CHAPTER IV

KATE MILLETT

Simone de Beauvoir laid out the philosophical foundations of post-Second World War feminism. Betty Friedan acted as the spokesman of the mainstream, middle-class American women. Kate Millett is the first major author who voices the aspiration and principles of Radical Feminism.

In Millett's own words, the publication of her first book, *Sexual Politics*, exploded "... what had been a life of pleasant obscurity with the rocket of American 'success'." (Millett, 1973, 9). It was published in July 1970 and became a best seller during the next two months. As she makes it clear, it was written in a deliberate academic style with the usual "distant, ironic, mandarin" tone. She had followed "bleak pretense of objectivity, routinely required of Ph.D. candidates." But it's very success produced a different style of life for her. In the months that followed the publication of *Sexual Politics* she became "something of a full-time activist and organizer." In the Spring of 1970 she left her Experimental College at Columbia University to join the Peace Movement. She acted as a committed feminist and travelled all over U.S.A. to mobilise college women. She also occasionally acted as a reporter for radical magazines like *Change Magazine* or the *Red Clay*
Reader. She also took a leading part in the first feminist conference on prostitution in 1971. In the same year she published her second book The Prostitution Papers. (Millett, 1973, 11-13).

While she is known as the author of these two books, we must remember that she was not leading a life of total obscurity as she makes out to be. As Ann Koedt explains she wrote Sexual Politics: A Manifesto for Revolution in 1968. It was written in connection with organisational meeting of the first women’s liberationist group at Columbia University. Both The Columbia Spectator and the Columbia Radio Station refused to publish or broadcast it. Since then she has led a life as a writer, film maker, sculptor and active feminist. (Koedt, 1973, 365).

Her fame is of course based on her first book, Sexual Politics. Rachael McDonough notes "(It) is one of the first major attempts to provide a thorough theoretical examination of the oppression of women using the concept of patriarchy." (Kuhn and Wolpe, 1978, 12). Richard A. Wasserstrom calls it "The best general account I have read of the structure of patriarchy and of its major dimensions and attributes." (Bishop and Weinzieig, 1979, 7). Eli Zaretsky states that the early writings of the women’s movement were mostly fragmentary and exploratory. He adds that the book was "The first attempt to an overall synthesis." According to him, it broadened the meaning of
Politics and tackled power relationships of "personal context and interaction." (Zeretsky, 1980, 13-14). Mary O'Brien describes it as "... a competent and passionately sincere denunciation of the psycho-cultural ramifications of feminine inferiority and male superiority." According to her, "it had a considerable social impact and it has played a substantial part in the escalation of feminists for women's place in contemporary North American Society." (O'Brien, 1983, 82-83).

Kate Millett's Radical Feminist Background

Zeretsky has noted that her book encouraged the idea that a feminist movement primarily concerned with the abolition of male supremacy, in both its social and 'personal' manifestations was needed. (Zeretsky, 1980, 14). The fact is that it exactly suited the demand and the mood of the times. The early 1970s marked a period of American history which witnessed emergence of all kinds of radical movements. This atmosphere of radicalism gave new life and new directions to feminist thought and organisation as well. Those who call themselves radical feminists primarily represent this development in feminism. "The main difference between the new doctrine of radical feminism and the older views, centres on their respective conceptions of the nature of women." (Charvet, 1982, 97). The classical individualists and socialist feminists assume that a woman, like men, has a sexual nature expressed in
specifically feminine traits and behaviour. In complete contrast, the radical feminist denies that there is any such sexual nature of human beings. They attribute the present-day sexually differentiated behaviour patterns of men and a woman to the different social formations of men and women. The function of these formations is essentially to support the institution of male-dominance or patriarchy. As a consequence, a more radical and deep-rooted antagonism between men and women comes to the fore in their thought. Charvet adds that this idea of women as a class, indeed as the most oppressed class, is an essential element in the fully-fledged position of radical feminism. (Charvet, 1982, 98). "However, it has to be completed by an account of men as the ruling class and of a political order through which men's rule over women is constituted." Charvet concludes that "with Kate Millett's work Sexual Politics these ideas are given expression." (Charvet, 1982, 120).

Kate Millett's Objectives

Millett realises that she has in her hand an "ambitious, often rather overwhelming undertaking." She modestly notes that it is "something of a pioneering effort, (and so) it must persevere be both tentative and imperfect." (Millett, 1980, 32). Her objectives are as follows. (1) She wants to prove that sex is a status category with political implications and wants to demonstrate that sex has a frequently neglected political aspect. (2) She aims to
formulate a systematic overview of patriarchy as a political institution. (3) She wants to outline the great transformation in the traditional relationship between the sexes which took place in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She then wants to analyse the history of the years 1930 to 1960 to see why the promise and the possibility of revolutionary social change in the field of patriarchal way of life was frustrated. (4) Finally, she wants to delineate some features of the future sexual revolution. (Millett, 1980, xiii-xv).

Kate Millett's Approach

She modestly calls her book a sketch, as "Notes towards a theory of patriarchy." Offering the excuse that her "intention is to provide an overall description", she cautions the reader that therefore "statements must be generalised, exceptions neglected, and sub-headings overlapping and, to some degree, arbitrary as well."

(Millett, 1980, 32). She also notes in her preface that "... in its zeal to present a consistent argument (she) has omitted (although it need not preclude) the more familiar ambiguities and contradictions of our social arrangements."

(Millett, 1980, xiii).

O'Brien calls Millett's approach pragmatic and her choice of materials eclectic. Millett selects some historical events to support her argument but the bulk of her evidence is literary. Her section on 'Historical
background' starts only in 1830. O'Brien adds that "Like Firestone and Rowbotham, she is impatient of theories of origins on the grounds that they are always and only can be speculative. This does not prevent her from summoning Bachofen, Morgan and Engels to support her cause." O'Brien notes "Millett (however) does attempt to differentiate her own pragmatic stance in social science from the claims of 'objective' or 'value-free' approaches and she has a reasoned critique of the functionalist persuasion. Here, she does not follow Weber, but publicises her passionate commitment to the feminist cause in a manner and method which owes much to the late C. Wright Mills." In short, her analysis is sociological and literary rather than political. (O'Brien, 1983, 82-83).

We must note that while Millett rejects marxism and functionalism to a large extent, she has heavily relied on Max Weber's definition of the terms politics and political. Her eclectic approach may be seen as a broad form of empirical theorising.

Millett has by choice used the tool of literary criticism to "seize upon the larger insights which literature affords into the life it describes, or interprets or even distorts." She adds, "I have operated on the premise that there is a room for a criticism which takes into account the larger cultural context in which literature is conceived and produced." She has, therefore, devoted the half of the
book to analyse the work of D.H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, and Norman Mailer. She takes them to be the representatives of the 'counterrevolutionary' period between 1930 to 1960. She examines their responses to the prospect of radical changes in sexual politics and their participation in a mood of reaction against such an impulse. She has devoted the final chapter to the writings of Jean Genet, which intends "to present a contrast, first in approaching sexual hierarchy from the oblique angle of homosexual dominance order as Genet describes ..., and secondly, ... (studying) the theme of sexual oppression and the necessity, in any radical programme, for its eradication." (Millett, 1980, xiv).

Millett is frank enough to admit "This essay, compound of equal parts of literary and cultural criticism, is something of an anamoly, a hybrid, possibly a new mutation altogether". Her justification is that "... there is room for a criticism which takes into account the larger cultural context in which literature is conceived and produced. Criticism which originates from literary history is too limited in this scope to do this; criticism which originates in aesthetic considerations, "New Criticism", never wished to do so." To sum up, Millett follows a highly eclectic, empirically - oriented and literary cultural criticism as her method of description and investigation. (Millett, 1980, xiii-xiv).
Mary O'Brien's examination of Kate Millett's approach

O'Brien is critical of Millett's approach. She points out that her essay is essentially a descriptive exercise. O'Brien admits that this is impeccably and powerfully done. Yet she argues that there are several aspects of Millett's work which are less satisfactory. According to O'Brien, the first of these failures is that Millett shares a general inadequacy of empirical theorising. She suffers from the usual shortcomings which arise from application of extreme versions of behaviourism. O'Brien adds that in Millett's work variables are resorted with only the most cursory response to their historical development. The theory component of her fact-finding is very weak indeed. The result is that Millett adds normative judgement to the data of a methodology which deplores such judgements. O'Brien argues that "Her (Millett's) unspecified theory of knowledge wavers between mechanical stimulus, intuition and the pedagogical and heuristic powers of determinist culture." Millett's descriptive methodology therefore cannot make sense of the interrelationship between physical, historical or psychic phenomenon.

O'Brien also notes that Millett is sometimes critical of capitalism but without undertaking a systematic critic of capitalism. O'Brien says that Millett commits the same mistake in handling marxism. Millett sometimes approves Engels's analysis and sometimes rather slighthly runs him
down. O'Brien observes "Millett would clearly like to avoid ideological labelling altogether, on the grounds that all political ideologies and theories are tainted with patriarchalism. As she does not present herself as alternative and coherent social theory, her ability to be prescriptive is limited." O'Brien's conclusion is that the dilemma "which produces these ambiguities is a very real one, relating to both the theory and practice of social change." (O'Brien, 1983, 83-86).

**Sexual Politics:**

*A Manifesto for Revolution*

The sum and substance of Kate Millett's argument in *Sexual Politics* can be gained by consulting *A Manifesto for Revolution* which she wrote in 1968. She has defined there her whole position with the utmost brevity. A good idea of her position in the manifesto will help us to follow her argument in *Sexual Politics*.

"When one group rules another, the relationship between the two is political. When such an arrangement is carried out over a long period of time it develops an ideology (Feudalism, Racism, etc.). All historical civilisations are patriarchies: their ideology is male supremacy.

Oppressed groups are denied education, economic independence, the power of office, representation, an image of dignity and self respect, equality of status, and recognition as human beings. Throughout history women have been consistently denied all of these, and their denial
today, while attenuated and partial, is nevertheless consistent. The education allowed them is deliberately designed to be inferior, and they are systematically programmed out of and excluded from the knowledge where power lies today — e.g. in science and technology. They are confined to conditions of economic dependence based on the sale of their sexuality in marriage, or a variety of prostitutions. Work on a basis of economic independence allows them only a subsistence level of life — often not even that. They do not hold office, are represented in no positions of power, and authority is forbidden them. The image of women fostered by cultural media, high and low, then and now is a marginal and demeaning existence, and one outside the human condition — which is defined as the prerogative of men, the male.

Government is upheld by power, which is supported through consent (social opinion), and imposed by violence. Conditioning to an ideology amounts to the former. But there may be a resort to the latter at any moment when consent is withdrawn - rape, attack, sequestration, beatings, murder. Sexual politics obtains consent through the "socialisation" of both sexes to patriarchal policies. They consist of the following:

(1) The formation of human personality along stereotyped lines of sexual category based on the needs and values of the master class and dictated by what he would cherish in
himself and find convenient in an underclass: aggression, intellectuality, force and efficiency for the male; passivity, ignorance, docility, "virtue", and ineffectuality for the female.

(2) The concept of sex role which assigns domestic service and attendance upon infants to all females, and the rest of human interest, achievement and ambition to the male; the charge of leadership at all times and places to the male; and the duty of follower, with equal uniformity, to the female.

(3) The imposition of male rule through institutions: patriarchal religion, the proprietary family, marriage, "The Home", masculine oriented culture, and a pervasive doctrine of male superiority.

A Sexual Revolution would bring about the following conditions, desirable upon rational, moral and humanistic grounds:

(1) the end of sexual repression - freedom of expression and of sexual mores (sexual freedom has been partially attained, but it is now being subverted beyond freedom into exploitative license for patriarchal and reactionary ends.)

(2) Unisex or the end of separatist character-structure, temperament and behaviour, so that each individual may develop an entire - rather than a partial, limited and conformist - personality.
(3) Re-examination of traits categorised into "masculine" and "feminine", with a total reassessment as to their human usefulness and advisability in both sexes. Thus if "masculine" violence is undesirable, it is for both sexes; "feminine" dumb-cow passivity likewise. If "masculine" intelligence or efficiency is valuable, it is so for both sexes equally, and the same must be true for "feminine" tenderness or consideration.

(4) The end of sex role and sex status, the patriarchy and the male supremacist ethic, attitude and ideology - in all areas of endeavour, experience, and behaviour.

(5) The end of the ancient oppression of the young under the patriarchal proprietary family, their chattel status, the attainment of the human rights presently denied them, the professionalisation and therefore improvement of their care, and the guarantee that when they enter the world, they are desired, planned for, and provided with equal opportunities.

(6) Bisex, or the end of enforced perverse heterosexuality, so that the sex act ceases to be arbitrarily polarised into male and female, to the exclusion of sexual expression between members of the same sexes.

(7) The end of sexuality in the forms in which it has existed historically - brutality, violence, capitalism, exploitation and warfare - that it may cease to be hatred and become love.
(8) The attainment of the female sex to freedom and full human status after millennia of deprivation and oppression, and of both sexes to a viable humanity." (Millett in Koedt, Levin, Rapone, 1973, 365-367).

SEXUAL POLITICS

Kate Millett's analysis in the first part titled: Sexual Politics

Millett has devoted the first part of her book to the proposition that sex has a frequently neglected political aspect. It consists of two chapters. The first chapter gives "random examples" which illustrate the role which "concepts of power and domination" play in literary descriptions of sexual activity itself in the writings of Miller, Mailer, Genet. Her purpose is to demonstrate how Miller and Mailer turn the event of sexual intercourse into the political event resulting in victory or conquest by deliberate employment of the masculine vocabulary and imagery. Women are shown as invariably weak, compliant and rather unintelligent. The male protagonists are always shown on sexually irresistible and potent to an almost mystical degree. Millett argues that their writings reveal "a case of sexual politics at the fundamental level of copulation." It celebrates the triumph of the male ego. The power nexus is clearly outlined to prove a male assertion of dominance over a weak female. Male is glorified and female is degraded. (Millett, 1980, 7-8).

Millett asserts that the "vicarious political" of these
authors carry the message that male domination and even violence are legitimate in treating females who are frigid. (Millett, 1980, 12).

Millett claims that in Norman Mailer's novel, *An American Dream*, female sexuality is depersonalized to the point of being matter of class or matter of nature. She compares the humanist convictions which underlie Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* or Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* with Mailer's novel to argue that Mailer's novel is "a rolling cry for a sexual politics". (Millett, 1980, 20-21).

Millett's study of Genet's novel convinces her that "Sexual role is not a matter of biological identity but of class or caste in the hierocratic home - sexual society project in Genet's novel." She adds that "Because of the perfection with which they ape and exaggerate the 'masculine' and 'feminine' of heterosexual society, his homosexual characters represent the best contemporary insight into its constitution and belief." She argues that his homosexual caricature "... have unerringly penetrated to the essence of what heterosexual society imagines to be the character of masculine and feminine and which it mistakes for the nature of male and female, thereby preserving the traditional relations of the sexes." (Millett, 1980, 22-23). Millett has closely followed Jean-Paul Sartre's study of Genet in arguing that in his literary
work Genet's "formidable analytic mind has fastened upon the most fundamental of society's arbitrary follies, its view of sex as a caste structure gratified by nature."

(Emphasis added) (Millett, 1980, 26).

Millett has understood Genet's implicit "theory of revolution and counter revolution" as follows. "Having studied human relationships in the world of pimp and faggot, Genet has come to understand how sexual caste superseds all other forms of inegalitarianism: racial, political or economic. The Balcony demonstrates the futility of all forms of revolution which preserve intact the basic unit of exploitation and oppression, that between the sexes, male and female, or any of the substitutes for them. Taking the fundamental human connection, that of sexuality, to be the nuclear model of all the more elaborate social constructs growing out of it, Genet perceives that it is in itself not only hopelessly tainted but the very prototype of institutionalised inequality. He is convinced that by dividing humanity into the groups and appointing one to rule over the other by virtue of birthright, the social order has already established and ratified a system of oppression which will underlie and corrupt all other human relationships as well as every area of thought and experience." (Millett, 1980, 27).

Millett ends her analysis of the literary instances of sexual politics by emphasizing Genet's humane
understanding of social life as compared with the masculinist attitudes of the other two authors. She notes that "the political wisdom implicit in Genet's statement ... is that unless the ideology of real or fantasised virility is abandoned, unless the clinging to male supremacy as a birthright is finally foregone, all systems of oppression will continue to function simply by virtue of their logical or emotion mandate in the primary human situation." (Millett, 1980, 28-29). Millett adds that "Sex is deep at the heart of our troubles, Genet is urging, and unless we eliminate the most pernicious of our systems of oppression, unless we go to the very centre for sexual politics and its sick delirium of power and violence, all our efforts at liberation will only land us again in the same primordial stews." (Millett, 1980, 30).

Millett's conclusion is that the three instances of sexual description which she has examined are remarkable for the large part which notions of ascendancy and power played within them. She states "Coitus can scarcely be said to take place in a vacuum; although of itself it appears a biological and physical activity, it is set so deeply within the larger context of human affairs that it serves as a charged microcosm of the variety of attitudes and values to which culture subscribes. Among other things, it may serve as a model of sexual politics on all individual or personal plane." (Millett, 1980, 31).
O’Brien has made the following comments on the descriptive exercise carried out by Millett in the first chapter as follows. "With as much shock value as she (Millett) can muster from pretentious pornographers like Lawrence, Mailer and Henry Miller, she elaborates the ideological components of male supremacy, ..." (O’Brien, 1983, 83).

**KATE MILLETT’S THEORY OF SEXUAL POLITICS**

Millett's second chapter is in her own opinion the most important in the book and far and away the most difficult to write. Here she wants to analyse the social relationship between the sexes from a theoretical standpoint. She attempts to formulate a systematic overview of patriarchy as a political institution. Though the chapter is called "Theory of Sexual Politics", she modifies it in the text to a more modest "sketch" which might be described in her own words as "notes toward a theory of patriarchy." As we have already noted she herself considers it as a tentative, imperfect and descriptive exercise. She has first given her definition of politics and then that of patriarchy. She then proceeds to analyse sexual relations in terms of eight conventional sociological variables. They are ideological, biological, sociological, class, Economic and Education, force, anthropological, myth and religion, and psychological. Her clubbing together of two diverse variables like economic and educational will
tell us how casual she is in listing them.

Kate Millett's definition of politics

Millett realises that in introducing the term "sexual politics" one must first answer the inevitable question "can the relationship between the sexes be viewed in a political light at all?" She answers her own question by stating that "The answer depends upon how one defines politics." She is not interested in defining the political as that relatively narrow and exclusive world of meetings, chairman and parties. She has heavily drawn upon Ronald Visamson's The Psychology of Power which has investigated the connection between formal power structures and the family and for his analysis how power corrupts basic human relationships.

Millett considers the American Heritage Dictionary's definition as "fairly approximate" (it runs: "methods or tactics involved in managing a state or government.") Yet for above reason she wants to expand this to a set of stratagems designed to maintain a system. In her search for proper suitable definition of politics, she rejects out-of-hand definitions of politics of a utopian variety which conceive politics as the arrangement of human life on agreeable and rational principles "from whence the entire notion of power over others should be banished." In other words, Millett is in search of a realist definition of politics.
She finds such a source in Max Weber. She has drawn heavily from a book entitled *Max Weber on Law in Economy and Society* translated by Max Rheinstein and Edward Shils. Max Weber has long ago pointed out that "Domination in the quite general sense of power, i.e. the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behaviour of other persons, can emerge in the most diverse forms." Weber is particularly interested in two such forms. (A) Control through social authority ("Patriarchical, magisterial, or princely") and (B) Control through economic force (Millett, 1980, 33). Millett prefers Weber's definition and defines the term politics as "power-structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another."

Millett wants to enlist the word "politics" when speaking of the sexes primarily because such a word is "eminently useful" in outlining the real nature of their relative status, historically and at present. She is interested in defining a theory of politics on grounds less conventional than those to which we are accustomed. Millett justifies her definition on the following grounds. As she puts it "I have therefore found it pertinent to define them on grounds of personal contact and interaction between members of well-defined and coherent groups: races, castes, classes and sexes. For it is precisely because certain groups have no representation in a number of
recognized political structures that their position tends
to be so stable, their oppression so continuous ... (such a) subordinated group has inadequate redress through
existing political institutions, and is deterred thereby
from organizing into conventional political struggle and
opposition." (Millett, 1980, 32-33).

**Millett's description of a System of Sexual Relationship**

It is in this connection that Millett has made one of her celebrated statements. She states "Groups who rule by birthright are fast disappearing, yet there remains one ancient and universal scheme for the domination of one birth group by another - the scheme that prevails in the area of sex." (Millett, 1980, 32-33).

**Milletts definition of Sexual Politics**

Millett therefore argues that "A disinterested examination of our system of sexual relationship must point out that the situation between the sexes now, and throughout history, is a case of that phenomenon Max Weber defined as **herrschaft**, a relationship of dominance and subordination." (Millett, 1980, 33). She has noted four features of the system. (1) What goes largely unexamined, often even unacknowledged (yet is institutionalised more the less) in our social order, is the **birthright priority** whereby males rule female. (2) Through this system a most ingenious form of "interior colonisation" has been achieved. (3) It is one which
tends to be sturdier than any form of segregation. It is more rigorous than class stratification, more uniform, certainly more enduring. (4) It appears at present in a muted form. However, sexual domination remains the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its most fundamental concept of power. (Millett, 1980, 32-33).

Kate Millett’s definition of Patriarchy

In Millett’s opinion sex as a birth-based status category with political implications generates in patriarchy. She notes that our society, like all other historical civilizations, is a patriarchy. She reminds us that no matriarchal societies are known to exist at present. Following the current anthropological findings, she states that matrilineality, which may be a residue or a transitional stage of matriarchy, does not constitute an exception to patriarchal rule. Matrilineality, in her opinion, simply channels the power held by males through female descent. Millett then offers her definition of patriarchy. This definition is centred around the concept of the sexual dominion of males over females.

The contemporary feminist movement and its radical feminist stream in particular continued to treat this definition as authoritative and virtually definitive. Millett says that "The fact is evident at once if one recalls that the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political office, and finance - in short, every avenue of
power within the society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands." (Millett, 1980, 34). This is the system which she calls patriarchy. Millett argues that the essence of politics is power; such concentration of power in the hands of men cannot fail to carry impact. All aspects of such a system — the ethics and values, the philosophy and art of our culture — is of male manufacture. In a patriarchy half of the populace which is female is controlled by that half which is male.

According to Millett the principles of patriarchy are two-fold. (1) Male shall dominate female, (2) Older male shall dominate younger. She admits that (1) like all other institutions, there is frequently a distance between the real and the ideal — that is between patriarchy in reality and patriarchy as an ideal type. Contradictions and exceptions do exist within the system. (2) Secondly, patriarchy exhibits a great variety of forms. It differs from place to place and also according to the historical background of a given society. Yet, just as it pervades all major religious, patriarchy as an institution as a social constant deeply entrenched whatever may be the political, social or economic form of the society. Whatever the form of the society is conditioned by caste or class, feudality or bureaucracy, patriarchy rules supreme. To sum up, patriarchy is seen as a universal
'mode of power relationships' and domination. It is all pervasive and penetrates class divisions, different societies, different historical epoch.

Millett's consideration of eight factors which influence patriarchy

Millett's concern is with male supremacy. Her very broad definition of politics helps her to say that sexual politics is the politics of patriarchy. As we will see presently, she rejects a biological base for male-supremacy. Using politics and power as virtually interchangeable terms, she understands sexual relations as "a relationship of dominance and subordination." She wants to argue that male supremacy presents itself as a natural or biological phenomenon. But it is in fact socially enforced through ideological conditioning, socialization of early childhood, restriction of women to the family, the male monopoly of violence and other institutions. Her comments on the role of each of these factors are as follows:

I. Ideological

Millett uses the authority of Hannah Arendt to note that government is uphold by power supported either through consent or imposed through violence. Power based on consent usually imply conditioning of the subjects to an ideology.

Millett argues that sexual politics obtains consent through a socialization of both sexes to basic patriarchal
values, norms and rules with regard to (a) temperament, (b) role, and (c) status.

The first item, temperament, involves the formation of human personality along stereotype lines of sex category - "Masculine" and "Feminine". It serves the values and needs of the dominant group.

The second item, sex role, decreases a consonant and highly elaborate code of conduct, gesture and attitude of each sex. Millett asserts, sex role assigns domestic service and attendance upon infants to the females. On the other hand it allots human achievement, interest, and ambition to the male. In her opinion, the limited role allotted to the female tends to arrest her at the level of biological experience. Thus all distinctly human rather than animal activity is largely reserved for the men.

The third item, status, is decided by the operation of the above two items. A pervasive ascent to the prejudice of male superiority guarantees superior status to the male and allots inferior status to the female.

Millett has also described the interrelationship between these three items. She argues that one might designate status as the political component, role as the sociological, and temperament as the psychological one. She asserts that their inter-dependence is unquestionable and they form a chain. Thus those who are awarded higher status (male) tend to adopt roles of mastery, largely
because they are first encouraged to develop tempaments of dominance. We must note that Millett does not care to give evidence for above conclusions. She simply declares that they are "self-evident". (Millett, 1980, 35-36).

II. Biological

In Millett's opinion, patriarchal religion, popular attitude and, to some degree, science (the social, rather than the physical science) assume that these psycho-social distinctions rest upon the biological differences between the sexes. The claim is always made that culture cooperates with nature to produce a sexual differentiation of human beings. Millett rejects a biological basis for male-supremacy. She emphatically declares that the scientific evidence does not support this claim. Her position is that attempts to prove that male is superior and dominant as a result of physiology or biology have been notably unsuccessful. Millett pleads that the evidence on the whole supports the view that gender or sexual-personality structure is overwhelmingly cultural in character. Millett argues that "Civilisation has always been able to substitute other methods (technics, weaponry, knowledge) for those of physical strength, and contemporary civilization has no further need of it."

According to Millett's understanding of the situation, "At present, as in the past, physical exertion is very
generally a class factor, those at the bottom performing
the most strenuous task whether they be strong or not." (Millett, 1980, 37).

Millett wants us to remember certain crucial facts
about role and temperrament.
(1) The psycho-social distinctions made between the two
sex groups are not clear, specific, measurable and neutral
in character. So they are not amenable to the procedures
of these physical sciences. Being vague and cultural in
character, no scientific statement can in case be made
about the 'natural' superiority of male temperrament.
(2) Endocrinology and genetics offer no definite evidence
of determining mental - emotional differences.
(3) Millett further makes an interesting argument.
Whether it is a scientifically tenable argument or not is
a different matter. She states: "Whatever the 'real'
differences between the sexes may be, we are not likely
to know them until the sexes are treated differently,
that is alike and this is far from being the case at
present." (Millett, 1980, 38). Charvet has made a sharp
comment on this type of her argument. He says "But this
apparent agnosticism does not represent her position,
since she is evidently committed to the rejection of the
claim that there is sexually differentiated human nature."
(Charvet, 1982, 121).
(4) She accepts Robert J. Stoller's authority and follows
his approach to sex and gender. Millett, therefore, states that sex is biological, and gender is psychological, and therefore cultural. Stoller has pointed out that if the proper term for sex are 'male' and 'female', the corresponding terms for gender are 'masculine' and 'feminine'; these latter may be quite independent of (biological) sex.

(5) Psycho-sexual personality is post-notal and learnt. Psychosexually there is no differentiation between the sexes at birth.

Millett's conclusion is that "Because of our social circumstances, male and female are really two cultures and their life experiences are utterly different - and this is crucial." The conditioning of early childhood, of adolescence and early youth is a decisive factor. This socialisation process is so complete and so much under male control that in spite of insecure biological foundations of patriarchy, it dominates the martiailling of the temperament traits to male and female.

Millett finally refutes some of the recent attempts which use data from physical sciences to support the so-called bio-social arguments. She has referred to the work of two well-known authors in this context. They are Lionel Tiger and Conrad Lorenz. Tiger has proposed a "bonding instinct" in males which assures their political and social control of human society. Lorenz has made much of
the concept of "territory" in supporting the case of universal male superiority. Millett has challenged their so-called 'scientific' character. Her argument is that "Should one regard sex in humans as a drive, it is still necessary to point out that the enormous area of our lives ... is almost entirely the product of learning. So much is this the case that even act of coitus itself is the product of a long series of learned responses." (Millett, 1980, 44). She claims that copulation, which certainly has biological aspects, is "the fundamental level of sexual politics."

Millett derives the following conclusion from her examination of the role of biological factor in patriarchy. Patriarchal ascriptions of temperament and role are arbitrary in character. Each person, therefore, realises little more than half his potential. But of more political significance is that this arbitrary division leads to a power or status division. Millett observes that "In the matter of conformity patriarchy is a governing ideology without peer; it is probable that no other system has ever exercised such a complete control over his subjects." (Millett, 1980, 44).

III Sociological

Patriarchy's chief institution, according to Millett, is the family. It is a mirror of the larger society and connects the individual with it. It effects control and
conformity where political and other authorities are insufficient. It is the fundamental instrument and the foundation unit of patriarchal society. So its sexually differentiated roles are prototypical.

In Millett's opinion family, society and the state are three separate but connected entities. Women have a decreasing importance as one goes from the first to the third category. In the family, male is normally designated as the head of household. Millett has discussed the writings of Sir Henry Maine and John McLennan to describe the major features of the patriarchal family.

The chief contribution of the family is the socialisation of the young into patriarchal ideology. Millett argues that "To insure that its crucial function of reproduction and socialisation of the young takes place only within its confines, the patriarchal family insists upon legitimacy." Millett points out that even Bronislaw Malinowsky describes this as 'the principle of legitimacy'. It insists that no child should be brought into the world without a man— and one man at that—assuming the role of sociological father. By this single measure patriarchy decrees that the status of both child and mother is dependent upon the male. (Millett, 1980, 48).

Millett then makes a much-quoted observation in the radical feminist literature. She states "Although there is no biological reason why the two central functions of
the family (socialisation and reproduction) need be inseparable from or even take place within it, revolutionary or utopian efforts to remove these functions from the family have been so frustrated, so be said by difficulties, that most experiments so far have involved a gradual return to tradition. This is strong evidence how basic a form patriarchy is within all societies, and how pervasive its effect upon family members." (Millett, 1980, 49). She concludes that attempts to alter these patterns in a radical way without a thorough understanding of the family as a socio-political institution will not be productive.

IV Class

Before we proceed to note Millett's understanding of the role of class in patriarchy we must be clear about her purpose. All radical feminists urge as a basic truth that women constitute an oppressed class. As a result of this claim they have to deny that women merely take on the class status of their husbands and fathers. Millett exactly argues in this manner. In fact, all radical feminists and even other students of feminism consider her as a pioneer in this matter.

Millett warns us that "It is in this area of class that the caste-like status of the female within patriarchy is most liable to confusion, for sexual status often operates in a superficially confusing way within the
variable of class." She adds: "In a society where status is dependent upon economic, social, and educational circumstances of class, it is possible for certain females to appear to stand higher than some males." (Millett, 1980, 49).

Millett notes that the function of class or ethnic mores in patriarchy is largely a matter of how overtly displayed or how loudly enunciated the general ethic of masculine supremacy allows itself to become. She notes what appears to be a paradox in this context. In the lower social strata, the male usually claims authority and the strength of his sex rank alone. In reality, he has to share power with the women of his class who are economically productive. On the other hand, in the middle and upper classes, there is less tendency on the part of men to assert blunt patriarchal dominance. But in reality, they carry a bigger punch of power vis-a-vis their female counterparts.

According to Millett, one of the chief effects of class within patriarchy, is to set one woman against the other. Thus in the past, it set a whore against a matron, and, in the present, it sets career woman against a housewife. One envies the other her 'security', and prestige, while other is jealous for the freedom and adventure of the other.

But Millett's major purpose and the principle thrust
of her argument in this section is as follows. She says that superficially women do seem to assume the class status of their husbands and fathers. But "... in the final analysis, ... women tend to transcend the usual class stratifications in patriarchy." Millett gives the following reason for this process. "Whatever the class of her (woman's) birth and education, the female has fewer permanent class associations than does the male. Economic dependency renders her affiliations with any class a tangential, vicarious, and temporary matter."

Because women as a group do not enjoy many of the interests and benefits any class may offer its male members. Women have therefore less of an investment in the class system. Charvet explains Millett's position in the following words. Not only do women constitute an oppressed class, but this sexual class division of society is more important in determining the general character of society than class divisions based on property ownership and control. (Millett, 1980, 52-53 and Charvet, 1982, 122-123).

Millett has provided some more information about women almost as a footnote. Women as a group lead a parasitic existence. They are dependent on their male rulers. Women as a 'dependency class', therefore, live on surplus. Their marginal life, therefore, frequently makes them conservative. For like all persons in their
situations, they identify their own survivals with their masters. Millett concludes that "The hope of seeking liberating radical solutions of their own seems too remote for the majority to dare contemplate and remains so until consciousness of the subject is raised." (Millett, 1980, 53). We may note that this has remained the principle theoretical underpinning of the programme of 'consciousness-raising', so common and popular among the radical feminists.

In one of her typical digressions from the subject, Millett has also touched upon the concept of romantic love. She notes that "It is generally accepted that Western patriarchy has been much softened by the concepts of courtly and romantic love." (Millett, 1980, 50). But in her opinion the influence of romantic love has been vastly overestimated. She wants to argue that the concept affords means of emotional manipulation which the male is free to exploit. It is a 'game' that the master group plays in elevating its subject to pedestal level. Her conclusion is that "Chivalry" is a ritual which masks the oppressed status of the women.

V Economic and Educational

It should be noted at the outset that Millett has clubbed together two distinct variables - economic and educational - under one heading. Most of the careful students of sociology will doubt the propriety of such a procedure. She has not offered any explanation.
So far as the first factor is concerned, Millett insists that one of the most efficient branches of patriarchal government lies in the agency of its economic hold over its female subjects. She makes it clear that what is at issue here is not labour but economic reward. According to her, women were "non-persons" without legal standing. They could neither own nor earn in their own right. In modern reformed patriarchy, women have certain economic rights. But they are still economically subordinate. Firstly, women’s work at home is not paid. Secondly, they are restricted to inferior employment opportunities and rewards. Thus the kinds of employment open to women are, with few exceptions, menial, ill paid and without status. Thus in general, the position of women in patriarchy is a continuous function of their economic dependence.

Millett then makes a point which has almost become a cliché in feminist literature. She states that women function as a reserve labour force in modern capitalist countries. She is equally critical of the situation in socialist countries. The female labour force in these countries too generally comes from the lower ranks. She argues that the relatively large incidence of women in some professions of high status such as medicine in the socialist countries is to be explained in terms of the needs of the state than in terms of the values of the
society. In her opinion, socialist countries are as patriarchal as the capitalist one. She then repeats two other points which are again so common to feminist literature. Like Friedan, she notes that women who are employed have in fact two jobs since they still have to carry the burden of domestic service and childcare. Like Friedan, she states that the invention of labour saving devices has not affected the quality as well as the duration of their household drudgery. She also notes that discrimination in matters of hiring, maternity, wages and hours is very great.

The most notable point which Millett makes in this section is her comparison of the situation of women in modern and pre-modern societies. In both kind of societies women do not participate directly in technology and production. What they customarily produce - domestic and personal service - has no market value. She adds "Nor, where they do participate in production of commodities through employment do they own or control or even comprehend the process in which they participate." (Millett, 1980, 57). Woman's inability - not a natural but a social product - to comprehend technology results in ignorance of it. Millett asserts that "If knowledge is power, power is also knowledge;" and, therefore, women are reduced to a secondary status.

So far as education is concerned, women are not
trained in science and technology. They are allotted to humanist studies. Thus the kind and quality of education is not the same for each sex. Instead of equipping them with emancipatory values, it merely confirms their early socialization. Control over the kind of education which is available to women is, in Millett's opinion, a matter of political power. It keeps them inferior even in the sphere of culture.

IV Force

Millett points out that we are not accustomed to associate patriarchy with force. The reality being otherwise, it shows the total success achieved by its legitimation strategies. Brutalities are, therefore, usually treated as either relics of the past or the product of individual deviance. Millett argues that like any other political system, control in patriarchal society, by definition, must be ultimately based on instrument of force. The situation is analogous to that of racism and colonialism.

Millett then demonstrates how most patriarchies have institutionalised force through their legal systems. She has given instances from several cultural systems all over the world. She shows that patriarchal legal systems deprive women of control over their own bodies. Women's resort to illegal abortions is just one of their responses to such latent abuse and violence in patriarchal legal
system.

Millett asserts that force is diffused and generalised in most contemporary patriarchies. Millett then offers an original insight into this problem. She states that "Significantly, force itself is restricted to the male who alone is psychologically and technically equipped to perpetrate physical violence. Where differences in physical strength have become immaterial through the use of arms, the female is rendered innocuous by her socialization. Before assault she is almost universally defenseless both by her physical and emotional training. Needless to say, this has the most far-reaching effects on the social and psychological behaviour of both sexes." (Millett, 1980, 61).

Millett then tackles the problem of rape. According to her, patriarchal force relies on rape "as a form of violence particularly sexual in character." Patriarchal force is realised most completely in the act of rape. It is a form of violence which is most appropriate to sexual politics.

Patriarchal societies typically link feelings of cruelty with sexuality, the latter often equated both with evil and with power. Millett points out that this is apparent both in the sexual fantasy reported by psychoanalysis and that reported by pornography. Millett states that "The rule here associates sadism with the male ('the
masculine role') and victimization with the female ('the feminine role')." (Millett, 1980, 61-62). Emotional response to violence against women is often ambivalent. It produces, on the one hand, a sense of shame involving male honour in protecting "his woman", and on the other hand, titillation and amusement. Millett adds that masculine masochism is regarded as exceptional and often explained as latently homosexual. Misogynist (woman-hating) literature is another form of patriarchal hostility towards women. Millett argues that its resurrection in the 20th century—attitudes and literature is the result of resentment over patriarchal reform. Her survey of three major contemporary authors - Lawrence, Miller, and Mailer - and other literature convinces her that contemporary literature has absorbed "not only the truthful explicitness of pornography, but its anti-social character as well." (Millett, 1980, 63-64).

Millett's survey of patriarchal violence leads her to conclude that its rationale bears a certain resemblance to the formulae of nations of war. In "the battle of the sexes" as in battles between nations, violence is justified on the grounds that the enemy is either an inferior species or really not human at all.

VII Anthropological: Myth and Religion

Millett gathers evidence from anthropology, religious and literary myths to demonstrate the politically expedient
character of patriarchal convictions about women. She has borrowed much from H.R. Hay's assessment of cultural notions about the female. She has also consulted Sigmund Freud on *Totem and Taboo* and psychoanalysts, sociologists, and, in particular, anthropologists like Amnest Crawley, David Riesman, Hutton Webster, Heinrich Schurtz, Lionel Tiger and the Hungarian psychoanalytic anthropologist Geza Roheim. She has also drawn upon Greek, Judaic and Biblical sources.

Millett's major argument is that the primitive and the civilized myths reveal a universal male sexual antipathy toward female. Whatever its origin, its function is to provide a means of control over the subordinate group and a rationale for that group's inferior status. She has also followed the concept of the "other" to argue the negative character of these myths so far as women are concerned. She has not taken care to inform us about the sources from which she has borrowed this concept. In any case she does not follow it in her latter presentation.

Millett points out that the feeling that women's sexual functions are impure, evil and detrimental to male health and stability are world-wide and persistent. She refers to various taboos about menstruation, taboos against women's touching ritual objects (those of war or religion) or food, taboos against women about eating with men and finally taboos about virginity, defloration and
sexual segregation of all kinds. Millett insists that these myths operate exclusively on the side of the male's property interest, prestige or (among preliterate) hazard.

Millett has devoted a good deal of space to masculine organizations which anthropology generally refers to as men's house institutions. She notes that men's house is a fortress of patriarchal association and emotion and strengthens masculine communal experience through dances, gossip, hospitality, recreation, religious ceremony, and games involving male weaponry. Her complaint about anthropologists is that the institution's less genial function of acting as a power centre vis-à-vis women is often unnoticed by them. She says that the tone and ethos of this culture is sadistic, power-oriented, latently homosexual, and misogynist (woman-hating). The derogation of feminine status in lesser males is a common patriarchal trait. The association of sexuality and violence is a universal patriarchal and militaristic habit of mind. She pleads that the origins of men's house institution lies in the patriarchal situation rather than any circumstance inherent in the homo-amorous relationship.

Millett has also analysed two leading myths of Western culture namely the Classical tale of Pandora's Box and the Biblical story of the Fall. She lays bare the powerfully expeditious character of these stories both as to the nature and origin of the female and the consequent
attribution of the dangers and evils that are attached to sexuality to the female sex. Her conclusion is that the connection of women, sex and sin constitutes the fundamental pattern of Western patriarchal thought thereafter.

VIII Psychological

Millett explains the psychology of both the sexes in terms of patriarchy. She claim that it reveals the interiorization of patriarchal ideology. Status, temperament, and role are, in her opinion, value systems with psychological ramifications for each sex. She has analysed women's psychology in terms of the problems faced by minority groups. She has drawn upon heavily from the work of Marlene Dixon, Hellen Hacker, Gunnar Myrdal, Everett Hughes, Louis, Wirth, Joseph Folsom, Golwin Watsome and Amitai Etzioni. She complains that psychology has yet to produce relevant studies on the subject of ego damage to the female which might bear comparison to the work done on the effects of racism on the minds of blacks and colonials. She points out what little research is available in this area tells us that women reveal the expected traits of minority status: group's self-hatred and self-rejection. She notes that the effect of patriarchal social beliefs, ideology, and tradition is bound to be pernicious for women. They suffer from a minority complex and tend to lead a marginal existence. Millett argues that patriarchy's greatest psychological
weapon is its universality and longivity. A referent for the feminist change of conditions or revolution hardly exists. She states "While the same might be said of class, patriarchy has a still more tenacious or powerful hold through its successful habit of passing itself off as nature." (Millett, 1980, 31). Yet she believes that when the workings of the systems of power are questioned or exposed the system becomes not only subject to discussion, but even to change. She believes that we are in such a period.

**Summing up of Millett's Analysis of Sexual Politics with special reference to Patriarchy**

As we have already noted that the part one and particularly chapter II constitute the core of Millett's book. Here she has attempted to formulate a systematic definition and overview of patriarchy as a political institution. Zaretsky has noted that "While Millett did not draw explicit political conclusions, her book encouraged the idea that a feminist movement primarily concerned with the abolition of male supremacy in both its social and 'personal' manifestations was needed. ... Insisting that male supremacy was a social rather than a biological phenomenon, Sexual Politics reflected the early stage of women's liberation: the first priority was to establish the validity of its concern." (Zaretsky, 1980, 14-15). As Lise Vogel puts it, Millett provided radical school of feminism a theoretical weapon which suited their
needs and understanding of the problem. She gave to them a term and a concept of patriarchy to indicate universal system of political, economic, ideological, and above all psychological structures through which men subordinate women. (See, Vogel in Sargent, 1981, 207-208). As it plays a crucial role in radical feminist thought it is essential to notice how it was received by others. Heidi Hartman criticises Millett for providing a definition that is so broad that it cannot account for the differences across societies. (Sargeant, 1980, 117). McDonough and Harrison argue that Millett gives no understanding of interconnectedness of the different mechanisms through which patriarchy works and how these have varied historically. (Kuhn and Wolpe, 1978, 13).

Juliet Mitchell has made some pertinent points on Millett's way of presenting her thesis of patriarchy. She says that Millett has just provided us with a eight-point list of variables which supports patriarchy." (Yet) we are left with a sense of a random and chaotic and equal contribution of each and all to the maintenance of patriarchy." (Mitchell, 1981, 83). Zaretsky also points out that Millett did not explain what gave rise to male-supremacy in the first place nor why, if male-supremacy was socially established, it was universally reproduced while other social institutions varied throughout history. Without such an explanation it was impossible for Millett
to outline a strategy for ending male supremacy. (Zaretsky, 1980, 14-15).

**MILLETT'S CONCEPTION OF THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION**

Millet might have failed to meet Zaretsky's and other socialist feminist's expectation of working out a logical and coherent theory of sexual revolution, but Millett has none the less offered her own conception of a sexual revolution. She has preferred to spell out the definition and the content of the sexual revolution of her choice at the outset of Part II of the book. Her decision to locate this analysis in this part and at this place is not an accident. We have already taken into consideration her general suspicion towards self-contained, historicist, systemic explanation of history. It may be one of the reasons that she has not included her definition of the sexual revolution in the first part of the book devoted to the theory of sexual politics where one would have expected it in logical terms.

Millet has offered a following explanation for her procedure in placing this discussion at the beginning of the next part. She states "... it might be well to speculate for a moment upon what a fully realised sexual revolution might be like. A hypothetical definition may be of service in measuring the short comings of the first phase" (of "The sexual revolution", which in her opinion, took place between 1830 to 1930). Millett claims that
her hypothetical definition "... might also be of use in the future ... (with) another upsurge of revolutionary spirit." (Emphasis added, Millett, 1980, 85-86).

She had worked out her conception of a sexual revolution already in A Manifesto for Revolution which she wrote in 1968. We have noted its contents above. We will now present her understanding of the sexual revolution at this stage of her writing.

**Millett's definition and description of the Sexual Revolution**

A sexual revolution would require, perhaps first of all, an end of traditional sexual inhibitions and taboos, particularly those that most threaten patriarchal monogamous marriage: homosexuality, "illegitimacy", adolescent, pre-and extra-marital sexuality. The negative aura with which sexual activity has generally been surrounded would necessarily be eliminated, together with the double standard and prostitution. The goal of revolution would be a permissive single standard of sexual freedom, and one uncorrupted by the class and exploitative economic bases of traditional sexual alliances.

Primarily, however, a sexual revolution would bring the institution of patriarchy to an end, abolishing both the ideology of male supremacy and the traditional socialisation by which it is upheld in matters of status, role, and temperament. This would produce an integration of the separate sexual subcultures, an assimilation by
both sides of previously segregated human experience. A related event here would be the re-examination of the traits categorised as "masculine" and "feminine", with a reassessment of their human desirability: the violence encouraged as virile, the excessive passivity defined as "feminine" proving useless in either sex; the efficiency and intellectuality of the "masculine" temperament, the tenderness and consideration associated with the "feminine" recommending themselves as appropriate to both sexes.

Monogamous marriage would not survive such freedom. The abolition of sex role and a complete economic independence of women would undermine both the authority and the financial structure of the patriarchal proprietary family. An important corollary would be the end of the present chattel status and denial of right to minors. To replace the family, professional collective care of the young would have to be developed. But Millett believes, like all other feminists opposed to the family, that this would involve an improvement in childcare. Millett claims that the care and education of children become a public matter, is absolutely basic condition of female liberation. So long as every female is obliged by anatomy to be the primary caretaker of childhood, Millett argues that woman is prevented from becoming a human being.

Once this is achieved, marriage might generally be replaced by voluntary association, if such is desired.
Charvet has pointed out that Millett's analysis at this stage closely follows Wilhelm Reich. We will tackle this problem at the latter stage of our presentation. Following Reich, she explains the process of how the sexual revolution will come about. A transition from the family to collective care and from monogamous marriage to the voluntary sexual association will be a long and a difficult process. Yet Millett does not entertain any doubts as to how it will inevitably begin. The initial impetus for this enormous transformation will come within the area of personal consciousness. She states "It must be clearly understood that the arena of sexual revolution is within human consciousness even more pre-eminently than it is within human institutions." Millett offers a rationale for her conviction in this regard. She observes: "So deeply embedded is patriarchy that the character structure it creates in both sexes is perhaps even more a habit of mind and a way of life than a political system." Millett, therefore pleads that in the case of the sexual revolution, a revolution in the structure of consciousness must and will proceed before structural revolution.

(Millett, 1980, 38).

We must note that Millett's statement about the nature and particularly the sequence of the sexual revolution is now recognised as the most authoritative and definitive statement expressing the radical feminist position on the
process of feminist emancipation. It also serves as the logic and justification of the "consciousness-raising" programmes which are typical of the feminist movement.

Millett's analysis is based on the conviction that "the primary social and political distinctions are not those based on wealth or rank but those based on sex." Her logic is that once we realise that the basis of our culture ultimately lies in patriarchy, a total revolution, by definition, will and must begin with the sexual revolution.

O'Brien's critique of Millett's perception of the sexual revolution

O'Brien is critical of Millett's position. In her opinion, Millett's analysis is full of confusions. O'Brien asserts that it arises as to Millett's confusion of whether sexual domination is a physical, historical or psychic phenomenon, or, if it is all of these, how such factors are subsumed in the general concept of the political. For example, Millett says that "the most fundamental level" of sexual politics is copulation. On the other hand Millett insists that it must also "be clearly understood that the arena of sexual revolution is within human consciousness even more pre-eminently than it is within human institutions." Yet in another context, Millett also suggests that the institutions of patriarchy have as their principle result "the interiorisation of patriarchal ideology." O'Brien categorically states: "Presumably
institutions are prior but not pre-eminent, causal yet subordinate to their powers of psychic suasion, but Millett's descriptive methodology cannot make sense of these dialectical relations."

O'Brien states that Millett would clearly like to avoid ideological labelling altogether. In Millett's opinion all political ideologies, theories and systems are tainted with patriarchy. O'Brien points out "As she (Millett) does not herself present an alternative and coherent social theory, her ability to be prescriptive is limited. She therefore falls back on the old liberal stand-bys of reform and education. Her notion of 'revolution' is radical reform which will grow out of consciousnesses reformed by 'true re-education'. O'Brien then points out that "she (Millett) speaks of Plato's 'liberal' suggestions on education without noting that they are intransigently elitist." O'Brien concludes that "The dilemma which produces these ambiguities is a very real one relating to both the theory and practice of social change." (O'Brien, 1983, 84-85).

Millett's Account of the First Phase of the Sexual Revolution: 1830-1930

In Millett's opinion, the period between 1830 to 1930 was a period of revolutionary ferment which gave the impression as if the organisation of human society was about to undergo drastic revision with reference to the political relationship between the sexes. In terms of its
revolutionary content, she ranks it with the Industrial, French, American and Russian Revolutions. Millett notes that the nature of this revolution is amorphous and yet its achievements cannot be ignored. In her judgement, it failed to penetrate deeply enough into the substructure of patriarchal ideology and socialisation. But Millett notes that it did attack the most obvious abuses in its political, economic and legal superstructure. It accomplished very notable reform in the area of legislative and other civil rights, suffrage, education, and employment. For a group excluded—as women were—from minimal civil liberties throughout the historical period, their very attainment was, in Millett's opinion, a great deal to achieve in one century. But the whole thrust of her argument running into some hundred and twenty-five pages is to demonstrate the radical shift in collective consciousness about the sexual values that took place during this period. Her survey is well-documented and full of insights. But as we are concerned with the feminist thought as such and not with either feminist movement or women's achievements we will pass over this section.

Millett has compared almost point by point John Stuart Mill's *Subjection of Women*, (first published in 1869) and John Ruskin's "Of Queen's Gardens", (an essay first published in 1865). Millett thinks that "Compressed
within these two statements is nearly the whole range and possibility of Victorian thought on the subject." She points out in Mill one encounters the realism of sexual politics, and in Ruskin its romance and the benign aspect of its myth. Mill understands woman's true place in society while Ruskin reveals the masculine phantasy representative of the official Victorian attitude. (Millett, 1980, 124-125). Mill's analysis, Millett states, the system of sexual dominance is a very prototype of other abuses of power and the other forms of egotism. Mill had discovered in it the psychological foundations of the other species of oppression. Ruskin's glorification of women hides Victorian consideration of women as basically inferior beings. Millett's conclusion is that in terms of their impact on social thought "In Mill's tones one hears the precursor of revolution; in Ruskin's only reaction tastefully phrased. In 1860s Ruskin's middle gallantry was in every mouth, but by 1920 Mill's clear voice had prevailed." (Millett, 1980, 151).

Millett's Analysis of Engels and Revolutionary Theory in the context of the sexual revolution

Millett places as much value on the revolutionary theorising about the sexual politics as she places on the concrete historical gains of women's movement. She points out that "Such theorists could give coherence and ideological support to the disputes of the day ... Capable of seeing the events of the present in a historical
perspective, they could provide direction for change, otherwise the product of unconscious forces." Millett states that "Major theorists (of the sexual revolution) were Chernyshevsky, Mill, Engels, Bebel and Veblen. Much of what they said is still relevant to a sexual revolution and therefore still speaks to us today."
(Millett, 1980, 151-152). Millett has singled out John Stuart Mill and Fredrick Engels as the outstanding spokesmen of the sexual revolution who thought "courageously and intelligently." We have already noted above her high evaluation of Mill's analysis as the prototype of studies of abuses of power. In case of Engels she claims that he "came to see in sexual, super- and subordination the model for later hierarchies of rank, class, and wealth." (Millett, 1980, 145). The possession of women by men was the first class oppression. Charvet comments that "This is not actually Engels' position, since for him the oppression of women is the consequence of private property and the male interest in legitimate heirs, but it is precisely the radical feminist position." (Charvet, 1982, 124).

Millett has devoted some thirty-five pages to the examination of Engels' role in the sexual revolution. Millett's understanding of Engels acts as the guideline of radical feminist position on marxism. So inspite of Charvet's correct understanding of the situation, it will
be necessary to understand Millett's evaluation of Engels.

Millett asserts that Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* provided the most comprehensive account of history and economy "and the most radical, for Engels alone among the theorists attacked the problem of patriarchal family organisation." (Millett, 1980, 152). As we have already noted that Millett is impatient of theories of origin, on the grounds that they are always and only can be speculative. She has situated her evaluation or assessment of Engels's within this framework. She points out that Engels was baffled by one of history's conundrums when he faced the problem of deciding which appeared first in history - patriarchy or matriarchy. Millett notes that this dispute is being thrashed out in anthropology for some hundred years. But Millett is of the opinion that despite its fascination it appears to be incapable of resolution since the information from pre-history which might settle it is inaccessible.

Millett argues that Engels' entire anthropological basis of beginning with matriarchy as the first stage of pre-history is more than problematic by now. She has mostly relied on Marvin Harris on this point. Millett is more critical of Engels' logic in explaining transition from mother-right to a pairing and finally monogamous marriage. Engels wanted to answer the question how women
allowed their subjection to overcome them. Bachofen and Engels thought that women found sexuality in group marriage burdensome and longed for relief by the right of chastity. Engels informs us that patriarchy was accepted as a not unwelcome penalty for becoming exempt from the group marriage. Millett comments that such confident assumption that women dislike sex is absurd. She says there is something consciously patriarchal in the assumption that sexual association involves surrender and that it constitutes a political act of submission. Millett argues that the logic and attitude betray the male-bias of his Victorian culture. She accuses Engels of adopting assumptions becoming only to patriarchal conditions when he explains conditions prior to patriarchy. In Millett's opinion, all his errors arise as Engels was ignorant of the nature of female sexuality.

Millett argues that "All the best scientific evidence today unmistakably tends towards the conclusion that the female possesses, biologically and inherently a far greater capacity for sexuality than the male." (Millett, 1980, 164). She points out that Engels' conviction that women should have preferred limited sexuality imposed on them by paired marriage reveals the male-dominated sexual climate of his times. She argues that scientists and thinkers have consistently underrated patriarchy's negative effect on women's sexuality.
(1) It has generated a sense of guilt about sexuality in women.

(2) Through a concentrated form of socialisation it has converted woman to a sexual object.

(3) Cultural restraints of patriarchy make her see her sexuality as a punishment except the situations when she is providing the male with sexual outlet and exercising the animal functions of reproduction and care of the young.

(4) The influence of increased physiological understanding, improved sexual technique, and a diminution of masculine-oriented sex has somewhat improved women's approach to sexuality. Millett states that in any case, Engels' analysis suffered from an unconscious patriarchal bias.

Yet Millett values Engels' contribution. In her opinion, his contribution to a sexual revolution lay in his analysis of patriarchal marriage and family. She calls his analysis a radical departure. She calls his work highly pragmatic. In tracing them as historical institutions, Engels led the above-mentioned institutions open to serious criticism, analysis, and even drastic reorganisation. Millett states "What Mill had thought to be a primordial evil, the inevitable consequence of man's original savagery, Engels' historical account transform into an oppressive innovation, and innovation which brought
with it innumerable other forms of oppression, each dependent upon it. Far from being the last injustice, sexual dominance became the key stone to the total structure of injustice." (Millett, 1980, 170).

Whether she is right in ascribing this thesis to Engels or not, Millett further argues that "Thus all the mechanisms of human inequality rose out of the foundation of male supremacy and the subjection of women, sexual politics serving historically as the foundation of all other social, political, and economic structures. Pairing marriages incorporated human barter, the buying and selling of women, in itself an instructive precedent for the indiscriminate human slavery which arose thereafter. Under patriarchy, the concept of property advanced from its simple origins in chattel womanhood, to private ownership of goods, land, and capital. In the subjection of female to male, Engels (and Marx as well) saw the historical and conceptual prototype of all subsequent power systems, all invidious economic relations, and the fact of oppression itself." Millett then argues that Engels made a fatal error at this point. She states that his "psychology is less subtle and individualised and based upon collective states." As a result Engels frames the subjugation of women in terms of "class emotion" rather than in terms of "A total social and psychological phenomenon, a way of life." Engels therefore tends, in
Millett's opinion, to depict the subjugation of women as an economic or even political event. Engels' famous statement that "The first class antagonism appearing in history coincides with the development of the antagonism of man and wife in monogamy, and the first class oppression with that of the female by the male sex." is framed, in Millett's judgement, in terms of class emotion. (Millett, 1970, 171).

Millett's examination of Engels' analysis is thus full of ambivalence. On the one hand she admires him for his awareness of the role of women's subordination in initiating the process of historical change. She generally approves of Engels' radical analysis of patriarchal marriage and the family. Yet she is critical of his economic determinism and, more notably, of his socialism. For example, Millett has taken severe objection to Engels' statement that sexual love in man's relation to woman becomes the rule among the oppressed classes alone and particularly among the proletarians. She states "Engels, in the time-honoured manner of socialists, appeared to romanticise the poor." She argues that woman is viewed, emotionally and psychologically as chattel property by the poor as well as, and often, even more than, the rich. Lacking other claims to status a working class male is more prone to assert his sexual rank which he brutally asserts. O'Brien points out that Millett's charge against
Engels in this respect is "not untrue, for Engels does indeed display this tendency on occasions, though socialists as different as Shaw and Marx do not." (O'Brien, 1983, 85). Janet Sayers notes that most of the Socialist feminists acknowledge their debt to Millett when she points out that Engels was unjustifiably romantic in his account of relations between the sexes in the proletarian family. (Sayers, 1982, 192-193).

On the whole, Millett is appreciative of Engels. She seems to appropriate his analysis for her radical feminist purposes. She points out that (1) he was the first thinker to show that the term monogamous marriage is something of a misnomer. Man is free to seek sexual outlets while women is not. (2) She praises Engels' refreshingly frank analysis of prostitution. (3) She finds his analysis of patriarchal family original and radical. (4) She praises Engels for his insistence that family is actually a financial unit.

Millett is even more positive in identifying Engels' contribution for providing a model of change. She considers that his proposals are both equitable and feasible. (1) She applauds him for his reasonable appreciation of temporary associations between a man and a woman free from economic considerations. (2) She thinks Engels is both logical and more radical than Mill when Engels asserts that the basis of true sexual pairing must
and will be "individual sex love" rather than financial coercion. (3) She finds that Engels' argument that one cannot be a dependent and still an equal very compelling. (4) She says that his objections to marriage and the family of the bourgeois variety are as valid today as they were in his own times. (5) She offers highest praise to Engels for insisting that a sexual revolution beginning with legal and political equality will not be complete until it is economic and social as well. (6) She points out that the depth of his radicalism is revealed by his propositions about child-care. She says it is his most crucial contribution which meets, as expected, with the greatest resistance. Engels wanted the care and education of children to become a public matter. Millett has summed up Engels' analysis with a statement that his thought was and is a heresy in his and our age. And in view of the history of the family, Engels' suggestion that the family, as it is presently understood, must go radical and revolutionary.

We have already noted Charvet's remark that Millett has not reported "actually Engels' position" and that she has practically read into his work the radical feminist position. (Charvet, 1982, 124). Branco Magas is also of the opinion that "While Millett is right to draw dividing line between Engels and Mill, and indeed uses the former for a lucid critique of the latter, she nevertheless draws
that line not at the origin of the difference between them but at its secondary aspect. For Millett's persuasive account of Engels's position contains one important and fundamental misunderstanding which underpins the whole book, its structure as well as its theory. Whereas Engels really argued that the development of productive forces gave rise to private property, resulting in the subjugation of women as well as the subjugation of most men, Millett's Engels argues that it is the subjugation of women that gave rise to private property (ownership of women being its first form) and thereafter to 'the total structure of human injustice. According to her, both Mill and Engels saw the subjugation of women as the cause of other forms of oppression, and therefore she can argue that once this oppression disappears all other forms will do so as well. The class history of mankind is thereby turned into the sex theory of history. Two concepts, so crucial to Engels's theory, 'private property' and 'class' (in particular, the proletarian, which Millett replaces by 'conscious revolutionary humanity'), play no role in her analysis. (Nor in that of Mill, needless to say.)" (Breitzel, 1972, 234-235)

Millett's Analysis of the Counter-revolution Between 1930 to 1960

Millett, as we have seen above, considers the period between 1830 to 1930 as a period of the great transformation in the traditional relationship between the sexes. Yet
it was followed, in her opinion, by a period when the climate of reaction prevailed. Millett argues that this reaction frustrated the possibility of revolutionary social change in this area for some three decades. She admits that no doubt there was some liberalisation even in this period. But, it was hardly more than a continuation or diffusion of that which begun before it. Any increase in sexual freedom for women in the period 1930 to 1960 is, according to Millett, due less to social change than to better technology in the manufacture of contraceptive devices and their proliferation. She opines that the "New Woman" of the twenties was possibly better provided with sexual freedom than the women of the fifties. Thus apart from the continuation of a modified patriarchal way of life, the period between 1930 to 1960 was a period in Millett's term, one of "The Counterrevolution".

As Millett looks at the scene, the early period of the sexual revolution helped to raise consciousness about the sexual politics. A consolidation of its gains would have required a radical institutional transformation. All desirable reforms like the removal of the economic disabilities of women, the double-standard, prostitution, venereal disease, coercive marital union, and involuntary parenthood remained impossible to eradicate until the institutions of marriage and the family were appropriately restructured. (Millett, 1980, 222). The end of the
patriarchal order called for the abolition of its ideology. Millett pleads that while patriarchal ideology was eroded and patriarchy reformed, the essential patriarchal social order in the period between 1930 to 1960 remained the same. In short, as the first phase ended in reform rather than revolution, the second phase had before it two options - revolution or reaction. Millett argues throughout the next part of the book that historically speaking, it followed the path of the counterrevolution.

Millett's major thrust of argument in this section is to emphasise the persistence of the family as a force frustrating revolutionary change. Millett has also identified other factors which were less basic in her opinion. They are the collapse of organised feminism in 1920; the Depression; the decline of Democratic Radicalism in the thirties; post-war reaction after 1945; the labour situation which accompanied it; and finally, the general conservatism of the fifties. Millett then points out that her hypothesis that the counter-revolution began to show signs of abatement after 1960 is attested by the recent revival of feminism.

Millett argues that both the state and the society realised in a period of stress and strain that the patriarchy was necessary for the family system. In her opinion in conservative economies with an ethos of aggressive competition, the "home" seemed to offer the
last island of humane feeling. (Millett, 1980, 223). She further argues that the state was interested in glorifying the patriarchal family as its effective educational arm.

Millett follows thinkers like Marcuse, Durkheim, and particularly, Reich to argue that the authoritarian governments appeared to favour patriarchy specially. Drawing upon the analysis offered by Reich in his *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, Millett suggests that the atmosphere of fascist states and of dictatorships depends heavily upon their patriarchal character. (Millett, 1980, 223).

Millett then discusses at length the examples of the Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. She considers them as typical examples of totalitarian systems which are interested in repressing the sexual revolution. Her interest in demonstrating "the patriarchal and malesupremacist" character of the Nazi state is to prove her hypothesis that such a character is due to the temperamental rather than political or economic factors.

After a rather random, loose-knit presentation of some "facts" about The Nazi Germany, Millett concludes: "In its regressive tribal mood a structure built on the suppression of women represented the perfect vehicle of authoritarian, jingoist, and militarist sentiment." (Millett, 1980, 237).
What is of interest to us as a student of feminist thought is Millett's conclusion drawn from these facts. We must note, in passim, that her conclusion practically defines the thesis of sexual politics which she wants to present in this book. She states: "... one is forced to conclude that sexual politics, social organisation, is, like racism or certain aspects of caste, primarily an ideology, a way of life, with influence over every other psychological and emotional facet of existence. It has created therefore, a psychic structure, deeply embedded in our past, capable of intensification or attention, but one which, as yet, no people have succeeded in eliminating." (Millett, 1980, 237).

Millett's analysis of the failure of the sexual revolution in the Soviet Union is significant for two reasons. It denotes those factors which differentiate the radical feminists from some of the marxist feminist counterparts which entertains some sympathy for the "socialist" experiment. Radical feminists as rule follow Millett in not treating the Soviet Union as a progressive society in terms of the sexual revolution. It should be noted that Millett does not seem to be a professional anti-socialist or anti-Soviet. In fact, she seems to be rather sympathetic. Yet her assessment of the Soviet experiment is negative in character.

She begins by saying that the Soviet Union made a
conscious effort to terminate patriarchy and restructure its most basic institution - the family - soon after the revolution. Every possible law was passed to free individuals and particularly the women and children from the claims of the family: free marriage and divorce, contraception, abortion on demand, and rejection of the controlling economic power of the husband. Millett then argues that twenty seven years after the revolution, the Soviet position had completely reversed itself. The initial radical steps were largely abridged. By 1943 the reaction gained so much that even coeducation was abolished, the result was that the sexual revolution was over and the counter-revolution triumphant. Millett also notes that the conservative opinion elsewhere "rejoiced in pointing to the Soviet as an object lesson in the futility of change" in the institutions of the family and the marriage.

According to Millett the reasons for the counter-revolution are many and complex. She has identified some reasons like the prolonged state of civil war; famine conditions, the terrible poverty of the early Soviet years, compulsions of armaments after 1933, the burden of age-old patriarchal traditions etc. Yet Millett argues that there is a still deeper cause. In her words, "... beyond declaring that the compulsive family must go, marxist theory had failed to supply a sufficient
ideological base for a sexual revolution, and was remarkably naive as to the historical and psychological strength of patriarchy." She has considered the views of Engels, Lenin and Trotsky in this connection. She points out that "Engels had supplied nothing but a history and economy of the patriarchal family, neglecting to investigate the mental habits it inculcates. Lenin admitted that the sexual revolution, like the social and sexual processes in general, were not adequately understood; he also ... did not find them important enough to speak on. Trotsky ... did not deign to treat of sex in his supposedly practical book Everyday Questions. ..."
(Millett, 1980, 239-240).

True to her understanding of the problem, Millett further argues that an additional basic factor explaining the failure of the Soviet experiment was its failure to change attitudes. In her opinion "There were ... several ancient errors embedded in the revolutionary mentality; belief that sexuality is incompatible with social effort and dedication; an assumption that sexuality is antithetical to collective or to cultural achievement; an attitude in which pregnancy and child-birth were continually referred to as the 'biological infirmities', and questionable, even dangerously superficial, presumption that family and marriage are merely economic or material phenomena, capable of solution by economic and

Millett states that as the cumulative result of all the above factors, the "revisionism" succeeded and the radical views of the feminists and revolutionaries like Kollontai, and Wolffson defeated. We must note at this point Eli Zaretsky's comments on Millett's analysis to put the things in proper perspective. He states that "The idea that Bolshevik policy during the 1930s represented a radical reversal probably arose with Wilhelm Reich's *The Sexual Revolution*, New York 1972, first published in 1945 and has been popularised in Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics*, New York 1970. There was certainly a change but there was also an underlying continuity. The conservative counterpart to Reich's Polemic is the academic opinion that the Bolsheviks first attempted to abolish the family, and then learned it could not be done." (Zaretsky, 1980, 99).

We have already noted Millett's chagrin at the joy felt by conservative scholars in the West in the failure of the Soviet experiment. Millett has cited by name, authorities like H. Kent Geiger, Urie Bronfenbrenner, Alex Inkeles, and Nicholas Timasheff who are said to be guilty of this bias. In her opinion, they have treated the dramatic shift in Soviet policy on the family as a return to and vindication of traditional Western family patterns. They use the Soviet example as a striking
affirmation of the importance of the family. Millett, though severely critical of the Soviet failure, questions the soundness of these scholars' assessments as well.

MILLET'T'S EXAMINATION OF PSYCHOANALYSIS AND FUNCTIONALISM AS IDEOLOGIES OF THE SEXUAL POLITICS

Millett holds the authoritarian systems only partially responsible for the failure of the sexual revolution. To her the real causes appear to lie deeper. The first cause was that the sexual revolution paid more attention to legal forms but neglected to change basic attitudes, values, emotions. It did not challenge the psychic structure built by several millennia of patriarchal society. The second cause was that the institutions of patriarchal marriage and family were not totally and effectively challenged. Millett points out that as a combined result of these two causes, sexual revolution remained incomplete and became vulnerable.

Millett observes that the rise of new ideological justifications for patriarchy were inevitable. In the face of the above weaknesses of the sexual revolution they were bound to win. Millett points out that the new defence of patriarchy could not come from religion. Religion had lost its appeal and credibility in the face of the scientific progress of the 19th century. The new formulation of patriarchal attitudes had to come from science. In Millett's opinion the emerging social sciences of psychology, sociology, and anthropology were
potentially useful for matters of social control and manipulation. Connected with sciences of biology, mathematics and medicine, they began to gather prestige. Millett argues that the new ideology was bound to arise within the sphere of these sciences. (Millett, 1980, 249-251).

**Millett's evaluation of Freud**

Millett differentiates Freud from his followers, Freud's own work from post-Freudianism. Yet she wants to plead that the anti-feminism of psychoanalysis is not without foundation in Freud's own work. She is not blind to Freud's achievements. She thinks that his discoveries of the theories of the unconscious and of infant sexuality were major contributions to human understanding. She is also aware of Freud's general image. His work is usually seen as a contribution toward softening traditional puritanical inhibitions about sexuality. But in her opinion, its negative results for women surpass his general achievements. She wants to prove that the effect of Freud's work, that of his followers, and particularly, that of his popularisers" was to rationalise the invidious relationship between the sexes, to ratify traditional roles, and to validate tempamental differences."

Millett therefore has treated Sigmund Freud's work as the most influential and therefore "beyond question the strongest individual counter-revolutionary force in the
ideology of sexual politics during period." By an irony nearly tragic, Millett argues, the discoveries of a great pioneer served conservative and counterrevolutionary goal. (Millett, 1980, 251-253).

Millett has followed Viola Klein's *The Feminine Character, History of an Ideology* in her analysis of Freud's work. Her general argument is that Freud's tendency was to treat the women's dis-enchantment with their social circumstances over-dependent upon their sexual inhibition. Millett argues that as a result of this error Freud generally recommends female sexual fulfilment as a panacea for substantial symptoms for social unrest within an oppressive culture. Millett has examined Freud's position in four separate sections.

In the first section, Millett has challenged some of Freud's basic assumptions. She has challenged the set of assumptions which Freud gathered together in the notion of penis-envy. Her argument on this point can be summed up as follows. The definition of the female within the conceptual frame work of penis-envy is negative. His entire psychology of women is built upon an original tragic experience - female child's "discovery" of a "lack" of a penis. Freud did not choose to explain his female patient's sense of inferiority in terms of their conditions within patriarchal society. He preferred instead an etiology of childhood experience based upon
the biological fact of anatomical differences. Worst still, Freud again ignored the social context of childhood, by isolating feminine "castration" complex by locating it in the realm of nature. In Millett's opinion, his procedures reveal a strong masculine bias, "even of a rather gross male-supremacist bias." Freud sees the entirety of feminine development in terms of one single "cataclismic movement of discovered castration." Millett suggests that Freud's understanding of the whole situation is "extraordinarily biographical."

Drawing very heavily from the unpublished work of Frances Kamm and the published work of Viola Klein, Millett further argues that Freud's work reveals a considerable fear of women. As a result, his prescriptive accounts also carry the same bias. Thus he prescribes that all lingering hopes of acquiring a penis be abandoned by women and be sublimated in maternity. Millett argues that what he recommends is merely a displacement, since even material desires rest upon the last vestige of penile aspiration. Millett notes: "Freudian logic has succeeded in converting childbirth, an impressive female accomplishment and the only function its rationale permits her, into nothing more than a hunt for a male organ. It somehow becomes the male prerogative even to give birth, as babies are but surrogate penises. The female is bested at the only function Freudian theory recommends for her,
reproduction. ... Woman is thus granted very little validity even within her limited existence and second-rate biological equipment: were she to deliver an entire orphanage of progeny, they would only be so many dildoes." (Millett, 1980, 262).

Millett argues that Freud had spurned an excellent opportunity to study the effect of patriarchal culture on the ego development of the young female. He has preferred instead to sanctify her oppression in terms of the inevitable law of "biology". He neglects the total cultural context of sex. Millett has used very strong, rather intemperate, words in this context. She states that "Freud appears to have made a major and rather foolish confusion between biology and culture, anatomy and status. It is still more apparent that his audience found such a confusion serviceable." (Millett, 1980, 263-265).

Millett has noted the historical fact that the feminist movement appears to have posed a considerable threat to Freud. She almost suggests that Freud's low intellectual rating of the women; his accusation of female jealousy resulting from penis-envy; and his attribution of low moral sense to women once again reveal his patriarchal male bias. Millett takes particularly strong objection to Freud's judgement in this matter in view of the socially-imposed low position of women. Millett states: "... this is remarkably damaging accusation, for
to accuse a deprived group of spitefulness and no sense of fairness, is to discredit or deprive its members of the moral position which is their only claim for just treatment." Thus the whole weight of responsibility and even of guilt is placed upon any woman willing to show an independence of mind and behaviour. The theory of penis-envy shifts the blame for her suffering to the female for daring to aspire to a biologically impossible state. A woman who resists femininity is thought to suffer from neurosis. (Millett, 1980, 265-268). Millett concludes this section calling Freud's method "circular" and castigating him for presenting an "irresponsible" version of the socio-sexual context. In her opinion, Freud's account slides from description to a form of prescription which insures the continuance of the patriarchal status quo, under the guise of health and normality. Millett points out that since then anti-feminists have always used the weapon of penis-envy against the women.

In the second section, Millett has analysed Freud's consideration of masculine and feminine traits. In Millett's opinion, Freud's basic error in this context stems from "His incapacity, unconscious or deliberate, to separate two radically different phenomena, female biology and feminine status." (Millett, 1980, 268). It causes, according to her, the gravest distortion in
Freud's theory of female psychology. She argues that he, as usual, refuses to treat these traits as behavioral constructs reflecting the social structure. In explaining male and female behaviour ultimately in terms of the behaviour of sperm and the ova, Freud attempts to formulate the working of an entire society in determinist biological terms. Freud appears to use sexual cells as sources of analogy both of temperament and role and in the psychological aspects of masculine and feminine. (Millett, 1980, 269-270). In Millett's opinion Freud's errors have resulted from his blind following of Weininger, "a misogynist thinker to whom Freud was often indebted."

Millett has also objected to Freud's use of his theory of bi-sexuality. It tends to equate, even to prescribe, what it defines as masculine with the biological male, and feminine with the biological female. Thus it prescribes femininity for women as the mature resolution of the child's bi-sexual dilemma. Millett takes a severe objection to Freud's favourite notions that women have not, and for "constitutional" reasons cannot, contribute to civilisation. She ridicules Freud for even entrusting the achievement of the biological aim to the aggressiveness of the male independent of the woman's consent. Millett observes that this attitude gave rise to a whole battery of military dictum which psychology has ever since employed to describe sexuality:
surrender, dominance, mastery etc. (Millett, 1980, 273). Freud insisted that cultural was in general enemical to sexuality; culture required sublimation of sexuality; and finally, that women have very low libido. So women are incapable of pursuing civilisation. Millett ends the second section by rejecting this attribution of "constitutional", "organic", "instinctive", and "genetic" tendencies to women.

In the third section, Millett has examined Freud's description of female personality in terms of passivity, masochism, and narcissism. Millett argues that Freud's analysis is a reworking of Weininger's remark on love and the idealisation of women in literature. She states "It is remarkable how Freudian prescription tends to ignore its own notion of bi-sexuality or to find symptoms of it as back-sliding." (Millett, 1980, 277). Using strong words, Millett calls this "A fairly blatant kind of Social-Darwinism." (Millett, 1980, 279).

In the fourth and final section of Millett's critical examination of Freud, Millett blames Freud for treating the female character as a static thing ordained by Nature. She charges that "... Freud's intent is not only to limit female life to the sexual-reproductive, but also to persuade us that women live at a low cultural level because this is the one of which they are capable." (Millett, 1980, 283). Millett has offered a very harsh
criticism of Freud's *Civilisation and Its Discontents*. Millett states: "while he continued to toy with the notion that her biological responsibility to the race impeded the female intellect, Freud progressed to an even more negative position; together with her inherent and psychological incapacities, the female's "sexual role", the function that defines her in life and in the family ... has made her not only incompetent, but necessarily hostile to intellect and high culture, a type of natural philistine". (Millett, 1980, 281-285).

Millett notes that Freud's view of women as a species unalterably primitive has become a part of a popular folk-lore in the 20th century with very harmful results.

Millett sums up her criticism of Freud by saying that Freud has put women in a cruel dilemma. Activity in women which is not sexual - rather reproductive and maternal - is always treated as a matter of penis-envy or "undesirable" masculine protest. It is considered as a futile struggle against her own nature and her "natural" identity. On the other hand, "feminine-nature" is only fulfilled, in Freud's opinion, through the renunciation of "masculine" or intellectual pursuits. Freud considers it unbecoming for women to attempt them. He even treats such efforts as signs of neurotic mal-adjustment. Millett concludes that this "A pseudo-scientific unification of the cultural definition of masculinity and femininity with
the genetic reality of male and female" is responsible for the success of the Counter-revolution. Freudian analysis provided the old myth of feminine nature a new respectability. Popular bigotry against women acquired the cachet of science. (Millett, 1980, 287).

Millett then examines the Post-Freudian tradition. She notes that in general it continued Freud's anti-feminist bias. She takes note of exceptions like those of Karen Horney and Clara Thompson who attempted to revise the Freudian theory in recognition of the social conditions of the sexes. Yet the overall tradition of psychoanalysis, in Millett's opinion, supported anti-feminist reaction. In this context she has considered in detail the work of Marie Bonaparte, Helen Deutsch, and Erick Erikson. She has also considered a very popular and influential text book, Modern Women, The Lost Sex, written by a sociologist named Ferdinand Lundberg and a psychiatrist named Marynia Farnham. Millett has treated it as a typical example of a populist and rather vulgar version of Freudian theory so popular among the general public. Her argument is that the work of these scientific or populist writers has set in motion a definite line of analysis which is reactionary in effect.

Millett's whole position about psychoanalysis can be put in a nutshell as follows. It (psychoanalysis) fails to acknowledge that woman is born female in a
masculine-dominated culture which is bent upon extending its values even to anatomy and is therefore capable of investigating biological phenomena with symbolic force. Juliet Mitchell's evaluation of Kate Millett's understanding of Freud

We have already seen in the earlier chapters Mitchell's pro-Freudian critic of Simone de Beauvoir's and Betty Friedan's analysis of Freud. Mitchell has also dealt with Millett's treatment of Freud. Mitchell has given an interesting title to her examination of Millett's position - "Facts and Fantasies". We can do no better than report Mitchell's opinion in her own words. In one single paragraph she has summed up her detailed treatment of Millett. Mitchell states "Kate Millett gives the most detailed outline of Freud's work of all the feminist writers considered. It seems perverse, therefore, to give it the most scant attention. However, her work serves as a perfect illustration of my thesis that if you study Freud's writings on femininity outside the context of the main concepts of psychoanalysis they are doomed to sound absurd and/or reactionary. Millett shares with Friedan, Figes and Firestone a wish that Freud had seen the social explanation staring him in the face, and she pursues this with greater intricacy than do the other three." (Mitchell, 1976, 351). Mitchell thinks that while the differences of detail between the "sociological injunctions" of Millett and the other feminists are not substantial,
Millett's distinguishing feature is that "Millett goes further and proposes that Freud invented psychoanalysis precisely so as to avoid acknowledging social reality." (Mitchell, 1976, 353). Mitchell adds that with Millett, empiricism runs not to deny any attribute of the mind other than rationality, and thus, to deny the importance of childhood experiences.

**Millett's Refutation of Functionalism**

Millett holds functionalism as much responsible as Freud and the latter psychoanalytic thought for the success of the counter-revolution. In her opinion it too joined hands with psychoanalysis to undermine the sexual revolution from within. She has treated functionalism as an ideology of this reaction.

Millett's tally of charges against functionalism is rather common place and familiar in sociological literature. But as most of the radical feminists tend to repeat Millett's accusations against functionalism, we will report them here. (1) Functionalism is merely descriptive in nature. (2) It tends to treat all systems which perpetuate themselves as functional. Thereby it tends to ignore the fact that despite their stability, many oppressive forms do not function efficiently. (3) When functionalists recognise waste and friction in the system, they treat it as "conflict". They therefore tend to put the burden of responsibility for it upon the
individual who experiences it. (4) In spite of its value-free methods, it disguises its values and thus plays an insidious role. (5) It is status-quoist in nature. It operates in an endless present against the dynamism of growth and change it proposes an ideal of stability. (6) In ignoring values, it ignores history. Lacking historical perspective it confirms the present reality as universal and natural. With its fetish for the mathematical sciences and methods, it neglects causality. (7) Its selection of standards of measurement are not necessarily free of bias as they are usually end-oriented. (8) Functionalism inevitably becomes prescriptive. It tends to treat "functional" factors as "normal" and "dysfunctional" factors as "deviant" ones. (9) Finally, it has a nostalgic flavour under its impersonal exterior. This is the result of its neglect of history and emphasis on persistence of structures.

Millett is particularly critical of Talcott Parsons. She says that the nostalgic character is "no where more quaintly evident" than in Talcott Parsons's functionalist evocation of 'youth culture' as student life in some golden past when all was varsity prom and varsity football. One can often discern some faintly glamorised version of the social scientist's own childhood in the comfortable middle class. The orientation is small-town and Middle-West, a world of some twenty years back, before the dangers and innovations of the present ever occurred to
the investigator. (Millett, 1980, 313-314).

Millett further argues that each of the major social disciplines contributed to re-establishing and then maintaining a reactionary status-quo in sexual politics, each through its own method of reason. Anthropology studied cross-cultural divisions of labour and ascribed them to a fundamental biological source. Sociology, in announcing that it merely records social phenomena, gradually came to ratify them by noting that non-conformist behaviour is in fact deviant and produces "problems". The psychology deplored individual mal-adjustment to social and sexual roles. Thereby, it came to justify both an inherent psychological nature, fundamental to the species and biological in essence.

Millett's devastating criticism of functionalism is accompanied by a description of how it has upheld the cause of patriarchy through the social sciences. Millett argues that when functionalists measure sex difference, little thought is given as to the causality of such phenomena, either as learned behaviour, or as behaviour specifically appropriate to patriarchal society. She further asserts that while early studies were content to measure and generalise, later rationalisations of a sexual differentiation in temperament and role grew all together bolder. She insists that having found traditional behaviour functional with reference to the institutions
and the family and the marriage, the functionalists began to treat them as "natural" hence biologically "necessary". Millett further pleads that functionalists began to take refuge in psychoanalysis' erroneous biological explanations, or through hazy generalisations of their own. Her final charge against functionalism in the context of her notion of patriarchy is that functionalism justifies the system it perceives and overtly identifies with it. It is followed by prescriptive recommendation of how to "adjust" groups or individuals to this system.

Millett, therefore, suggests that functionalism either fails to mention patriarchy, or gives no recognition to patriarchy as a form of social government, or, simply assumes that patriarchy is the first form of human grouping, the origin of all society, and therefore "too fundamental to merit discussion."

Millett's accusations against functionalism in the context of patriarchy may be summed up in her own words. In one of the most quoted statement in the radical feminist literature Millett states: "As the major trend of the sexual revolution had been to de-emphasize traditional distinctions between the sexes both as to role and to temperament, while exposing the discrepancy in status, the most formidable task of reactionary opinion was to blur or disguise distinctions in status while re-emphasising sexual differences in personality by implying that they are innate
rather than cultural. A differentiation of roles followed upon that of temperament, and it too was regarded as eminently useful, even necessary. As this return to a conservative prerevolutionary system required validation, the whole weight of public authority which the social sciences had gradually amassed was now exerted in favour of patriarchal ideology, attitudes, and institutions. The preservation of conservative notions of marriage, and the family, of sex role, of temperamental trait and identity through conformity to sexual norms, took on something of the nature of defuse of holy ground. Socialist experiment or change generally came to be viewed with pity or derision." (Millett, 1980, 313).

To sum up, Millett holds the social sciences (in America) with their usual functionalist mode of analysis guilty of entertaining a strong sexist bias. She charges that this bias, the product of several decades of reaction, still pervades areas of study involving women. An idea and a flavour of her polemical attack on functionalism can be gained when she calls functionalism virtually "a form of a cultural policing." (Millett, 1980, 312). Her charges and the way she has tried to construct evidence may be treated as questionable even by sympathizers of her over-all position.

But to be fair to her, we must note that she has chosen two examples representative of functionalist
analyses of sex differences. One is a study entitled "A Cross-cultural Survey of Some Sex Differences in Socialisation", by Berry, Bacon, and Child, whose orientation is comparative cultural anthropology; and another called "Family Structure and Sex Role learning by Children", by Orville G. Brim Jr., whose point of view derives from social psychology. Both articles were published in reputable professional journals (the first in the Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology and The American Anthropologist; the second in Sociometry). Her treatment of these articles is careful and thorough, though one may still disagree with her. She concludes that both these articles typically reduce sex differences to the "natural" order of biological necessity. They always end in rooting their archetypal sex-roles in biology. They put up no actual evidence for their biological assumptions. Crucial and probable elements of status, political, and economic power are not given equal consideration.

Millettt's judgement about the role played by ideology in The Counter-Revolution

Millettt's investigation of the role of psycho-analysis and functionalism in frustrating the sexual revolution ends with a passing comparison of psycho-analysis and functionalism, and their combined impact on women's destiny. She finds the functionalist formulation "a rather more admirable technique than the earlier and
rather tarnished charge of penis-envy." She notes that it acts like psychoanalysis in pointing "an accusatory finger of mal-adjustment of any woman" who challenges patriarchy. Yet Millett notes that functionalism avoids the openly invidious character of Freud's formula." She adds that it also avoids "pitfall references to sexual status without resorting to Ruskin's or Erikson's chivalrous fatuity." In short, she accuses both of them for their camouflaging patriarchy's regressive character with their "verbiage". Both of them in her opinion are out to save the family. (Millett, 1980, 322-323).

In Millett's final verdict these ideologies avoid the necessity to comment on "the invidious character of the relationship between the sex groups" they study. They ratify and rationalise the present social order. In the name of objectivity they reinforce the present stereo-types. They reduce the status quo to "phenomena" and ultimately to "biology". Finally, these ideologies generate identity crisis in their subjects. Every member of either group-male or female - has to face a painful identity crisis. For the failure to be adequately masculine or feminine is to fail to be true to one's nature. Each imagines that should we loose the certainty of gender identity we may fail to exist in short, as the whole subject of sex is covered with shame. Any failure to confirm reduces the individual to a feeling of guilt
and confusion.

**Millett's examination of representative literature**

In the final part of her book, Millett studies "Some of those who helped to build" patriarchal structures. She states that writers after the usual manner of cultural agents reflect and actually shape attitudes. She has called such authors "counter-revolutionary sexual politicians." (Millett, 1980, 329). She has examined the work of D.H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, Norman Mailer in contrast with the work of Jean Genet whom she considers writer of a different persuasion.

In carrying out such an exercise, Millett has followed Simone de Beauvoir. Millett's exercise in turn has stimulated other feminist writers to undertake similar studies. Millett's exercise is no doubt of great cultural significance. It opens up a new methodology to study the woman problem. But as we are principally interested in the feminist thought we will just present the gist of her argument in Gayle Yates' words. Yates notes: "She (Millett) shows that the novels of D.H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, and Normal Mailer reveal the cultural belief that the power of sexual mastery of men over women is the central symbol of political dominance and subordination. By contrast, the literary works of Jean Genet question this belief by showing the powerlessness of the male homosexual, the queen, who
deliberately but artificially takes on the role of a woman. As Genet says in *The Balcony*, the recreation of manipulation, role-playing, mutilation, and violence will continue in an endless cycle if woman does not cease to play whore and mascot to man's role as general, bishop, and king." (Yates, 1977, 82-83).

**Millett's final statement about the Sexual Politics**

Millett has ended the book on a hopeful note. She thinks that the reactionary sexual ethics fostered between 1930 to 1960 has nearly spent itself. The rise of other progressive forces like the revolt of youth or the movement of the blacks have also stimulated the women's movement. She talks about the rise of a new consciousness. She calls for a cultural revolution. Her justification is that "The enormous social change involved in a sexual revolution is basically a matter of altered consciousness, the exposure and elimination of social and psychological realities underlining political and cultural structures. We are speaking, then of a cultural revolution, which, while, it must necessarily involve the political and economic reorganisation traditionally implied by the term revolution, must go far beyond this as well." (Millett, 1980, 506).

Millett categorically rejects the use of violence to achieve the feminist objectives. This is of great significance as the question of violent or non-violent
tactics had become a crucial issue among all the post-nineteen sixty eight radical movements in the U.S.A. including the feminist movement. She argues that the most profound changes are accomplished by human growth and true re-education, she rejects the utility of "the theatrics of armed struggle" "even should the latter become inevitable." She thinks that resort to violent tactics is usually sex-destructive. She is of the opinion that the possession of numbers a dedication, and creative intelligence make the use of violence unnecessary.

Branca Magas has given the following quotation from an interview that Millett gave after the publication of her book. Millett states "Women's lib is going to be the greatest revolutionary movement in history because it is going to avoid all the fascist traps of the male mind. But not unless we face the resurgence of all that masculine shit that's coming out of women who have learned politics from men. ... A revolutionary is a changer, a teacher. Somebody who hangs in and keeps at it and keeps loving people, until they change their heads. ... The trouble is all these women want to play war because their boyfriends do and they think it's radical. ... We've got to get rid of it, or we're not going to make it."

(Emphasis in original; Dreitzel, 1972, 243-244).

Millett emphasizes that the rejection of the use of violence does not mean acceptance of slow and gradual
progress. She believes that "The deliberate speed fostered by modern communication" has opened up new possibilities of mobilising world public opinion for radical purposes. She expects the new women's movement to ally - itself with blacks and students in a radical coalition strictly on an equal basis. She imagines that women will play a crucial role in deciding the balance of political power.

Millett states "As the largest alienated element in our society, and because of their numbers, passion, and length of oppression, its largest revolutionary base, women might come to play a leadership part in social revolution, quite unknown before in history." (Millett, 1980, 507). Millett once again stresses the fundamental significance of the need of attitudinal change. She points out: "For to actually change the quality of life is to transform personality, and this cannot be done without freeing humanity from the tyranny of sexual-social category and conformity to sexual stereo-type as well as abolishing racial caste and economic class." (Millett, 1980, 507).

**MILLETT'S THE PROSTITUTION PAPERS**

Millett's next book *The Prostitution Papers* was published in 1970. As she became more and more involved in the women's liberation struggle, Millett became increasingly convinced of the movement's relevance for
prostitutes. This conviction led her to write this book. Written in "The most hectic period" of her existence, the book marked her emergence as a writer freed "from the academic manner". The book follows the first feminist conference on prostitution in December 1971. Her project first appeared in an anthology called *Women In Sexist Society*, first published in 1971. It was published therein with the title "Quartet". It consists of a "four-cornered conversation" between four women - two prostitutes and two feminists including Millett herself who discussed prostitution and their personal experiences. It records extensive interviews with a white prostitute who later earned a Ph.D.; a black prostitute still in the business (at least at the time of the writing of the book); Liz Schneider a woman lawyer with training in sociology who has worked extensively with prostitutes in New York City and Millett's associate in this project; and finally Millett's own personal memoirs and observations.

"These real experiences give us a way of measuring the stereotypical prostitutes of (popular imagination and) fiction. Though victims of society, in the sense that all of us are at least partially determined by forces over which we have no control, the two prostitutes were certainly not 'innocent'; both went into prostitution knowingly because it afforded them the
highest profit for the least effort. One needed to support a drug habit; the other not only preferred her work to menial low-paid jobs but, after getting a Ph.D. in psychology, realised that one of her motives had been neutral of men. Far from being "the misled innocent with a heart of gold", she recognised her motivation as contempt for men who had to pay for what they should have through love. The lawyer's experience supports the image of prostitutes as passive, but it adds insight as to the cause. Prostitutes accept the contempt of police and judges and internalise it as a negative self-image that makes a desire to change most unlikely. Their apparent reluctance to change stems from the numbness of self-hatred. Kate Millett emphasises the ways in which amateur sex objects prostitute themselves for the price of a dinner or for a professional advantage; women, showing the views of their oppressors, see themselves as commodities." (Ferguson, 1977, 28-29). All readers of this book will be impressed by its sincere, moving, honest and responsible tone. As a piece of social documentation, its humane character leaves a deep imprint on our mind.

Millett has tackled the problem of prostitution even earlier in the Sexual Politics. She has praised Engels for being refreshingly frank about prostitution. She states that prostitution is as much the result of the psychological needs of men as the economic compulsions
which lead certain women to the profession. She agrees with Engels that the prostitution is the natural product of traditional monogamous marriage. Whatever society's official attitude may be, the demand for prostitution continues within male-supremacist culture. Prostitution is a social institution. It seems that it affirms male-supremacy through the humiliation of women. Millet states that "prostitution, when unmotivated by economic need might well be defined as a species of psychological addiction, built on self-hatred through repetitions of the act of sale by which a whore is defined." (Millet, 1980, 174). Millett adds that prostitution as a social institution expresses the male-contempt for female sexuality. She also notes that the prostitute’s role is also in a certain sense an exaggeration of patriarchal economic conditions where the majority of females are driven to live through some exchange of sexuality for support. She concludes by saying that the degradation of prostitution is "reflection of a culture whose general attitudes toward sexuality are negative and which attaches great penalties to a promiscuity in women it does not think to punish in men." (Millet, 1980, 174).

The Prostitution Papers is not, as we have already said, a formal academic exercise. Yet Millett has stated her position in a relatively more formal terms in the book. She states that prostitution is somehow
paradigmatic, somehow the very core of the female social condition. In place of the subtlety of a marriage contract, it declares women’s subjection right in the open. But the very act of prostitution is itself a declaration of a certain value system. It is not sex the prostitute is really made to sell. It is degradation. The male buyer is not buying sexuality, but power, over another human being. It demonstrates the relative position of male and female in patriarchal society - he as a master, she as a slave. (Millett, 1973, 93-94).

Millett then makes a brilliant suggestion. She states that "Prostitution is, in a sense, antique, a fossil in the social structure, pointing, as all fossils do, to an earlier age. But the correct metaphor must be social, not phenomenological." (Millett, 1973, 94). She explains her statement by drawing upon Levi-Strauss. Levi-Strauss has emphasised that men have traded in women throughout most of human history in pre-monetary societies. Millett concludes by saying that "Little wonder that the origins of prostitution lie in temples converted from fertility rites to the cult of patriarchy." (Millett, 1973, 94). Millett states that, for the prostitute, probably the ultimate oppression is the social onus with which she is cursed for accepting the agreed-upon social definition of her femaleness, her sexual objectification.

Millett finds the marxist analysis of the problem
quite inadequate. In her opinion, it fails to take psychological factors such as shame into account. She notes that there is a crucial element quite beyond the economic which decides the nature of prostitution. She describes it as a kind of psychological addiction, self-denigration, an addiction which women are socially conditioned to accept. She bluntly states "In a sexual culture as unhealthy as our own, it is reiterated again through the manner of our sexual acts, that the female is carnality, a thing ..." (Millett, 1973, 96).

Prostitute is posed as the opposite of ego or selfhood, its very antithesis, the negative pole of selfhood or spirit. She concludes that the sell of women in prostitution reinforces this attitude more powerfully than any other event. Thus she calls prostitutes as "political prisoners" of a patriarchal society. In short, the core of prostitution is sexual politics. (Millett, 1973, 119).

Millett has also made some passing comments about the myth and content about female masochism. By calling of an organic and constitutional principle of female character, it forces women to play it out as a part of their proper role. Patriarchal society destroys female "ego, their self respect, their hope, their optimism, their imagination, their self confidence, their will". In the face of this oppression, women naturally imbibe
and reveal the behaviour of other equally socially oppressed groups.

Millett has also reiterated her rejection of violent and abusive tactics to solve the problem of prostitution. She has ridiculed those radical members of the New Left of the middle class, bourgeois origins who indulge in self-righteous dedication to violent means and manners as a guarantee of sincerity, even atonement, for the comfort of their upbringing; and who call their violence-rejecting comrades as middle-class. Millett rejects this "macho obsession with violent methods." (Millett, 1973, 107 and 10). Millett realises that prostitution is a very difficult problem to handle. She realises that prostitution has flourished always counting on and aided by the state. She states that "Considering the weight of this tradition, one gets a notion of how heavy a job actual social revolution is: beggary, habit, moneyed interest, physical force, even indifference are so solid." It calls for the removal of "the mess our sick culture has made of sexuality" which is a "difficult and protracted task." (Millett, 1973, 110).

Millett wants to take only one step forward carefully in this matter. So far as the U.S.A. is concerned, she rejects either the state regulation or repression of prostitution as the proper methods of handling this problem. Her solution lies exactly in another direction,
viz. in removing prostitution from criminal code altogether. She argues that "Decriminalisation would in no way increase the incidence or availability of female prostitution, but it would frustrate the exploitation of prostitutes by two classes of men who are their chief predators: pimps and police." (Millett, 1973, 84).

Millett sums up her analysis in an insightful passage. She rejects that understanding of prostitution can be gained by "the statistical approach of sociological text, the cheerful rationalisation of popular accounts, the romanticised versions of literature." She notes that for centuries, a tremendous moral and sociological confusion has surrounded the entire issue. It is a phenomenon which one can consider only with reference to the monumental sexual repression within patriarchal culture. It is a standing proof of the failure of the patriarchal system to recognise its own product namely the prostitute as human in any meaningful sense at all. Millett emphasises the fact that the causes of female prostitution lie in the economic position of women. Together with the psychological damage inflicted upon them through the system of sex-role conditioning in patriarchal society, the solution calls for a cultural that is attitudinal revolution. She declares in a wellknown statement that "I should like to see the new movement give women ... a confidence in the value of their own culture ... and a
respect for its experience, together with the freedom, even the spontaneity, to express this in new ways, in new forms." (Millett, 1973, 30). Women as a class with a subculture of its own will have to raise their consciousness to achieve true freedom and respect for womanhood.

Millett says that basic changes in attitude on the part of the public must precede legislative change. She prefers re-education of people and not violence. It involves, first and foremost, an attitudinal change on the part of women who are not prostitutes. She insists that there must be a new climate of awareness, of trust and self-respect between women, a feeling of community. She is sincere and a realist enough to note finally that it calls for a most difficult effort to secure a meaningful change on the part of the prostitute herself. The task is difficult as the prostitutes as victims of society interiorise the oppressive values of the patriarchal culture. To sum up, Millett calls for a universal programme of consciousness-raising.

SUMMING UP

The early writings of the post-1968 women's movement were fragmentary and exploratory. All militant feminists, certainly the Radical Feminists, agree that, whatever its merits, the first attempt at an overall synthesis of women's liberation positions came with the publication of
Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics*. Millett sought to broaden the meaning of politics to include power relationships of personal context and interaction between the two sexes. Millett's notable impact derives from her thesis, however argued, that the sexual revolution requires not only an understanding of sexual politics but the development of a comprehensive theory of patriarchy. (See Vogel, in Sargent, 1981, 207). Zaretsky observes that "While Millett did not draw explicit political conclusions, her book encouraged an idea that a feminist movement primarily concerned with the abolition of male-supremacy in both its social and 'personal' manifestations was needed." (Zaretsky, 1980, 14).

The subsequent feminist thinkers have reacted to Millett in two ways. The Socialist Feminists share some of her criticism of the Marxist tradition in neglecting the system of patriarchy, but think that she has rather gone too far in neglecting the role of the production process in women's oppression. To take one example, Charmie Guettal states: "Millett accurately points out the relevance of Engels' assertion that patriarchal authority rests on economic dependence of members of the family. But Engels goes further in stating that patriarchy itself as a form of authority is a result of a mode of production." (Elanó, 1978, 193).

Similarly McDonough and Harrison argue: "One of the
first major attempts to provide a thorough theoretical examination of the oppression of women using the concept of patriarchy was Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1971). ... Whilst her analysis is able to draw upon and make comparisons between a vast range of transhistorical, empirical and cross-cultural evidence and thus give extremely important insights into the way in which patriarchy permeates our lives, its strength is ultimately its limitation. Millett's examination of patriarchy and the various domains of its operation remains discrete and abstract precisely because it is so general. She gives us no understanding of interconnectedness of the different mechanisms through which patriarchy works and how these have varied historically. In other words there is no analysis of the specificity of the operations of patriarchy throughout time and of its relation to other forms of domination at the economic and political levels. All is subsumed under the general rubric of patriarchy, which, however undeniable its universality may be, does not lead very far.

*Sexual Politics* does, however, represent one of the first serious theoretical attempts to come to grips with the specific nature of women's oppression and it signals the irreducibility of that oppression to any simple or even complex class analysis conceived through traditional marxist economic categories. But her attack on the
inadequacies of traditional marxist analysis in its confrontation with the question of women's oppression, while correctly pointing out its deficiencies and castigating it for its economic reductionism, can constitute no solution merely by means of inverting that lack. Thus one of the central weaknesses in Millett's position is revealed not when she states that most marxist analyses involve the presumption that the family and marriage are merely economic phenomena capable of transformation by economic or institutional methods alone, but when she attempts to redress this theoretical lacuna by asserting the primacy of sex over class. The problem (which still remains and to which Millett was one of the first to address herself systematically) is not solved by overturning the classic, crude, economistic position which stresses the simple determinacy of class conceived economically only to replace it with another primary determination - that of sexual oppression. Millett rejects not just a specific kind of marxism, but marxism per se, and in seeing patriarchy as equivalent to and at times more fundamental than the class system she moves away from a materialist analysis and into a sociological one."

(Kuhn and Wolpe, 1973, 12-14).

But some Radical Feminists, on the other hand, criticise her rather casual rejection of Freud's contribution. Firestone, for example, argues that Freud had grasped the
crucial problem of modern life namely the sexuality so well that a feminist critic of his position should have cared to offer a more deeper line of analysis. Some of the Radical Feminists have also criticised Millett's overreliance on the literary evidence as compared to her rather irritating neglect of the social sciences.

O'Brien is a major critic who has devoted considerable space to analysis of Millett's writing. We have already reported her evaluations of Millett's arguments themewise. Here we want to note her overall assessment of Millett's work. She considers Millett's Sexual Politics as a competent and passionately sincere denunciation of the psycho-cultural ramifications of feminine inferiority and male superiority. She praises Millett's statement about patriarchy. In her opinion, it is "Impeccably and powerfully done." She has however taken objection to Millett's less satisfactory methodology. O'Brien argues that Millett is highly critical of empirical theorising yet she does not succeed in working out her own alternative. The result is Millett's hybrid methodology. Millett collects the data in an eclectic manner and without a specified conceptual framework. Yet, she tags normative judgements to them - a procedure which goes against the cannons of modern statistical and empirical methodology. O'Brien, as a Socialist Feminist, further notes that Millett also commits an error which is so typical of
liberals. Millett holds capitalism responsible for the additional woes of modern woman in bourgeois societies. Yet Millett offers no systematic critique of capitalism. O'Brien's more serious charge is about Millett's excessive reliance on "true re-education" in securing the sexual "revolution." In other words, O'Brien is accusing Millett of "reformism". We feel that there is certainly an ambiguity in Millett's statement about the theory and practice of social change concerning patriarchy. While O'Brien's charge of reformism against Millett may be considered as a product of O'Brien's own ideological position; her analysis about Millett's understanding of the role of violence in the sexual revolution is certainly to the point. O'Brien states "Having argued that violence is not the alternative to passivity but is essentially a male cultural value, Millett is obliged to find an alternative mode of social transformation for women. Like a reluctant Fabian, she has no position to fall back on except education." (O'Brien, 1983, 86).

O'Brien finally takes an objection to Millett's basic error in neglecting the role of reproductive process in patriarchy. O'Brien charges that Millett roots patriarchy "In an abstracton called culture without relating it to its material and dialectical grounds in reproductive process." O'Brien adds that Millett therefore underrates the potential power which women possess in the socialisation
of young children in preparing them for the new sexual order. As a result Millett's war against sexual politics takes form of a personal vendetta. Millett's error in this context, according to O'Brien, lies in her ambivalent position about the whole question of "nature". Millett is correct when she makes a distinction between sex and gender and yet she does not maintain this distinction consistently in her study of patriarchy. Thereby she virtually rejects sex when she really wants to uproot patriarchal manipulation of gender in history. (O'Brien, 1983, 82-87).

Conclusion

Millett's work certainly suffers from her rather casual approach to the necessity of rigorous academic discipline in analysing basic social problems. Yet with all its shortcomings Millett's work remains as a major statement of contemporary women's movement on patriarchy. While she has failed to offer a rigorous and a comprehensive analysis of the problem, she has no doubt provided a basic definition of the problematic governing the issue of patriarchy. Her Manifesto and the book, Sexual Politics have provided a continuous stimulus to latter-day feminists working either as activists or academics. She must be considered as the first feminist thinker who dared enough to put the issue of patriarchy in its feminist context on the agenda of serious social science investigations.