich Engel

Socialist Feminism

Follows Socialism and Socialist Frame work.

Friedrich Engel

**Give Primacy to Class Exploitation
over Gender Exploitation**

“ The Origin of the family, Private Property and The State” (1884)

Before Capitalism

- **Society was Matriarchal : Property transferred along Maternal Line**
- **Centre of Production – Family: Men and Women Worked Together.**

After Capitalism

- **Society became Patriarchal : Mother's right overthrown.**
- **Centre of Production – Factory: Women confined to domestic Work**

Liberal Feminism

Individualist

**Talks about legal and Political
Equality**

**Does not Criticize Capitalism
and Patriarchy**

**Creation of a Genderless
Society**

Socialist Feminism

Collectivist

**Mainly Focuses on Economic
Equality**

**Goal is to Overthrow
Capitalism and Patriarchy**

**Creation of a Classless
Society**