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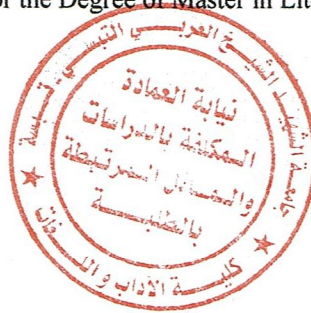
UNIVERSITY OF CHIKH LAARBI TEBESSI

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

**VOICING WOMEN'S STRUGGLE AND
GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN MODERN
FEMINIST LITERATURE
CASE STUDY: REBECCA SOLNIT'S "MEN
EXPLAIN THINGS TO ME"**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Literature and Civilisation



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Dedication

Thanks ALLAH for giving me the support and strength while working this dissertation. I would like to dedicate this work to those who gave me their support and encouragement my dear father Mrs: Chaguetmi Mohamed and my dear mother Ms: Chaguetmi Djamila and my lovely brother Bouka may Allah protect all of them. To all my . best friends and all those who love me without forgetting my partner Chaima

Miss: Hakima Chaguetmi

Dedication

I dedicate this work to My parents: Mister Deghboudj Mohammed Ali and Miss Deghboudj Donia who provided me with whatever I need and surrounded me with great affection to reach my objectives in this life.

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To My Grandmother who still lives in my heart. My best friends, beloved, and my partner Dalel.

My cousins and every member in my family.

To all who know me.

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Abstract:

Women have been subjected to gender discrimination in literature for decades. They have often been marginalized, misrepresented, or even erased from narratives altogether. However, in modern literature, women have been pushing back against these long standing injustices and fighting for their place in literary canon .

This abstract explores the ongoing struggle of women in literature and how modern writers are breaking down barriers to create more diverse and inclusive narratives. In modern literature, women have struggled against these limitations and have challenged traditional gender roles. Literature has become a powerful tool for women to voice their concerns and struggles against the patriarchal norms. The feminist movement has given rise to a new wave of feminist literature, which not only addresses the issues faced by women but also celebrates their empowerment and achievements. Through their writing, women have shown their strength, resilience, and determination to overcome gender discrimination. This research aims to explore the feminist and psychoanalytic discourse in modern literature and the various ways in which women authors have struggled to break free from stereotypes and traditional gender roles. It will analyze the different themes highlighted in feminist literature and how they reflect the struggles of women in different contexts. The research concludes by highlighting the importance of modern literature in promoting female empowerment and creating awareness about gender discrimination.

Key words: Feminism, psychoanalysis, mansplaining, women struggle, gender inequality, sexual harassment, gender bias, intersectionality, domestic violence .

Resumé :

Les femmes ont été victimes de discrimination dans la littérature pendant des décennies. Ils ont souvent été marginalisés, déformés ou même complètement effacés des récits. Cependant, dans la littérature moderne, les femmes ont repoussé ces injustices de longue date et se sont battues pour leur place dans le canon littéraire.

Ce résumé explore la lutte continue des femmes dans la littérature et comment les écrivains modernes brisent les barrières pour créer des récits plus diversifiés et inclusifs. Dans la littérature moderne, les femmes ont lutté contre ces limitations et ont défié les rôles traditionnels de genre. La littérature est devenue un outil puissant permettant aux femmes d'exprimer leurs préoccupations et leur lutte contre les normes patriarcales. Le mouvement féministe a donné naissance à une nouvelle vague de littérature féministe, qui non seulement aborde les problèmes auxquelles sont confrontées les femmes, mais célèbre également leur autonomisation et leur réalisation. À travers leurs écrits, les femmes ont montré leur force, leur résilience et leur détermination à surmonter la discrimination fondée sur le sexe. Cette recherche vise à explorer le discours féministe et la psychanalyse dans la littérature moderne et les diverses manières dont les femmes auteurs ont lutté pour se libérer des stéréotypes et des rôles de genre traditionnels. Il analysera les différents thèmes mis en lumière dans la littérature féministe et comment ils reflètent les luttes des femmes dans différents contextes. La recherche conclut en soulignant l'importance de la littérature moderne dans la promotion de l'autonomisation des femmes et la sensibilisation à la discrimination sexuelle.

Mots clés : Féminisme, Psychanalyse, Mansplaining, la lutte des femmes, l'inégalité entre les sexes, le harcèlement sexuel, les préjugés sexistes, l'intersectionnalité, la violence domestique, le stéréotype.

ملخص

تعرضت النساء للتمييز بين الجنسين في الادب منذ عقود, غالبا ما تم تهمةهم او تحريفهم او حتى محوهم من الروايات تماما و مع ذلك في الادب الحديث كانت النساء تقاوم هذه المظالم الطويلة الاملد و تناضل من اجل مكانها في الشريعة الادبية . يستكشف هذا الملخص النضال المستمر للمرأة في الادب و كيف يكسر الكتاب المعاصرون الحواجز لخلق روايات اكثر تنوعا و شمولية في الادب الحديث, كافحت المرأة ضد هذه القيود و تحددت الادوار التقليدية للجنسين اصبح الادب اداة قوية للنساء للتعبير عن مخاوفهن و كفاحهن ضد الاعراف الابوية ادت الحركة النسوية الى ظهور موجة جديدة من الادب النسوي و التي لا تتناول فقط القضايا التي تواجهها المرأة بل تحتفل ايضا بتمكينها و انجازاتها من خلال كتاباتهن . اظهرت النساء قوتهن و مرونتهن وتصميمهن على التغلب على التمييز بين الجنسين يهدف هذا البحث الى استكشاف الخطاب النسوي في الادب الحديث و الطرق المختلفة التي كافحت بها الكاتبات من اجل التحرر من القوالب النمطية و الادوار التقليدية للجنسين, ستحلل الموضوعات المختلفة التي تم تسليط الضوء عليها في الادب النسوي و كيف تعكس نضالات النساء في سياقات مختلفة و يختتم البحث بتسليط الضوء على اهمية الادب الحديث في تعزيز تمكين المرأة و خلق الوعي حول التمييز بين الجنسين .

الكلمات المفتاحية: النسوية, التحليل النفسي, التدبير البشري, نضال المرأة, عدم المساواة بين الجنسين, التحرش الجنسي, العنف المنزلي, الصور النمطية, التحيز الجنسي, التقاطع.

General introduction :

INTRODUCTION

Modern literature is an incredibly powerful platform for voicing women's struggles and shedding light on gender discrimination. Women writers, in particular, have taken advantage of this platform to highlight issues that pervade societies across the globe. These issues include gender-based violence, inequality and lack of representation in leadership positions. Through their works, women writers strive to create awareness, inspire change and challenge societal norms that perpetuate gender ,this platform helps to challenge societal norms, expose injustices, and bring attention to the oppression and marginalization experienced by women in various spheres of life.

The background of this study lies in the persistent gender inequality, bias, and discrimination that women have faced throughout history. Despite significant progress in the fight for gender equality, women continue to struggle for equal opportunities, representation, and voice in different fields, including literature. While there are many successful women writers and feminist movements, there is still a disproportionate representation of women in the literary world. Even when women are published, their works are often dismissed or marginalized.

The study of voicing women's struggle and gender discrimination in modern literature seeks to highlight the value and importance of women's voices in literature. It focuses on the role of women writers in addressing gender issues, gender disparities, and gender discrimination in Modern literature. It examines how women writers have utilized various literary techniques to depict women's struggles, reveal gender biases, and challenge the status quo .

One of the Modern writers Rebecca Solnit, a prominent feminist writer, who gained recognition for her essay "Men Explain Things to Me." In her essay, Solnit recounts an experience in which a man explained a book to her, despite the fact that she had written it herself. Solnit, in her book "Men Explain Things to Me" became a viral sensation and inspired the term "mansplaining." Solnit's work is a case study for examining the ways in which modern literature can be used to highlight women's struggles and gender discrimination.

Through her writing, Solnit examines how men's voices are often privileged and how women's experiences and perspectives are discounted. She explores the impact of gender discrimination on women's daily lives, from the workplace to personal relationships, and highlights the ways in which women are often silenced or ignored.

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This study seeks to analyze Solnit's work as a way of understanding the ways in which modern literature can be used to voice women's struggles and combat gender discrimination. It will examine the themes and motifs of "Men Explain Things to Me," consider its impact on modern discourse surrounding gender, and explore its potential as a tool for education and advocacy. Ultimately, this study will shed light on the importance of literature in shaping public perception of gender issues and the role of literature in promoting gender equality.

Studying Rebecca Solnit's book "Men Explain Things to Me" has several significant objectives .

Firstly, the book deals with the issue of male dominance and its effects on women, particularly in the context of gender-based violence. By studying this book, one can better understand the impact of male entitlement and dominance on women's lives and how it perpetuates systemic inequalities that need to be addressed of male dominance and its impact on women's lives. By examining personal experiences and cultural phenomena, Solnit exposes the ways in which men often dismiss women's voices and perspectives. Therefore, studying this book helps us understand the intersecting dynamics of power and privilege between genders in society.

Secondly, "Men Explain Things to Me" also highlights the importance of listening to women's voices and experiences. By bringing the issue to light and shedding light on the experiences of those who have faced silencing, the book prompts readers to consider their own listening habits in interactions with other people.

Thirdly, Many writers and scholars have praised Rebecca Solnit's essay "Men Explain Things to Me." Several of them have pointed out that the essay is not just about a single incident of mansplaining but is instead a reflection on the larger issue of gender inequality and how it affects women's experiences in society. Bell Hooks an American author and feminist who has written extensively on issues related to gender, race, and class. In her book *Feminism Is for Everybody* hooks argues that feminism should be accessible and relevant to everyone, not just academic elites. She also critiques the ways in which mainstream feminism has often excluded women of color and working-class women. (hooks, 2000), Hook discussed the intersectionality of race , gender, and class in *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center*..(49-35)

INTRODUCTION

Audre Lorde another American writer and activist who focused on issues related to race, gender, sexuality, and class. In her essay "The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism," Lorde discusses the ways in which anger can be a powerful force for social change, particularly for women of color who face multiple forms of oppression. She also argues that ignoring anger can lead to depression and other health problems. (Lorde, 1981)

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie a Nigerian author and feminist who has written extensively on issues related to gender and race equality. In her book *We Should All Be Feminists*, Adichie argues that feminism should not just be about women, but about dismantling patriarchal systems that harm both men and women. She also discusses the ways in which gender stereotypes limit women's opportunities and perpetuate inequality. (Adichie, 2014)

these writers and scholars have recognized the ways in which gender discrimination, violence, and harassment have pervaded society, and have advocated for change towards a more inclusive and equitable world. They have highlighted the importance of acknowledging people's lived experiences and offering a platform for underrepresented voices to be heard.

Finally, the book also provides an important critique of the patriarchal system that still exists in our world and inspires readers to take action towards gender equality. Ultimately, by studying this book, readers can activate change and work towards building a more equitable future for all genders.

In this study we are going to answer the following questions:

1 .What are the common themes and motifs that reflect women's struggle and gender discrimination in modern literature?

2 .To what extent do modern female authors have challenge and subvert traditional gender roles and stereotypes, and how does their work contribute to the overall discourse on gender equality?

3 .How do the essays in Rebecca Solnit's book "Men Explain Things to Me" shed light on the various ways in which women are silenced and dismissed in society, as well as the strategies they adopt to challenge patriarchy and reclaim their voices?

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The method adopted in studying this title of dissertation involves a literary descriptive analysis of Rebecca Solnit's book "Men Explain Things to Me" to understand the different ways in which women are silenced in modern society. This will involve a close reading and interpretation of the text to identify the themes, literary devices, and language used by the author to voice women's struggle in a male-dominated world. Additionally, this study will also involve which women's struggles are voiced and the gender discrimination faced by women in modern literature. The study will involve a qualitative approach where the researcher will read and analyze the book to identify themes, patterns, and messages related to women's struggles and gender discrimination. The analysis will focus on the techniques and literary devices used by Solnit to express the experiences of women, the challenges they face, and the impact of gender discrimination on their lives.

Furthermore, the study will use feminist and psychoanalysis theoretical framework to examine the role of patriarchy and how it shapes the experiences of women. We will also use a critical discourse analysis approach to analyze the language and how it contributes to the perpetuation of gender discrimination.

The data collected in this study will be in the form of excerpts from the book and the analysis of the themes and literary devices used. The findings will be used to draw conclusions on how women's struggles and gender discrimination are portrayed in modern literature, with a focus on Solnit's book. The study will provide insights on the different ways in which women are silenced and how literature can be used as a platform to give voice to their struggles.

This research is divided into two chapters:

The first chapter provides a comprehensive insight into the evolution of modern literature, gender discrimination, feminist theory, and psychoanalysis through a critical analysis of the development and impact of these concepts on modern society. The aim of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the complex relationships between literature, gender, and psychoanalysis, and how they have shaped the way we perceive gender and sexuality.

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Modern literature has the intersectionality between these themes. The first part will explore the historical backdrop that led to changes in literary genres and styles, considering the rise of modernism and how it challenged traditional gender roles.

Furthermore, this chapter will delve into feminist theory, examining how it emerged as a response to gender discrimination and marginalization of women from different spheres of life .

In Chapter Two

In this analytical chapter, we will explore the key themes and arguments in Solnit's book, including th concept of mansplaining, gendered silencing, and the importance of listening to marginalized voices .We will also examine the broader implications of Solnit's work, and how it relates to the ongoing struggle for gender equality and social justice .

Through a critical analysis of Solnit's text and engagement with other relevant scholarly works, we will seek to gain a deeper understanding of the complex ways in which gender shapes our communication practices and structures, and how we can work towards a more equitable and inclusive society. This analytical chapter aims to contribute to ongoing efforts to challenge and disrupt gendered power dynamics in all spheres of life.

Chapter One: Theoretical and Conceptual Background

Chapter One: Theoretical and Conceptual Background

Introduction:

The issue of gender discrimination has shaped literature for centuries. In modern literature, the topic of gender discrimination has been explored in great depth, uncovering the various ways in which women are marginalized in society and how this is reflected in literary works. Feminist theory has emerged as a powerful lens through analyzing literature, examining the ways in which female characters are represented and how they navigate societal structures and ways in which stereotypical gender roles and expectations have limited and oppressed individuals. Along with this, feminist theory has played a significant role in modern literary discourse, examining the role of gender power dynamics in society and how they affect both men and women. Additionally, psychoanalysis has been utilized as a tool to delve into the unconscious biases and societal pressures that influence gender identity formation and perpetuate discrimination. In this chapter, we will explore the intersectionality of these two fields and how they have contributed to a better understanding of the complexities of gender and literature. We will examine how these theories have been utilized to analyze contemporary literary works and how they have shed light on the ways in which literature can both challenge and reinforce societal notions of gender.

1_ The Intersection of Gender Discrimination and Modern American Literature:

1.1_Modern Literature:

Modernism in literature is the act of rebellion against the norms on the writers part. They refused to conform to the rules any longer. Instead, they sought new ways to convey new ideas and forms of expressing themselves. In their opinion, the old ways of writing simply couldn't reflect the rapid social change and a new generation born out of it. Started by the Industrial Revolution and fueled by urbanization, the movement originated in Europe, with Virginia Woolf, Franz Kafka, and Robert Musil as early modernists. It was also heavily influenced by the horrors of World War I: it shattered the preconceived notions about society for many modernists. The movement first developed in American literature in the early 20th century modernism. Apart from the Industrial Revolution, it was influenced by Prohibition and the Great Depression and fueled by a sense of disillusionment and loss. William Faulkner, T.S. Eliot, and E. E. Cummings are among the prominent American modernists.

The authors moved from dealing with the social phenomena to psychological ones by describing what happens inside people's minds and revealing the hidden motives behind

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their actions because of the horror, alienation, and dissolution caused by the First World War. People were shocked, and no more trusting the advanced technologies that led to the death of millions during the war and consequently, effected greatly on people's perception. Philosophical works like those of Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud had also a huge impact on the modernist literary products during the urbanization and industrialism. Modernist authors put an emphasis on the subjectivity of experience. Instead of telling us everything, the author lets the characters express their experiences through first person narrator to affirm the idea that reality is relative. Another widely used narrative mode is the stream of consciousness. It was developed by the philosopher William James, and often used interchangeably with the term "interior monologue". Fiction writers used this technique to portray the thoughts, feelings, and experiences occurring inside characters' minds. James Joyce is the most known writer in adopting this mode in *Ulysses*.

In modern American literature, Gender has been always a prevalent theme, Women have been historically marginalized and objectified in literature, often only serving the purpose of being a romantic interest or a supporting character to male protagonists. However, modern literature has challenged traditional gender roles and explored complex issues related to gender identity, gender expectations, and the impacts of patriarchy on women. However, in modern literature, writers have been more conscious of portraying women in more complex and nuanced roles, challenging traditions and stereotypes. Modern literature has made significant strides in addressing and highlighting gender issues, creating more diverse and representation that challenge gender norms specially in America.

Gender discrimination in America intersects with various sites, including workplaces, academic institutions, and social environments. For instance, women in the workplace often face gender discrimination in the form of unequal pay, lack of promotions or opportunities for leadership roles, and harassment. This theme is explored in several literary works, such as the novel *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan which experience gender bias, harassment, and unequal pay compared to their male counterparts.

Academic institutions can also be a site of gender discrimination, as women often face challenges such as lower enrollment in certain fields and lack of support for their research and academic pursuits. This theme is explored in works such as *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir and *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin.

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Social environments can also be a site where gender discrimination occurs. For example, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence are prevalent issues that disproportionately affect women. These themes are explored in literature such as *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson.

Modern American literature has provided a platform for exploring the intersection of gender discrimination with various sites, highlighting the challenges and barriers that women face in American society.

1.2_ Unpacking Gender Inequality in American Literature through a Modern Lens :

In American literature gender equality has been a recurring theme throughout history. From the early works of Nathaniel Hawthorne to the modern-day novels of Toni Morrison, authors have explored the ways in which women are marginalized and oppressed in society.

However, when we examine these works through a modern lens, we can see even more clearly the pervasive and insidious nature of gender inequality. The ways in Morrison, the representation of women has faced numerous challenges and prejudices. While some literary works have challenged, dissected and subverted gender norms, others have reinforced them.

When looking at how gender inequality is portrayed in American literature, it is important to examine it through a modern lens. This involves an intersectional analysis that considers not only gender, but also race, class, and other social identities that further complicate the experiences of women.

One example of this intersectional analysis can be found in Morrison's novel "Beloved". The novel explores the story of Sethe, an enslaved woman who escaped slavery. Sethe's experience is unique and distinctly shaped by the intersections of race and gender. The novel uncovers the violence inflicted on black women in slavery and the emotional consequences that continue to afflict them even after slavery ends. By presenting the story through Sethe's own voice and perspective, Morrison challenges the stereotypes that often depict black women as passive and weak.

Similarly, in Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*, the protagonist Esther Greenwood struggles to find her identity in a world that restricts her because of her gender. Although,

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the novel remains relevant today in its portrayal of the challenges faced by women in an inherently patriarchal society. Greenwood's challenges of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation are not solely the result of her gender, but rather intersect with the societal expectations placed on her as a woman. However, not all literature challenges gender inequality. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, for example, the female characters are consistently objectified and portrayed as secondary to the male characters. Daisy is described in terms of her physical appearance and her potential as a status symbol for the male characters. This reinforces the idea that women are only valued for their beauty and ability to please men.

The examining of gender inequality in American literature through a modern lens involves an intersectional analysis that acknowledges the complexity of gender and its intersections with other social identities such as race and class. While some literary works have challenged gender norms, others have reinforced them. By critically analyzing the representations of women in literature, to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which gender inequality affects our society, both past and present.

1.3_ The Role of Gender Bias in Shaping Modern American Literature Canon:

Gender bias has played a tremendous role in shaping the modern American literature canon. Women writers have been systematically excluded from the literary canon for centuries. The majority of the literary works studied in universities and high schools have been written by white male authors, and the contributions of women writers have been consistently overlooked.

This exclusion of women writers from the American literary canon can be traced back to a variety of factors. Women of classic works in the literary canon were written by men and were primarily intended for a male audience. Women's experiences and perspectives were often dismissed as inferior or irrelevant, leading to a lack of recognition and support for women writers. Early feminist literary movements sought to challenge this gender bias and bring attention to the works of women writers. This began in the 1960s and 1970s with the second wave of feminism, which focused on pursuing greater gender equity in the literary world and beyond.

In the past few decades, there has been progress toward greater gender diversity in American literature, but significant gender inequality remains. The literary canon still predominantly features the works of male writers, and women writers often face barriers to entry and advancement in the publishing world. The VIDA count, an annual survey of

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gender representation in major literary publications, consistently finds that women writers are underrepresented in literary publications, book reviews, and bylines.

Additionally, certain genres, such as science fiction and fantasy, were male-dominated and have often excluded the perspectives of female authors. This has led to the creation of feminist and women-led publishing houses and literary movements to address this disparity, such as the Women's Prison Book Project, We Need Diverse Books, and Women in Literature and Publishing.

Gender bias has significantly impacted the literary canon in America, but feminist movements and initiatives have worked to incorporate more diverse perspectives and challenge traditional notions of what constitutes valuable or important storytelling. obstacles and barriers to entry into the literary canon, often being overlooked or undervalued compared to their male counterparts. Research has shown that male authors are more likely to be included in academic and literary curricula, awarded prestigious literary prizes, and reviewed by influential critics. This perpetuates a cycle of gender bias in the literary world, as male authors are given more recognition and opportunities for success, while are more likely to receive prestigious literary awards, be reviewed favorably by critics, and have their works entered into high school and college curriculums. In addition to representation and recognition, issues like gender-based violence, discrimination, and marginalization remain pivotal themes for women writers who feel compelled to write about injustices they experience or witness in their lives. Despite these challenges, women writers have continued to produce great works of literature, exploring themes and experiences that are important to women and society as a whole. The push for greater gender equity in literature is ongoing and must continue in order to create a diverse, truly representative, and inclusive literary canon.

2_ Feminist Theory, Psychoanalysis and The Fight against Gender Discrimination:

2.1_ Feminist Theory:

Feminism was pioneered by the Famous writer Virginia Woolf. Etymologically derived from the word feminist femme (women), means that women who aim to fight for the rights of women as a social class. The purpose is to balance feminist, gender interrelations .In a broader sense, it is the women's movement to reject everything that is marginalized, subordinated and demeaned by the dominant culture, both in politics and economics as well as social life in general.

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Feminist theory is a social and political movement that seeks to promote women's rights and improve gender equality. It originated in the late 19th century and has since evolved into many different strands and forms. At the core of feminist theory is the belief that women were historically oppressed and marginalized by patriarchal systems of power and privilege. Feminist theory seeks to challenge and transform these systems, and has since evolved to encompass a broad range of perspectives and approaches. Feminist theory is founded on the belief that gender is a socially constructed concept that has resulted in the subjugation of women and other marginalized groups.

There are different waves of feminism that have emerged over time, each with their own focus and goals:

2.1.1_ First Wave Feminism (late 19th century to early 20th century): The focus of this wave was on gaining legal and political rights for women, particularly suffrage (the right to vote). First wave feminists also focused on issues such as access to education and the workplace.

2.1.2_ Second Wave Feminism (1960s-1980s): The second wave emerged in the 1960s and was a response to the social and cultural upheaval of the time. This wave was also concerned with gender inequality, but focused on a broader range of issues such as sexuality, reproductive rights, and domestic violence.

2.1.3_ Third Wave Feminism (1990s-present): The third wave emerged in the 1990s as a response to the perceived limitations of second wave feminism. This wave sought to address intersectionality and the ways in which gender intersects with other forms of oppression such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class.

There are also different types of feminist theory, which offer different perspectives on gender inequality and how to address it:

2.2_ Types of Feminism:

2.2.1_ Liberal Feminism: This theory focuses on individual freedoms and rights, and seeks to eliminate gender-based discrimination within existing social structures.

2.2.2_ Marxist Feminism: This theory sees gender inequality as a result of economic structures and argues that ending capitalism is necessary to achieve gender equality.

2.2.3_ Radical Feminism: This theory focuses on the patriarchal nature of society and seeks to dismantle this system of power.

2.2.4_ Intersectional Feminism: This theory recognizes that gender inequality intersects with other forms of oppression and seeks to address this intersectionality.

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2.2.5_ Eco-Feminism: This theory focuses on the interconnectedness of all forms of oppression including gender, species, and the environment. It argues that patriarchy has led to the exploitation of both women and nature.

2.2.6_ Postmodern Feminism: This theory challenges traditional theories of gender and posits that gender is not fixed, but rather constantly evolving and constructed through social norms and culture. for women through changes in laws and social norms, as well as through civil disobedience and direct action. Some key figures of this wave include Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Alice Paul.

3_ Psychoanalysis Theory:

Psychoanalysis is a method of treating mental disorders, shaped by psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes unconscious mental processes and is sometimes described as “depth psychology.” The psychoanalytic movement originated in the clinical observations and formulations of Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud, who coined the term psychoanalysis. During the 1890s, Freud worked with Austrian physician and physiologist Josef Breuer in studies of neurotic patients under hypnosis. Freud and Breuer observed that, when the sources of patients’ ideas and impulses were brought into consciousness during the hypnotic state, the patients showed improvement. Observing that most patients talked freely without being under hypnosis, Freud evolved the technique of free association of ideas. The patient was encouraged to say anything that came to mind, without regard to its assumed relevancy or propriety. Noting that patients sometimes had difficulty in making free associations, Freud concluded that certain painful experiences were repressed, or held back from conscious awareness. Freud noted that in the majority of the patients seen during his early practice, the events most frequently repressed were concerned with disturbing sexual experiences.

Psychoanalysis theory emphasizes the significance of unconscious processes and the way that they influence people’s thought, emotions and behaviors by understanding the role of unconscious processes. Feminism could gain a greater understanding of individuals, including women, hold certain beliefs and attitudes that may of gender in psychological development. Psychoanalysis offers a nuanced understanding of how gender and sexuality are formed in the psyche. By examining the unconscious dynamics between children and their caregivers, psychoanalytic theory can shed light on how early experiences of gender socialization shape our identities and behaviors. Feminism recognizes the pervasiveness of gender-based violence and trauma, but it may lack the clinical tools to address the

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psychological effects of trauma. Psychoanalysis can provide a way to understand and treat the complex psychological reactions to trauma, such as dissociation, post-traumatic stress disorder, and complex trauma.

Psychoanalysis can explore internalized oppression and help to identify unconscious patterns of thought and behavior that perpetuate internalized oppression. For example how self-criticism and perfectionism are linked to patriarchal structures, and how women may internalize the need to please others at the expense of their own needs. Feminism recognizes the importance of relationships in shaping our experiences, but psychoanalysis further illuminates the unconscious dynamics of relational patterns. Psychoanalytic approaches can help to uncover the role of power, dependency, and intimacy in relationships, and how gendered expectations can impact these dynamics.

3.1_ The Freudian Riddle of Femininity:

The Freudian riddle of femininity with its complex and controversial theory that is related to women psychology believed that women were inherently inferior to men because of their biology and natural tendencies. Freud believed that women had a weaker superego, the part of the psyche responsible for regulating socially acceptable behavior, and were more likely to experience “Hysteria” or intense emotional outbursts. He believed that women’s unconscious desires led them to identify with their mother, rather than their father, which he deemed as a sign of arrested development.

This theory has been widely criticized as being sexist and unscientific, and has been challenged by more modern perspectives on gender and sexuality. Nevertheless, Freud’s ideas about femininity continue to be the subject of debate and analysis in the fields of psychology, gender studies, and cultural studies.

3.2_ Freudian Defense Mechanisms:

Defense mechanism refer to the unconscious psychological processes that people engage in as a means to cope with stress, anxiety, and comfortable situations. In feminism, some of the common defense mechanisms include:

3.2.1_ Denial: This is the defense mechanism where a person will refuse to acknowledge or accept the truth about an issue or situation. For instance, feminists might deny the presence of sexism in certain situations or workplaces. Common defense mechanisms include:

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3.2.2_Rationalization : Justifying unequal treatment and gender roles based on outdated beliefs or social norms

3.2.3_Projection: Attributing negative characteristics or behaviors associated with woman to men, such as calling men emotional or weak.

3.2.4_Displacement: Redirecting negative feelings and emotions towards men on to less threatening objects, such as social institutions or benign actions.

3.2.5_Reaction Formation: Denying one's own feelings and thoughts related to gender inequity, instead expressing the opposite, such as advocating for traditional gender roles and societal expectations.

3.2.6_Intellectualization: Focusing on abstract or intellectual arguments to avoid addressing the emotional and personal impact of gender inequality.

3.2.7_Trauma: it is a psychological and emotional response to a distressing or overwhelming event or series of events. Traumatic events can include physical or sexual assault, natural disasters, accident, war, or the sudden loss of loved one

In the context of feminism, trauma can refer to the experiences of individuals who have experienced gender-based violence, including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, harassment, and discrimination. Trauma can also result from systemic oppression and the pervasive impact of patriarchal norms and structures on people's life, While defense mechanisms can provide temporary relief, they can also limit personal growth and hinder progress towards gender equality. It's important to recognize and address these defense mechanisms in order to create a more inclusive and equitable society.

Feminist theory and psychoanalysis theory have both been used to understand and fight gender discrimination. Feminist theory focuses on the ways in which gender is socially constructed and how power relations between genders are maintained, reinforced, or challenged. Psychoanalytic theory, on the other hand, analyzes the role of the unconscious in shaping human behavior and perceptions.

The relationship between feminist theory and psychoanalytic theory is socially constructed and the systemic oppression and discrimination faced by women and other marginalized genders. Psychoanalysis theory, on the other hand, examines the

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psychological roots of gender roles and how they shape our understanding and experience of gender.

Together, these theories have been used to challenge traditional gender roles and combat gender discrimination in various ways. One way is through the examination and critique of gender norms and stereotypes. Through feminist theory, we can deconstruct and challenge the ways in which women and other marginalized genders are expected to behave, dress, and think, which perpetuate gender discrimination.

Psychoanalysis can also be used to understand the roots of gender discrimination and stereotypes, such as examining the role of the unconscious mind and childhood experiences in shaping gender identity and societal expectations. This can lead to interventions and strategies to promote more equitable and inclusive attitudes and behaviors.

Finally, feminist theory and psychoanalysis can also be used to promote policies and practices that support gender equality, such as anti-discrimination laws, gender quotas, and initiatives to promote equal opportunities for women and other marginalized genders in education, employment, and leadership positions. Feminist theory and psychoanalysis theory both provide powerful tools for understanding and combating gender discrimination, offering new perspectives and strategies that can help create a more just and equitable society for all genders. Inequalities and sexism are embedded in social, political, and cultural systems. It also highlights the importance of acknowledging women's experiences and perspectives to challenge gender discrimination. Psychoanalytic theory, on the other hand, claims that human behavior is determined by unconscious conflicts and emotions. This theory has been used to understand how gender roles and stereotypes are internalized in the individual's psyche and how they can promote gender equality. Feminist theory recognizes that gender inequalities are systemic and require fundamental changes in societal structures and attitudes. On the other hand, psychoanalysis theory emphasizes the influence of the unconscious mind and our early experiences on our development and behavior. Psychoanalytic theory has been used to understand the socialization processes that shape gender roles and stereotypes. It has highlighted the importance of recognizing the role of internalized gender scripts and expectations, and how they can contribute to discrimination against women and non-binary individuals.

In the fight against gender discrimination, feminist and psychoanalytic theory have been used to challenge dominant gender norms, promote gender awareness, and facilitate critical reflection on gender practices and policies. Additionally, both theories have

contributed to the development of interventions and programs aimed at promoting gender equality and reducing gender-based violence.

the combination of feminist and psychoanalytic theory can provide a robust framework for understanding and addressing gender discrimination, which is essential for creating a more equitable and justice society.

4_Voicing Women's Struggle through Modern Feminist Literature:

Modern feminist literature often explores the struggles women have faced and continue to face in efforts to achieve equal rights and recognition in society. These struggles span various areas such as politics, the workplace, education, and reproductive rights. such as political, economic, social, and cultural spheres. The following are some of the ways through which modern feminist literature has given voice to women's struggles.

4.1_ The Marginalization of Women:

Modern feminist literature depicts the marginalization and exclusion of women from various spheres of life such as education, politics, and the workplace. The works explore how women have been denied the basic rights struggles.

4.2_ Challenging Gender Roles:

Feminist literature often challenges traditional gender roles that have restricted women to specific roles in society. By examining how these roles have shaped women's lives and limited their full potential, feminist literature encourages women to challenge these norms and demand more equality.

4.3_ Addressing Sexual Violence:

Many works of feminist literature explore the pervasive issue of sexual violence, including rape, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. These stories often center on survivors and highlight the emotional and psychological impact of these experiences, as well as the struggles to seek justice and find support.

4.4_ Highlighting Workplace Discrimination:

Feminist literature highlights gender-based discrimination in the workplace, including the wage gap, gender-based job segregation, and harassment. This literature works to expose how these experiences limit women's opportunities, financial security, and overall well-being.

4.5_ Critiquing the patriarchy: Many works of feminist literature critique the patriarchal systems that have been embedded in society for centuries. These systems give

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men the power to shape society, enforce gender norms, and determine the roles women can play. By critiquing the patriarchy, feminist literature seeks to empower women to take control of their lives and demand equality in all spheres.

4.6_Celebrating diversity:

Modern feminist literature celebrates diversity and intersectionality, recognizing that women come from different backgrounds and face different challenges. This literature highlights how race, ethnicity, sexuality, and other factors shape women's experiences and calls for a more inclusive and intersectional feminism that elevates all women.

4.7_Sexual Harassment and Gender Violence – Works

such as #MeToo: Women Share Their Stories of Sexual Assault including politics, education, economics, and social norms. Modern feminist literature aims to raise awareness about these struggles and promote a movement towards gender equality.

One major theme in modern feminist literature is the struggle for reproductive rights. Women have fought for the right to access birth control and abortion, the right to make decisions about their own bodies, and the right to be free from forced sterilization. In works like *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood and *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir, authors highlight the historical and ongoing oppression women face in being denied over their own reproductive health.

Another major theme in modern feminist literature is the fight for equal pay and opportunities for women. Women have historically been paid less than men and faced immense difficulty in being hired and promoted in male-dominated industries. Modern literature like *Lean In* by Sheryl Sandberg and *We Should All Be Feminists* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie argue for breaking down these barriers and creating a more equitable system for women.

Finally, modern feminist literature also addresses the intersectionality of different forms of oppression that women face. Women who experience discrimination based on their race, sexual orientation, religion, and other factors face additional challenges in achieving equality. Works by writers like Bell Hooks and Audre Lorde explore the interconnected nature of oppression and the importance of recognizing and addressing the unique struggles of different groups of women.

Modern feminist literature provides a platform for women's voices to be heard and for their struggles to be recognized. By highlighting these issues and promoting a

movement towards equality, these works empower women to work towards a more just and equitable society. such as political, economic, social, and cultural spheres.

5_ Amplifying The Silence: Uncovering The Challenges Women Face through Modern Feminist Literature

Modern feminist literature sheds light on the various challenges faced by women in today's society. These challenges can be both personal and systemic, and include issues such as gender inequality, sexual harassment and assault, gender-based violence, reproductive rights, and the wage gap. One of the major themes addressed in modern feminist literature is the problem of patriarchy and how it limits women's freedom and opportunities. Patriarchy such as sexism, discrimination, gender-based violence, reproductive rights, and unequal pay in the workplace.

One major challenge that women face is the persistent gender inequality that pervades many aspects of life such as education, healthcare, and employment. Despite progress in recent years, women still earn less than their male counterparts for doing the same job, and are significantly underrepresented in leadership roles in many fields.

Another challenge is the prevalence of sexual harassment, domestic violence, and other forms of gender-based violence. Women face harassment and abuse in their homes, workplaces, and communities, and may lack the resources and support they need to escape these situations.

Feminist literature also highlights the challenges women face in accessing healthcare, particularly reproductive healthcare. Women may be denied access to contraception, abortion, and other reproductive services for a variety of reasons, including political opposition to these services.

In short, modern feminist literature brings to light the many challenges that women continue to face in modern society. By highlighting these issues, feminist writers and scholars aim to empower women and promote greater gender equality in all areas of life

5.1 _ From Marginalization to Empowerment: The Progression of Feminism in American Literature and Society:

Another reference for the progression of feminism in American literature and society is *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan. This book was published in 1963 and is widely considered to be one of the foundational texts of second-wave feminism in the US. In the book, Friedan argued that the post-World War II emphasis on domesticity and consumption had resulted in a generational crisis among America in 1963 and is often

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credited as launching the second wave of feminism in the United States. Friedan highlighted the societal pressures on women to conform to traditional gender roles and argued for the need for women to have fulfilling careers and lives beyond the home.

In literature, feminist writers such as Margaret Atwood, Sylvia Plath, and Alice Walker also became prominent voices in the second wave. They explored the experiences and struggles of women in their writing, breaking free from the male-dominated literary canon that had previously ignored or marginalized women's perspectives.

The third wave of feminism emerged in the 1990s, with a greater emphasis on intersectionality and inclusivity. This was reflected in literature as well, with authors such as Toni Morrison, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Audre Lorde exploring not only gender but also race, sexuality, and other forms of oppression in their writing.

The progression of feminism in literature and society has been marked by a shift from marginalization to empowerment. Women have gained more representation and visibility in literature, as well as more political and social power as a result of feminist activism. However, the fight for gender equity and justice is far from over, and feminist writers and activists continue to challenge and reshape societal norms and structures.

6_Exploring The Link between Gender Discrimination and Psychoanalysis through Modern Literature:

The psychoanalytic theory provides a useful framework for analyzing gender discrimination because it emphasizes the importance of the unconscious mind and the impact of societal norms on individuals and their behavior. Modern literature, in particular, offers a rich source of material for examining gender discrimination from a psychoanalytic perspective. Through fictional narratives, authors can delve into the internal psychological struggles of characters who face sexism and discrimination. This approach recognizes that the individual is shaped not only by personal experiences and relationships but also by the broader cultural context in which they exist.

In modern literature, authors have used psychoanalytic theory to explore the psychological effects of gender discrimination. For example, in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, the protagonist Clarissa struggles with the societal expectations placed on her as a woman. She feels trapped in her role as a wife and mother and experiences a sense of disconnection from her emotions and desires, which she suppresses in order to conform to societal norms. Woolf uses this character to critique gender roles and to show the impact of societal pressure on an individual's psyche. Another example is in Margaret Atwood's *The*

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Handmaid's Tale where the protagonist Offred lives in a dystopian society where women are reduced to reproductive agents and stripped of their agency, autonomy, and identities. This story highlights the psychological impacts of gender discrimination and how it can lead to psychological trauma, anxiety, and depression.

Modern literature allows us to explore the complexities of gender discrimination and the psychological toll it takes on individuals. By bringing together the insights of psychoanalytic theory and literary analysis, we can gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which gender discrimination affects the psyche and contributes to broader societal inequalities. By examining these issues through the lens of literature, we can build empathy and understanding of the experiences of those affected by gender discrimination and work towards creating a more just and equitable society.

Additionally, psychoanalytic theory offers insights into the role of the unconscious mind in shaping our behavior and attitudes towards gender. According to the theory, individuals may unknowingly internalize sexist ideas and beliefs from the broader culture. These attitudes can become part of their unconscious thoughts and feelings, which can influence their behavior without their awareness.

Modern literature can provide a space for exploring these unconscious influences and their effects may internalize societal norms and expectations regarding gender without being aware of it, and these unconscious beliefs can influence their behavior and choices.

For instance, Sigmund Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex suggests that children internalize certain gendered behaviors and expectations from a young age by identifying with their same-sex parent and opposing the opposite-sex parent. This process can lead to the development of gender roles that are rigid and limiting, and can contribute to the persistence of gender discrimination in society. Modern literature can also highlight the ways in which gender discrimination is embedded in language and communication. For example, in Tillie Olsen's *Tell Me a Riddle*, the protagonist's husband refers to his wife as "little woman," which demonstrates his dismissive and patronizing attitude towards her. This use of language becomes a way of enforcing gendered power dynamics and maintaining the status quo of gender discrimination.

The use of psychoanalytic theory in analyzing gender discrimination can help us understand the psychological mechanisms that contribute to its perpetuation and its impact on individuals. Moreover, modern literature offers a rich source of narratives that can be used to illustrate and explore these mechanisms, and to generate empathy for those who are

affected by gender discrimination. By using this interdisciplinary approach, we can work towards creating a more equitable and justice society.

6.1_A Critical Analysis of Gender Discrimination in Modern Literature

Literature throughout history has reflected and reinforced societal attitudes and beliefs surrounding gender and gender roles. Even in modern literature, which may seem more progressive and inclusive, there are often subconscious gender biases and discriminatory attitudes present in modern literature. Psychoanalytic theory can provide a lens through which to interpret and analyze these biases. One aspect of psychoanalytic theory that can be applied to literature is the concept of the unconscious mind. At first, there are still underlying gender stereotypes and prejudices present. This critical analysis aims to interpret these subconscious beliefs through the lens of psychoanalytic theory, uncovering the complex interplay of power and desire that underlie gender discrimination in modern literature.

Psychoanalytic theory posits that human behavior is driven by unconscious desires and conflicts. In relation to gender, psychoanalytic theory suggests that our understanding of gender is shaped by deeply ingrained societal norms and expectations, as well as personal experiences and desires. These unconscious influences can manifest in literature, reflecting and perpetuating gender stereotypes and prejudices.

One example of gender discrimination in modern literature is the perpetuation of the male gaze, a concept coined by feminist scholar Laura Mulvey. The male gaze refers to the way in which media and art often depict women through the eyes of heterosexual men, reducing them to objects of sexual desire. This can be seen in the way that female characters are often portrayed in literature, with their physical appearance and sexuality often prioritized over their achievements and personality. Psychoanalytic theory suggests that this focus on the female body and sexuality reflects a deeper desire for power and control over women. This desire, often unconscious, may stem from feelings of insecurity or emasculation. By objectifying and sexualizing women in literature, male writers may seek to reinforce their own sense of masculinity and dominance.

Another example of gender discrimination in modern literature is the characterization of women as submissive and emotional, while men are portrayed as strong and rational. This reinforces traditional gender roles and reinforces the idea that men are inherently superior to women. Psychoanalytic theory suggests that this reflects a fear of vulnerability and emotional intimacy, which are often associated with femininity. Male characters may

be portrayed as strong and rational to protect themselves from perceived weakness, while female characters are portrayed as emotional and submissive to reinforce these gender norms.

Psychoanalytic theory can shed light on the underlying beliefs and desires that influence gender discrimination in modern literature. By examining the subconscious motives behind these stereotypes and prejudices, we can more effectively challenge and work to overcome them.

Furthermore, psychoanalytic theory can also help us understand how gender discrimination in literature may be perpetuated by both men and women. Women may internalize these gender stereotypes and subconsciously perpetuate them through their own writing. They may feel pressure to conform to societal expectations of femininity, which can lead to the portrayal of female characters as passive, emotional, and dependent on men.

6.2_Deconstructing Gender based Oppression in Modern Literature:

Gender-based oppression is a recurring theme in modern literature. One way in which this oppression is deconstructed is through the portrayal of female characters who resist, and challenge traditional gender norms and expectations. These characters are often strong, independent, and assertive, breaking away from the traditional role of women as passive and submissive. For example, In Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, the main character Offred is a woman who is living in a dystopian future where women have been stripped of their rights and are forced into reproductive slavery. Through her internal monologues and actions, Offred actively resists the patriarchal system that has oppressed her and asserts her agency as a woman. Similarly, in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*, the character Olanna rebels against the expectations placed on her as a woman in a patriarchal society. She refuses to marry a wealthy man who her family pushes her towards and instead pursues a relationship with a man she loves, despite the fact that he is from a lower social class. In both of these examples, the authors show that women can challenge societal norms and expectations, and resist gender-based oppression. This deconstruction of gender-based oppression in modern literature is important because it not only sheds light on the injustices that women face, but also empowers readers to challenge and resist oppressive systems in their own lives. To challenge, or subvert traditional gender roles and expectations. These characters are often strong, independent, and capable, but they also navigate the limitations and obstacles imposed upon them by patriarchal systems.

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For example, Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, portrays a society in which women are stripped of their rights and reduced to their reproductive functions. The protagonist, Offred, that are placed on them by society. Authors explore the dynamics of power, patriarchy, and sexism, and the ways in which they intersect with other forms of oppression such as race, class, and sexuality.

Intersectionality is a key aspect of deconstructing gender-based oppression in modern literature. Intersectionality recognizes that individuals face multiple forms of discrimination and oppression, and that different forms of oppression intersect and reinforce each other. Authors explore the ways in which gender intersects with other identity categories, such as race, ethnicity, and sexuality, and how this intersectionality impacts the experiences and struggles of their characters.

Many modern authors also employ various literary techniques and strategies to deconstruct gender-based oppression in their works. For example, they may use narrative shifts, unreliable narrators, or non-linear structures to challenge traditional gender roles and expectations. They also use language and symbolism to subvert gender norms and question the validity of gender categories.

6.3 How did modern women writers empower and inspire change:

Modern women writers empower and inspire change by breaking down stereotypes and challenging societal norms. They use their writing to shed light on issues that are often ignored or underrepresented, such as gender inequality, discrimination, and marginalization. They also use their writing to empower women by highlighting their achievements and contributions to society. These writers encourage women to speak up and take action by providing them with a voice and a platform taboo, such as sexual assault, gender inequality, and discrimination. They create characters that represent diverse experiences and identities, and their stories encourage readers to reexamine their own beliefs and biases. These writers also often use their platforms to advocate for social justice causes, and to amplify the voices of marginalized communities. They speak truth to power, calling out injustices in the world and demanding accountability. By doing so, they inspire others to follow their lead and take action to create a more just and equitable society.

Through their writing, modern women writers empower readers to speak up and push for change in their own lives, communities, and beyond. They provide a voice for those who have been silenced and a call to action for those who are ready to fight for a better world.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, modern literature has been greatly influenced by the issues of gender discrimination, feminist theory, and psychoanalysis. Women writers have used their literary works as a platform to challenge traditional gender roles and societal norms, with feminist theory providing a framework for understanding patriarchal structures. Psychoanalysis, too, has been a useful tool in exploring the complexities of the human psyche and how it affects our interactions with gender as a tool to express their struggle against gender inequality, patriarchy, and social norms that limit women's rights and autonomy. Feminist theory has provided a powerful framework for understanding gender relations and has inspired writers to create characters and stories that challenge accepted gender roles and stereotypes.

At the same time, psychoanalysis has also impacted modern literature by offering insights into the unconscious motivations and desires of characters, particularly regarding sexuality and gender identity. Psychoanalytic theory has enabled writers to give voice to previously ignored experiences and perspectives, such as queer and transgender identities.

The intersection of gender discrimination, feminist theory, and psychoanalysis has influenced modern literature in significant ways. Writers have used their works to break down traditional gender roles, to expose the issues of inequality and to explore the complexity of gender and sexuality in our contemporary society. The result is a literary landscape that is diverse, engaging and thought-provoking, constantly challenging us to rethink our assumptions about gender and power.

CHAPTER TWO:

**The Analytical Study of Rebecca Solnit's
“Men Explain Things to Me”.**

Introduction:

Solnit's "Men Explain Things to Me" is a powerful example of how feminist and psychoanalytic theories intersect in practical applications. At its core, feminist theory aims to understand and challenge gender inequality and the structures that reinforce it. Meanwhile, psychoanalytic theory seeks to explore unconscious motivations and patterns that drive human behavior. Together, these theories offer a unique lens to examine individuals and society as a whole. Feminist theory seeks to challenge and dismantle systems of oppression and inequality based on gender, while psychoanalytic theory endeavors to understand the unconscious processes that underlie our actions and experiences. Through her essays, Solnit uses a feminist lens to explore the ways in which gender-based violence and power asymmetries shape our individual lives and broader societal structures. In using a psychoanalytic approach, Solnit delves deeper into the unconscious motivations that drive these power dynamics.

Solnit's essays examine how patriarchal power structures operate in various contexts, such as everyday conversation, legal systems, and media portrayal of gender issues. Using psychoanalytic concepts such as repression, projection, and identification, Solnit uncovers the psychological mechanisms underpinning gender-based oppression, including victim blaming, gaslighting, and mansplaining. Furthermore, Solnit uses psychoanalytic theory to explore the emotional dimensions of gender-based violence and illustrate how it impacts women's sense of self, safety, and agency. By intertwining feminist and psychoanalytic theories, Solnit provides an insightful analysis of the complex power dynamics that shape our social reality. Her work highlights the importance of understanding both conscious and unconscious processes to create real change and advocates for the vital role of feminist activism in achieving a more equitable and just society.

Section one : Exploring Feminist theory in Rebecca Solnits Men Explain Things To Me

1_The 'Mansplaining' Epidemic : A Feminist Critique

In Rebecca Solnit's book « Men Explain Things to Me, » she highlights the issue of 'mansplaining'. Mansplaining is when a man explains something to a woman in a condescending or patronizing manner, assuming that she knows less about the subject than he does, even when that is not the case. Solnit argues that this phenomenon is not only frustrating, but also silences women's something to a woman in a condescending or

patronizing manner, assuming that the woman lacks knowledge or understanding of the topic. Solnit argues that mansplaining happens because men are socialized to believe that their opinions are more valuable than women's and that women are less intelligent. Solnit's feminist critique of mansplaining can be seen throughout the book. For instance, on page 1, she recounts an experience of a man explaining her own book to her, despite the fact that she was the author. She writes, « He went on steadily through the catalogue of my errors and limitations, exercising what is known in Scandinavia as the 'tall poppy syndrome' – the cutting down of successful people. » Solnit's use of the phrase « tall poppy syndrome » (a term used to describe the cultural tendency to criticize those who stand out) demonstrates how mansplaining is not just about correcting factual errors, but also an attempt to diminish and undermine women's accomplishments.

On page 14, Solnit discusses how mansplaining is deeply rooted in the patriarchy. She writes, “ The assumption of male superiority is so deep-seated culturally and so widespread socially that we often don't even see it because it is simply taken for granted. » Here, Solnit argues that mansplaining is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather a symptom of a larger societal issue. Men's need to exert control over women's opinions and knowledge is part of a larger system that values masculinity and devalues femininity. She writes, “ The out-and-out confrontational confidence of the totally ignorant is, in my experience, gendered. Men explain things to me and to other women, whether or not they know what they're talking about. Some men who are by no means foolish or ignorant suffer from blind spots the size of the Grand Canyon and demonstrate this repeatedly and emphatically. The problem with male arrogance and other women, whether or not they know what they're talking about. Some men who know what they're talking about talk to other men about what they're talking about, but they seem to love explaining things to me more.” (p.1)

Here, Solnit highlights the gendered nature of mansplaining, which is a result of how patriarchal societies have conditioned men to believe that they are superior in knowledge and authority. It is important to note that not all men are mansplainers, but the behavior is pervasive enough to be recognized as an epidemic. Moreover, on page 9, Solnit argues that mansplaining can have serious consequences beyond just frustrating interactions. She explains that in certain professional and academic contexts, women may be silenced and not given credit for their ideas because men feel the need to explain things to them, even if those women are experts in their fields. Solnit writes, « Every woman

knows what I'm talking about. It's the presumption that makes it hard, at times, for any woman in any field; that keeps women from speaking up and from being heard when they dare; that crushes young women into silence by indicating, the way harassment on the street does, that this is not their world. It trains us in self-doubt and self-limitation just as it exercises men's unsupported overconfidence » (p.9).

This quote illustrates the far-reaching impacts of mansplaining, which is not just limited to individual interactions but can have damaging effects on gender equality in general. It is also worth noting that Solnit's point about how mansplaining can make women feel silenced and self-doubting reflects how it is just one manifestation of a larger issue regarding toxic masculinity, internalized oppression, and gender-based discrimination.

Many other writers have chimed in on Solnit's essay and refer to the phenomenon where men condescendingly explain things to women, assuming that women are less knowledgeable on the subject.

Some other writers have also talked about this issue and shared their opinions. Here are some examples :

. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, the Nigerian author, stated, « Mansplaining is the presumption that anything a woman says can be improved upon by a man's explanation. It's the idea that women are inherently less knowledgeable and intelligent than men, and it manifests itself in many ways. »(Adichie,2017,p09)

. Roxane Gay, an American writer, said, « Mansplaining is a reflection of the systemic sexism women face in the world. Women are not given the same opportunities as men, and often their intelligence and expertise are belittled in male- dominated spaces. »(Gay ,2018,p128)

.Soraya Chemaly, an American feminist writer, wrote, « Mansplaining is a form of harassment that perpetuates gender inequality. It is a way for men to assert their dominance and feel superior, even when they don't have the knowledge or expertise on the subject. »(chemaly,2019)

. Jessica Valenti, an American feminist writer, stated, « Mansplaining is a symptom of our patriarchal culture that teaches men to value their own opinions over women's, even

when it's unwarranted. It's time for men to listen to women's voices and acknowledge their expertise. »(Valenti,J,2013)

These writers agree that mansplaining is a problem that reflects larger issues of gender inequality and discrimination. It is important for men to recognize their privilege and listen to women's voices, rather than assuming they are always right.

2_ Feminism and the silencing of women's voice :

Rebecca Solnit's book "Men Explain Things to Me" highlights the need for feminism and the silencing of women's voices. Throughout the book, Solnit uses various characters and events to show how pervasive gender inequality is in society and how it is essential for women to speak up and be heard. One character that Solnit introduces is "a very important man" who insists on explaining a book, Solnit uses characters and real-world events to show case the ways women have been silenced and how a lack of gender equality leads to harmful outcomes. One of the examples Solnit presents is the story of the pioneering French scientist Émilie du Châtelet. Solnit states on page 33, "When Émilie du Châtelet translated "Newton's Principia Mathematica into French, she added her own commentary, including the assertion that 'the quarrels about women's capacity' were essentially moot: 'Prejudice has decided in advance, and it is recognized as impossible that women should have sufficient insight to understand such profound ideas.'"

By highlighting Du Châtelet's story, Solnit show cases the long history of education and science being gate kept from women and how societal beliefs about women's inferiority have hindered access to knowledge and achievements. She also notes how women have been silenced and deemed incapable of understanding complex ideas.

Another character Solnit mentions is Cassandra from Greek mythology who was cursed with the inability to have her warnings listened to and believed. On page 1, Solnit states, "Cassandra metaphorically shows us how it could be dangerous to fail to listen to women, to fail to believe them." By referencing the story of Cassandra, Solnit emphasizes how women continue to be silenced and disbelieved, leading to dangerous and harmful outcomes. She highlights the importance of listening to women and taking their warnings seriously, as the consequences of ignoring them can be dire.

Solnit highlights the importance of feminism and the need to empower women to speak up and be heard.

Here are some examples of Solnit's characters and events that illustrate this theme:

. Virginia Woolf:

Thus, when in the examination of various events and characters, Solnit highlights the ways in which women have been marginalized and dismissed, and presents feminist activism as a means of reclaiming their voices. One example of this is seen in Solnit's discussion of

Virginia Woolf and other women writers who struggled to be heard in a male-dominated literary world. She writes, "Woolf wrote that in order to write fiction a woman must have money and a room of her own. This is true and needs saying" (p. 34). Solnit goes on to argue that lack of money and space are not the only obstacles women face in their creative pursuits. They must also contend with "the centuries-old cultural traditions that have made women's intelligence and creative power suspect" (p.35).

Solnit also examines the silencing of women's voices in more concrete terms, such as instances of sexual harassment and assault. She discusses the #MeToo movement and the efforts of women to speak out about their experiences, despite the stigma and risk of retaliation. She writes, "We are living in a new era, one in which women across the globe are standing up and speaking out, no longer willing to be silenced or dismissed" (p. 127).

Through her analysis of these events and characters, Solnit emphasizes the importance of feminism in creating a space for women's voices to be heard and respected. She writes, "Feminism is a transformational movement, one that aims to transform the dominant cultures that have perpetuated inequality and to elevate women to a place of equal dignity and worth" (p. 130).

Solnit's *Men Explain Things to Me* is a powerful example of how feminist and psychoanalytic theories intersect in practical applications. At its core, feminist theory aims to understand and challenge gender inequality and the structures that reinforce it. Meanwhile, psychoanalytic theory seeks to explore unconscious motivations and patterns that drive human behavior. Together, these theories offer a unique lens to examine individuals and society as a whole. Feminist theory seeks to challenge and dismantle systems of oppression and inequality based on gender, while psychoanalytic theory endeavors to understand the unconscious processes that underlie our actions and experiences. Through her essays, Solnit uses a feminist lens to explore the ways in which gender-based violence

and power asymmetries shape our individual lives and broader societal structures. In using a psychoanalytic approach, Solnit delves deeper into the unconscious motivations that drive these power dynamics.

Solnit's essays examine how patriarchal power structures operate in various contexts, such as everyday conversation, legal systems, and media portrayal of gender issues. Using psychoanalytic concepts such as repression, projection, and identification, Solnit uncovers the psychological mechanisms underpinning gender-based oppression, including victim-blaming, gaslighting, and mansplaining.

Furthermore, Solnit uses psychoanalytic theory to explore the emotional dimensions of gender-based violence and illustrate how it impacts women's sense of self, safety, and agency. By intertwining feminist and psychoanalytic theories, Solnit provides an insightful analysis of the complex power dynamics that shape our social reality. Her work highlights the importance of understanding both conscious and unconscious processes to create real change and advocates for the vital role of feminist activism in achieving a more equitable and just society.

In Her work, Solnit highlights the importance of women speaking up and being heard, both individually and collectively, in order to challenge patriarchal structures.

One example of a character in Solnit's book who embodies this message is Virginia Woolf. Solnit quotes Woolf's assertion that « for most of history, Anonymous was a woman » (15), suggesting that women's contributions have often gone unrecognized of the key themes in the book is the idea of mansplaining, where men assume that they know more about a particular topic than women, and therefore feel the need to explain it to them. Solnit writes, « Men Explain Things to Me, and to other women, whether or not they know what they're talking about. Some men who have a lot of something to say wield it as a way of preventing others from speaking » (2).

This quote highlights the power dynamics at play in many conversations between men and women, with men often taking up more space and assuming a position of authority.

Solnit also explores the theme of women's invisibility in society, where they are often ignored or dismissed. She describes a personal experience where she was invited to

speak about one of her books, only to be told by a man that he had heard a « very important » man speak about the same topic, completely dismissing her as a speaker (16).

Solnit argues that these experiences are not isolated incidents, but rather part of a larger cultural trend where women's voices are marginalized and pushed to the sidelines.

Despite these challenges, Solnit remains hopeful and encourages women to continue speaking up and making their voices heard. She writes, « The transformation of silence into language and action is an act of self-revelation and that always seems fraught with danger»(83). By taking this risk and speaking out, women can challenge patriarchal structures and create positive change in society.

_Writers who have discussed this issue and their perspectives on it:

One of the writers Solnit references is Virginia Woolf, who famously declared in her essay « A Room of One's Own » that « a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction. » Solnit notes that this statement highlights the systemic barriers that have historically prevented women from being heard and taken seriously essay « A Room of One's Own » that « a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction. » Woolf argued that the silencing of women's voices in literature was directly tied to the patriarchal societal structures that denied women the opportunities and resources necessary to pursue creative endeavors.

Solnit also references Audre Lorde, who spoke out about the marginalization of women of color within the feminist movement. In her essay « The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House, » Lorde writes, « The true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations which we seek to escape, but that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within each of us. »

Other writers who have commented on the issue of silencing women's voices include bell hooks, Gloria Steinem, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie...Etc.

Solnit's « Men Explain Things to Me » aims to further the feminist project of amplifying marginalized voices and challenging the structures that perpetuate oppression. By highlighting the perspectives of other feminist writers and thinkers, Solnit shows the ways in which the struggle for gender equality and social justice is ongoing and multifaceted.

3_ The Patriarchy and The Power Dynamic of Gender :

In Rebecca Solnit's « Men Explain Things to Me, » she explores the dominance of men in conversations and the societal structures that reinforce gender inequality. Here are some quotes from the book that speak to this theme :

1. « The term mansplaining was coined soon after the essay appeared, as women shared their experiences of being patronizingly explained things by men who assumed that they knew less than they did. » (p. 10)

This quote highlights the phenomenon of mansplaining, where men explain things to women in a condescending or patronizing way, assuming that they are ignorant or uninformed. Solnit argues that mansplaining is a form of gender-based oppression that reinforces male dominance and silences women's voices.

2. « Most men don't harass women, we know that, but those who do are too often treated like slightly embarrassing relatives who can't quite be disowned, and the stories of those they hurt are brushed off as 'just stories'. » (p. 19)

This quote sheds light on the issue of sexual harassment and assault, which is often dismissed or trivialized by society. Solnit argues that this dismissive attitude perpetuates a culture of impunity and enables abusive behavior to continue.

3. « Patriarchy is also, as an intersectional feminist analysis would remind us, the rule of fathers, of patriarchs, of old men. And it is not only men, but patriarchal women who perpetuate and support sexist oppression. » (p. 35)

This quote highlights the fact that patriarchy is not just about individual men's behavior, but also about systemic, institutionalized forms of power that are sustained by both men and women. Solnit emphasizes the importance of intersectional feminist analysis, which takes into account the ways in which gender intersects with other dimensions of identity, such as race, class, and sexuality.

4. « What's being hammered home is not just a vengeful impulse but an insistence that women are a force in this world, that women have agency and voices and stories that matter. » (p. 38)

In this quote, Solnit speaks to the importance of recognizing women's agency and voices in a world where they are often silenced or ignored. She argues that women are not

just deserve power and respect, that women should not be treated as less or other. The insistence runs against the grain of a society that is still consistently more comfortable with men's voices than with women's, still phobic about many aspects of female power, still confused about the difference between strength and Machismo, still too closed in its definition of masculinity. » (p. 12)

In this quote, Solnit argues that the fight against the patriarchy isn't just about seeking revenge, but rather it's about asserting the worth of women and their right to equality and respect. She also notes that society still tends to privilege men's voices over women's, which contributes to the perpetuation of the power dynamic between genders.

5. « The problem with gender is that it prescribes how we should be rather than recognizing how we are. Imagine how much happier we would be, how much freer to be our true individual selves, if we didn't have the weight of gender expectations. » (p. 52)

Here, Solnit points out that the societal expectations and norms around gender limit individuals' ability to express themselves and be their authentic selves. She suggests that if we removed the constraints of gender, people would have more freedom to explore their individuality, leading to greater happiness and fulfillment.

6. « The grandeur of a house includes not just its architecture and ornamentation but the life lived there, the life or the lives that have passed through it and shaped it, as though marked a kind of turnstile revolving in people and scenes. » (p. 59)

In this quote, Solnit speaks to the idea that objects and spaces are imbued with the history and experiences of those who have inhabited them. This is relevant to the patriarchy discussion, as it suggests that the power dynamics between genders are woven into the very fabric of society and can be difficult to unravel.

Many other writers have commented on the impact and relevance of Solnit's work in highlighting the issues surrounding the patriarchy and its power dynamic. For example, writer and activist bell hooks writes, « Men Explain Things to Me bravely takes up the battle over whether we are actually going to have an egalitarian society...Rebecca Solnit is essential feminist reading » (hooks, 2014).

1. In her article for The Guardian, Kira Cochrane praised Solnit's book for being « a rallying cry for change » and a « vital contribution to feminist discourse » (Cochrane,

2014). Cochrane highlighted Solnit's exploration of the powerful cultural forces that perpetuate gender inequality and the importance of resisting them.

2. In an article for *The New Yorker*, Alexandra Schwartz reflected on Solnit's assertion that the silencing of women's voices is a defining feature of the patriarchy : « The book's key insight is the way that silencing is built into the very structure of patriarchal society » (Schwartz, 2014). Schwartz also praised Solnit for her ability to weave together diverse strands of feminist theory and activism into a cohesive and compelling narrative.

3. In a review for *The New York Times*, Rebecca Traister described Solnit's book as « a powerful polemic on the silencing of women and the histories that have led up to it » (Traister, 2014). Traister particularly appreciated how Solnit's work resonated with a new generation of feminists who were grappling with similar issues and seeking solutions.

4. In a review for *The Chicago Tribune*, Julia Keller praised Solnit for her clear and accessible prose, as well as her ability to convey complex ideas with simplicity and clarity : « Solnit is a gifted stylist, and her prose is crisp and tart, even when she's grappling with knotty philosophical concepts » (Keller, 2014).

Solnit's work has been widely praised for its intellectual rigour, clarity, and power to inspire and galvanize change. Her ideas continue to shape feminist discourse and activism today.

5_ Feminist resistance to male domination :

Solnit's *Men Explain Things to Me* is a testament to feminist resistance against male domination. The book's main essay, « Men Explain Things to Me, » highlights the ways in which male entitlement and silencing of women's voices perpetrate oppression and violence against women. Here are some quotes and analysis that demonstrate feminist resistance to male domination in Solnit's work :

1. « The woman who is not, » explores the phenomenon of mansplaining, where men condescendingly explain things to women that they already know. In doing so, Solnit highlights the power dynamic that exists between men and women, where women's voices are silenced and their expertise is dismissed.

One of the key ways in which Solnit advocates for feminist resistance is through the act of speaking up.

She writes, « The antidote to mansplaining is woman- speaking » (p. 17). This suggests that women need to assert themselves and speak up in order to challenge the existing power dynamic. This echoes the feminist slogan « the personal is political, » which emphasizes

the importance of individual actions in the fight against gender inequality.

Solnit also advocates for feminist resistance through community building and collective action. She highlights the importance of solidarity among women, writing, « It's true that the worst thing you can call a girl is a girl. The worst thing you can call a guy is a girl. Being a woman is the ultimate insult » (p. 37). This quote highlights the way in which patriarchy has devalued femininity and pushed women to be subservient to men. By coming together and valuing femininity and female experiences, women can resist this devaluation and challenge the power structures that up hold it. Another way in which Solnit challenges male domination is through the act of rewriting history. In the essay « #YesAllWomen, » she writes about the importance of acknowledging women's experiences of violence and misogyny. She argues that these experiences have been erased or minimized in history, and it is essential to bring them to the fore front in order to challenge the status quo.

She writes, « The act of telling the story is part of the resistance » (p. 84)

Moreover, Solnit argues that feminist resistance is not just about individual acts of rebellion but also about creating systemic change. In the essay « Pandora's Box and the Volunteer Police Force, » Solnit discusses the importance of changing the structures that perpetuate gender inequality. She writes, « We must work to transform the structures that maintain the privileges of some, at the cost of others » (p.'s Box and the Volunteer Police Force, » Solnit discusses how the criminal justice system, which is dominated by men, perpetuates violence against women. She writes, « The volunteer police force also indicted a larger social order in which sexual violence is often rendered invisible or unimportant... It's not just about men who rape but about a culture that supports and condones rape » (p. 72).

Solnit highlights the importance of collective action to create change, as opposed to relying on individual heroism. In the essay « The Longest War, » she discusses how military culture perpetuates gender violence and how survivors are often silenced. She

writes, « Rape in the military is not a new problem, but what is new is that we're finally talking about it » (p. 56).

By bringing attention to this issue, Solnit advocates for collective action to change the culture of the military and hold those in power accountable for their actions. Furthermore, Solnit calls for feminist resistance to challenge the dominant narrative and rewrite history. In the essay « Woolf's Darkness, » she discusses how women's voices and experiences are often erased from history. She writes, « Women may not have been in the annals of great men, but in reality they were the ones who held everyone together » (p. 22). Solnit argues that feminist resistance involves reclaiming women's history and telling their stories.

Other writers and scholars have also praised Solnit for her work on feminist resistance to male domination. In her review for *The New Yorker*, Alexandra Schwartz comments on Solnit's ability to link personal experiences to broader societal issues, stating that « Solnit's writing often takes memoir as its raw material and spins it into broader social and political commentary in ways that feel fresh and invigorating » (Schends) Solnit's book is a call to action, to resist complacency and defeatism, to rethink media consumption and power structures, and above all, to listen » (Schwartz, 2015).

Similarly, Laura Hudson of *The Guardian* writes, « *Men Explain Things to Me* is a powerful and necessary book that deserves to be read and reread by both women and men » (Hudson, 2015). Hudson praises Solnit's writing style and her ability to « marshal data » to support her arguments.

In a review for the *Los Angeles Times*, Lauren Oyler writes, « Solnit's book functions as a reminder that current gender inequality is still far from equal, and the fight for equal rights is far from over » (Oyler, 2015).

Oyler notes that Solnit's essays are not just « angry » or « bitter » but also contain « hope » and « change. »

Solnit's "Men Explain Things to Me" has been widely praised for its insight into feminist resistance to male domination, as well as its call to action for readers to challenge oppressive power structures and work towards a more just and equitable world.

5_ From Men explaining to women leading:

In Rebecca Solnit's book « Men Explain Things to Me », she discusses instances where women are subjected to men explaining things to them despite the women being experts or knowledgeable on the subject matter.

Solnit explains how this phenomenon reflects a larger societal issue of men assuming superiority and dominance over women. However, Solnit also highlights instances where women defy this narrative and assert their leadership capabilities. Solnit argues that this behavior is a form of gender-based oppression, where men assert dominance over women by assuming that they are naturally less knowledgeable or competent. One of the examples Solnit provides is a personal experience where a man tried to explain her own book to her. She writes: « He was also rather pleased with what he knew, which struck me as a little sad, » (pg. 4).

Solnit's use of the word « sad » in this quote conveys her disappointment and frustration with the occurrence of men asserting their dominance over women by explaining things to them. Additionally, the phrase « rather pleased » suggests that the man enjoyed the power dynamic that was unfolding, where he was trying to teach Solnit something that she was already intimately familiar with. Throughout the book, Solnit argues that women's voices are often silenced or ignored in a variety of spaces, including politics, the workplace, and social events. She suggests that the only way to counteract this form of oppression is for women to assert themselves and their expertise by leading in these spaces. She writes :

« The consequences of gender identity run deep, but changing them requires collective action, a collective action whose first baby step is simply to become conscious of how different they are from what we've been told, » (pg. 28).

In this quote, Solnit implies that in order for women to take control of the spaces they inhabit, they need to first acknowledge the ways in which they have been conditioned to be submissive and deferential to men.

Only then can they begin to push back against these societal norms and take on leadership roles in various fields, including activism, academia, and politics. Additionally, Solnit provides examples of powerful women who have defied societal norms by taking on leadership roles, such as Angela Davis, Gloria Steinem, and Rebecca Walker. She

emphasizes that these women are not anomalies, but rather represent the potential that all women have to lead and make impactful change in the world.

On page 62, Solnit writes : « Some women get erased a little atand Malala Yousafzai”. Solnit argues that these women are leading the way for future generations to assert their leadership capabilities, despite the societal pressures that try to limit them.

On page 31, Solnit writes :

« Women have always been an active force in social movements, but their role has been suppressed, minimized, and ignored for too long. »

In this quote, Solnit highlights how women have always played an active role in creating change, but their contributions have often been overlooked or diminished. She suggests that by acknowledging and addressing this issue, women can begin to take on leadership roles in a more equitable way, both within social movements and in other spaces. Furthermore, Solnit argues that men also have a responsibility to support women in their leadership roles.

She writes : « It's not just on women to fight gender discrimination. Men also have a role to play in breaking down the gender-based hierarchy that underlies much of our culture, » (pg. 45).

This quote suggests that in order to create a more equitable society, men must recognize their privilege and actively work to dismantle systems of gender-based oppression. This includes supporting women in their leadership roles and challenging societal norms that prioritize men over women. Overall, Solnit's book highlights the ways in which men often try to assert their dominance over women by explaining things to them, but also emphasizes the importance of women stepping into leadership roles and being supported in those roles by both men and women. By acknowledging and addressing gender-based oppression, Solnit offers a message of hope and empowerment for women seeking to assert their expertise and lead in various spaces.

Section Two : An Examination Of Psychoanalytic Theory In Rebecca Solnit's "Men Explain Things To Me"

1_The power dynamic of mansplaining :

Solnit utilizes psychoanalytic concepts to analyze the power dynamics of mansplaining in « Men Explain Things to Me. » She argues that men who engage in mansplaining are often driven by a desire to assert dominance and control over women, sublimating their own feelings of inadequacy and insecurity through the act of belittling and dismissing others.

One of the key psychoanalytic concepts that in mansplaining are attempting to exert power and control over women by denying their expertise and devaluing their knowledge. She also suggests that this behavior can be linked to deeper psychological issues related to insecurity and a need for dominance.

For example, on page 5, Solnit writes, « Mansplaining is a small, quiet room where men control the conversation, and where their version of events is the only one that matters. » Here, she uses the metaphor of a small room to illustrate how men use mansplaining as a way to narrow the conversation and assert their dominance over women's knowledge.

Later in the book, on page 12, Solnit discusses how mansplaining can be linked to feelings of insecurity and a need for control : « The essential thing mansplaining does is...rearrange a woman's mind, and thereby her expertise and authority...it undercuts women intellectually and polices our behavior. » By framing mansplaining as a way for men to exert their dominance over women's minds and behavior, Solnit establishes a connection between the behavior and deeper psychological motivations related to power and control.

Solnit's analysis of the psychology of mansplaining goes beyond just the desire for power and control. She also examines how mansplaining can be linked to issues of gender and masculinity, and how these factors contribute to the power dynamic in mansplaining interactions.

On page 14, Solnit writes, " Mansplaining is more than a social pattern or a linguistic tic. It's a manifestation of deep-seated gendered power dynamics that are ingrained in our

society". She argues that men have historically been socialized to view themselves as authorities, while women are often viewed as less knowledgeable or even unintelligent.

On page 22, Solnit writes, « A man once asked me how I managed in my work to get so much done. I told him I didn't think I did more than anyone else –just tried to do what I thought needed to be done. He disagreed, and told me I was 'a credit to my gender.' These experiences are often brushed aside as 'isolated incidents' or as 'no big deal'...but a cumulative weight feels oppressive. »

Here, Solnit demonstrates how the gendered power dynamic underlying mansplaining can often be subtle and insidious, perpetuating a sense of inferiority in women even when the individual instances of mansplaining are not overtly malicious.

Solnit also explores how male entitlement and perceived superiority contribute to mansplaining. On page 13, she writes, « Men explain things to me, still and no matter how many times you tell them that you know your own life better than they do, no matter how many times you explain that you have a doctorate in American literature or polite and persistent, they keep trying to set you straight. » Here, Solnit highlights the way in which mansplaining can be a means for men to exert their perceived intellectual superiority over women.

Another example of the psychology of mansplaining that Solnit provides in her book is about a female friend who went to a doctor with a serious health concern, but the doctor dismissed her symptoms and told her to take some over-the-counter medication. She later found out that she had a life-threatening condition and had to undergo surgery. Solnit writes, « The doctor had repeatedly told her she was problem. The doctor dismissed her symptoms and her concerns, believing that she was simply being overly anxious. Solnit writes, « The doctor thought it was all in her head, but after a year of being told that, my friend went to another doctor. Within days she was diagnosed with a life-threatening condition. » (p. 3) This event illustrates how mansplaining can even lead to dangerous consequences as women are often not taken seriously or believed by male professionals.

Furthermore, Solnit provides several statistics about how men are more likely to interrupt women, and how men's voices are valued more highly in society than women's voices. She writes, « In studies of classroom interaction, male students are found to speak more often and more aggressively than female students... the pattern of male-female

conversational dominance extends beyond school into the lives and work of adults. » (p. 13)

This statistic highlights how the psychology of mansplaining is not just a personal issue but a societal problem that affects how men and women communicate and interact in all aspects of life.

Solnit also writes about how mansplaining is related to the larger issue of sexism and the oppression of women. She states, « Mansplaining is part of a larger phenomenon of men who are overconfident and oblivious to what they don't know, and this is particularly true when it comes to gender politics and issues of gender equality. » (p. 4) This statement shows how mansplaining is not just about men asserting their power and superiority over women, but also reflects the larger societal structures that privilege men and undermine women's voices.

In conclusion, Rebecca Solnit's book *Men Explain Things to Me* provides a rich analysis of the psychology of mansplaining through various examples and characters. Her book demonstrates how mansplaining is not just a personal issue but a societal problem that reflects larger issues of gender inequality and sexism. Specifically, Solnit highlights how mansplaining can lead to dangerous consequences, and how men's voices are often valued more highly than women's voices.

2_Finding a Voice : Rebecca Solnit and The Psychology of Silencing :

Another significant part of Solnit's argument is that this silencing is not just a matter of individual bias or bad behavior ; it is a systemic and deeply ingrained problem that stems from a broader cultural narrative that prioritizes male voices and perspectives. Solnit writes :

« For a woman writer to dare to address the problems of gender, androgyny, or sexual identity, is to encounter predictable opposition, to challenge patriarchal conformity. » (p.13)

This quote reflects Solnit's belief that women who speak out about gender and sexuality are often met with resistance and hostility precisely because they are challenging a deeply ingrained patriarchal system. Solnit goes on to argue that this system is upheld by a larger cultural narrative that casts women as passive and men as active:

« The foundations of sexism are reinforced by the assumptions of silence and repossession of speaking to or speaking for women that the rules of conversational interaction have institutionalized. » (p.11)

This quote suggests that the cultural norms around communication and conversation often reinforce gender-based silencing. When men are taught to dominate conversations and women are taught to be passive, it becomes easier for men to dismiss women's contributions and experiences.

Moreover, Solnit argues that this silencing can be especially pernicious when it comes to sexual violence, where the cultural narrative often blames victims and denies the extent of the problem:

« The silencing of women is a necessary precondition for rape and abuse to occur. When women are silenced, they are rendered invisible, unimportant or undeserving of respect. » (p.12)

Here, Solnit is making a clear connection between the silencing of women and the prevalence of sexual violence. By denying women a voice and dismissing their experiences, we create a culture in which sexual assault can flourish without consequence.

Solnit also uses various events and characters throughout her book to illustrate the psychology of silencing. One example she gives is the story of a woman who was repeatedly ignored and belittled by a man who insisted on explaining things to her that she already knew.

Solnit writes :

« I watched a woman awed into silence creep back into herself like a turtle into its shell, and I chilled at the memory as if I too were outside in a cold downpour and around me people splashed and chattered joyfully, unaware of my plight. » (p. 10)

This quotation highlights the isolating effect of silencing. When women are unable to speak up, they can feel invisible and excluded from important conversations. By comparing the experience to being out in the cold rain, Solnit emphasizes the emotional toll that silencing can have.

Solnit also discusses the character of Cassandra, from Greek mythology, who was cursed to speak the truth but never be believed. Solnit writes:

« Cassandra's curse is to know the future and be dismissed as hysterical, to know the extent of her own oppression and be told she's imagining things. » (p. 11)

This quote highlights the paradox of the experience of being silenced. Women who speak up about their experiences of oppression may be seen as hysterical or irrational, even when they are simply telling the truth.

Moreover, the very act of speaking up may be seen as a threat to the dominant power structure, which can lead to further attempts to silence women's voices.

Finally, Solnit discusses the events surrounding the creation of the term « date rape » in the 1980s. She notes that initially, many people were resistant to the idea that rape could happen in the context of a social situation. Solnit writes :

« The concept of date rape was initially much resisted, and still is in some quarters ; at the time there was a sense that to name something was to create it, a fear that recognizing this crime would transform and expand it. » (p. 58)

This quote highlights the way that language can be both powerful and contested. By naming the experience of « date rape, » activists were able to draw attention to a form of sexual violence that had previously been ignored or dismissed. However, the act of naming also brought resistance from those who were invested in the status quo.

Throughout the book, Solnit touches upon various examples of the psychology of silencing, from historical events to everyday life interactions. She highlights that silencing is not just a matter of being quiet, but rather an act of exerting power and control over someone else's voice and agency.

One example she uses is the story of a woman who was repeatedly ignored and belittled by a man who can be a way of exerting power and control over marginalized groups, particularly women. Solnit explains how women are often talked over, interrupted, and condescended to, which can lead to the erasure of their voices and experiences.

One example of the psychology of silencing in the book comes from Solnit's personal experience of being silenced and the effect it had on her. She writes :

« For a long time, I convinced myself that the inability to speak was a temporary by product of living in a hostile environment, that if I could find the right words and the right tone, I could gently-but-firmly correct men who interrupted me or told me that my ideas were wrong. »(p. 9)

This quote shows how being silenced can lead to self-doubt and a sense of powerlessness. It also highlights the psychological toll that silencing can take on individuals, as they begin to doubt their own abilities and feel excluded from important conversations.

Solnit also uses the character of Virginia Woolf to illustrate the way that women's voices and experiences have historically been silenced. She writes:

« Virginia Woolf wrote: 'For most of history, Anonymous was a woman.' This is true in literature as in life. Where are the women who wrote the literature of their time ? » (p. 35)

This quote speaks to the erasure of women's voices from history and the perpetuation of male-centric narratives. It also emphasizes the importance of actively seeking out and amplifying women's voices in literature and in life, in order to challenge the system of silencing.

Lastly, Solnit discusses the impact of silencing on survivors of sexual assault, and the importance of creating a space where survivors can speak out and be heard. She writes:

« Silence is forever tempting, and speaks so many languages. . . . But the opposite of silence isn't speaking, it's hearing. » (p. 49)

This quote highlights the way that silence can be a tool of oppression, particularly for survivors of sexual assault who are often silenced through victim-blaming and shame. By emphasizing the importance of creating a space for survivors to speak out and be heard, Solnit is advocating for a culture of listening and believing in order to disrupt the patterns of silencing and erasure.

Many other writers have praised Solnit's exploration of the psychology of silencing in « Men Explain Things to Me. » In an article for "The Atlantic", Megan Garber writes that Solnit's book « exposes the different kinds of 'silencing' that go on every day—the subtle, implicit ways that people are, often unconsciously, encouraged to quiet themselves

» (Garber) Rebecca J. Rosen writes, « Solnit's book is a reminder that silencing is not just a matter of being quiet ; it is an active process, one that seeks to exert power and control over others. (Rosen,2014)

Similarly, in a review for *The New Yorker*, Kathryn Schulz notes, « Solnit's observations about the subtle, pervasive ways in which women are silenced and dismissed are spot-on. » (Schulz, 2014)

In an essay for "LitHub", writer Maria Popova describes Solnit's book as « a powerful manifesto against the silencing that takes root in the subtlest of ways and the most improbable corners of society. » (Popova, 2015)

The Booklist review of « *Men Explain Things to Me* » highlights Solnit's exploration of the psychological impact of silencing, stating, « Solnit's insights about the psychological consequences of being silenced dovetail with many recent feminist arguments on sexual assault, rape culture, and the suppression of women's voices in public discourse. » (Booklist, 2014)

many writers and reviewers have praised Solnit's exploration of the psychology of silencing in « *Men Explain Things to Me*, » highlighting the relevance of her insights to contemporary feminist discussions on the suppression of marginalized voices

3_The Journey through Patriarchal Psychoanalytic Theory:

In her book *Men Explain Things to Me*, Rebecca Solnit delves into the patriarchal roots of psychoanalytical theory. She argues that this field of study is often used to justify and perpetuate gender inequalities. Solnit notes that Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, believed that women were inherently inferior to men and that their natural state was one of castration anxiety. She writes study has historically perpetuated the same kind of gender-based biases and stereotypes that underlie the phenomenon of mansplaining. Solnit writes:

« The history of psychoanalytic theory is a compendium of mansplaining... [it] has authorized and amplified gender bias and stereotyping in the culture at large, often with the help of Freudian theories about women's nature and role. » (p. 24)

Solnit goes on to describe how Freudian ideas about women – such as the notion of « penis envy » and the Oedipus complex – have been used to pathologize and marginalize

women's experiences and perspectives. She writes, for example, that Freud saw « women's primary sexual problem as envy of men's genitalia, » and that he believed « that a girl who does not turn away from her father and become completely sexually identified with her mother will be developmentally arrested. » (pp. 24-25)

These kinds of ideas, Solnit argues, reflect a broader societal bias against women, in which women's desires, experiences, and perspectives are often seen as aberrant or pathological. She writes that « The Freudian vision of gender relations... drew on and purveyed broader social beliefs in women's weakness, irrationality, and sexual inferiority. » (p. 25)

While Solnit acknowledges that contemporary psychoanalytic theory has moved away from some of these more overtly sexist ideas, she argues that the field still has a long way to go in terms of addressing the ways in which its historical biases continue to influence its practices and assumptions. She writes, for example, that « Even today, there are few women psychoanalysts, and its forms of interpretation have disregarded, silenced, and pathologized female desire. » (p. 27)

Solnit provides several examples of how patriarchal psychoanalytic theory has influenced and shaped our cultural understanding of gender. One such example is the story of Pandora, which Solnit discusses in the opening chapter of *Men Explain Things to Me*. She describes how the myth of Pandora as the first woman created by the gods is often interpreted as a cautionary tale of female curiosity and temptation. Solnit's Pandora and how it has been interpreted through a Freudian lens. Solnit writes, « In a Freudian view, Pandora is analogous to Eve, both archetypes of women's origins in sin, weakness, and stupidity » (p.25).

This analysis shows how Freudian ideas about gender and sexuality have been used to pathologize and marginalize women's experiences and perspectives.

Another character Solnit discusses is Edith Wharton, a writer who challenged and subverted traditional gender roles in her work. Solnit writes, « Wharton's works often concern the consequences of women's subordination, as well as the rigidity and shallow morality of the rich. Her writing... is a stage on which the patriarchal norms of the time are both enacted and explored » (p. 26). This analysis shows how literature can be used as a tool for subverting, challenging, and exposing patriarchal norms. Solnit also explores

events such as the 2012 Delhi gang rape and the subsequent protests in India. She notes that the rampant sexual violence in India is a symptom of a broader societal problem in which women are not viewed as equal to men. Solnit argues, « In India, where these rapes and murders were so highly publicized, and so clearly symptomatic of larger patterns of gendered violence and injustice, the protests that followed... marked a turning point in India's engagement with its ongoing war on girls and women » (p. 27). This analysis demonstrates how patriarchy and its toxic effects are not limited to the realm of theory but have very real, tangible consequences for women's lives.

Solnit's exploration of patriarchal psychoanalytic theory is not limited to theoretical or abstract discussions, but rather she provides examples of how these ideas manifest in our culture and world. This approach helps to ground her analysis in real-world contexts and reinforces her argument that patriarchal ideas and values still dominate in many areas of society.

4_ Gender-based trauma :

Solnit's *Men Explain Things to Me* outlines the consequences of the culture of gender-based trauma that exists under patriarchy. She argues that the burden of trauma is primarily born by women, who are exposed to violence and harassment on a daily basis. Solnit provides several examples of this trauma, including stories of rape, domestic violence, and workplace harassment.

One powerful example of gender-based trauma that this trauma is born primarily by women and is perpetuated through a range of experiences and events. Solnit offers several examples of these experiences, including sexual violence, domestic abuse, and workplace discrimination, each of which have serious emotional and psychological effects on women.

One example that Solnit discusses is the phenomenon of « mansplaining, » in which men assert their authority over women in conversations, often speaking over them or presuming they are ignorant or uninformed. Solnit writes, « Men Explain Things to Me, and other women, whether or not they know what they're talking about. ... Every woman knows what I'm talking about » (p. 1). This kind of dismissive behavior can make women feel smaller, less intelligent, and less valuable than their male counterparts. It can also be a form of emotional trauma, causing deep-seated feelings of anger, frustration, and helplessness.

Similarly, Solnit reflects on the pervasive culture of sexual harassment that women are subjected to in public spaces and workplaces. She notes that living under the constant threat of physical or verbal assault can lead to a heightened state of anxiety and trauma. Solnit writes,

« The process of sexual harassment, of being presumed an object for male use and pleasure by strangers on the street and at work, for instance, disrupts that sense of our own authorship » (p. 17). This quote highlights the way in which experiences of gender-based violence can undermine women's sense of autonomy or agency.

Additionally, Solnit argues that these experiences of gender-based trauma are not isolated incidents but are instead part of a broader, systemic pattern of gender inequality and power imbalance. She discusses how the pervasive societal message that women should be quiet, compliant, and agreeable can be damaging to women's self-esteem, making them less likely to speak out against experiences of trauma.

In addition to Solnit's discussion of mansplaining and sexual harassment, she also offers several other examples of gender-based trauma that women face. One example that Solnit highlights is the culture of victim-blaming that often arises in cases of sexual assault and domestic violence. She writes, « Women who report violence...may be accused of lying. They may be told it was their fault for wearing" the such example is the story of Diana, a woman who was seeking help from the police after being stalked by her ex-boyfriend. Solnit writes, « Diana's stalker was a cop who owned a gun, a fact that rendered her situation particularly terrifying » (p.27). This quote highlights the intersectionality of Diana's trauma, as both a survivor of domestic violence and a woman fearing for her life. The reality that someone who is meant to uphold the law could endanger Diana adds an additional layer of distress to her situation.

Solnit also shares the story of a woman named Amber who, while working as a hotel housekeeper, faced harassment and assault from male guests. Solnit writes,

« The men she serviced believed there was no one to protect her, that they could say and do anything and face no consequences » (p. 61). Amber's experiences are an example of the power dynamics at play in situations of gender-based trauma. The fact that the men felt entitled to harass and assault Amber is indicative of a societal belief that women's bodies are public property and that men can do with them as they please.

Another example Solnit discusses is the issue of reproductive rights for women. She points out that policies that limit access to birth control and promote abstinence-only education can contribute to women feeling helpless and victimized. Solnit writes, « We have been raised to fear the yes within ourselves, our deepest cravings » (p. 24). This fear is a result of a culture that seeks to control women's bodies and minimize their reproductive autonomy, ultimately leading to trauma and disempowerment.

Many writers and scholars have praised Solnit's work in *Men Explain Things to Me* for its illuminating exploration of gender-based trauma and its impact on women in society. For example, in an article for *The New Yorker*, Jia Tolentino writes, « On its own, each essay [in *Men Explain Things to Me*] is a sharp prism through which ordinary effects are transformed into terrifying and transformative in society. For instance, in an article for *The Guardian*, writer Maya Goodfellow discusses how Solnit's work exposed the dangers of dismissing women's experiences, stating that « by taking women's stories as seriously as they deserved, she has helped to lay the groundwork for movements against sexual harassment and abuse. » (Goodfellow), « Rebecca Solnit : Giving Women a Voice That Challenges the Status Quo, » (The Guardian, September 7, 2018)

Similarly, in an article for *The New Yorker*, "Jia Tolentino" describes Solnit's work as « a masterpiece » and notes how Solnit's writing gives voice to the experiences of so many women who have found themselves facing gender-based trauma. (Tolentino) « Rebecca Solnit on a Childhood of Reading and Wandering, » (The New Yorker, September 28, 2018)

Alison Goldman, writing for *TIME*, highlights how Solnit's work in *Men Explain Things to Me* serves as a powerful tool for feminist activism and awareness, stating that « Solnit's essays encourage us to raise our voices and fight against the injustices that still exist. » (Goldman)

« 10 Women Writers All Women Should Read, » (TIME, March 15, 2016)

By portraying the experiences of women facing gender-based trauma and exploring the systemic issues that contribute to this trauma, Solnit's work has inspired a generation of feminists and survivors to speak out and demand change.

5_ The Intersectionality of Oppression : A Critique to Male Domination

Solnit's work in *Men Explain Things to Me* not only explores gender-based trauma but also highlights the intersectionality of oppression and how different forms of oppression intersect and reinforce one another. In her essay « Worlds Collide in a Luxury Suite : Some Thoughts on the IMF, Global Inequality, and the Economic Other, » Solnit examines how male domination intersects with other forms of oppression, such as class intersect and compound their effects on marginalized communities. In particular, Solnit critiques the way that male domination perpetuates and intersects with other forms of oppression.

One example can be found in the essay « Men Explain Lolita to Me, » in which Solnit examines the way that male artists and critics have shaped the narrative around *Lolita*, a novel about a grown man's sexual relationship with a young girl. Solnit argues that male domination not only allows for sexual abuse of young girls but also silences their voices and perspectives.

She writes, « The language of male critics is overwhelmingly the language of effortless power and mastery, of large forces rather than human beings, of nouns rather than verbs or adverbs ; it is abstract, impersonal, and politically neuter, not the language of human social relations » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 50).

Through this critique, Solnit highlights the intersectionality of oppression, as male domination perpetuates not only gender-based violence but also silences marginalized voices who have been historically excluded from cultural production.

Furthermore, in the essay « Grandmother Spider, » Solnit examines the way that race and gender intersect in the experiences of Indigenous women. She writes, « Violence against Indian women is tied to the history of colonial subjugation ; their vulnerability to violence stems from the government's seizure of their land, the destruction of the social fabric of their communities, and an almost total disruption of the cultural resources that enable people to survive and resist » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 76).

Through this analysis, Solnit illustrates how colonialism and the systemic oppression of Indigenous people compounds with gender-based violence to create a unique experience of trauma for Indigenous women.

Solnit highlights the intersectionality of oppression not only through her analysis of cultural production and gender-based violence but also through her examination of systemic injustices and events in *Men Explain Things to Me*. For example, in the essay « Worlds Collide in a Luxury Suite : Some Thoughts on the IMF, Global Inequality, and the Economic Other, »

Solnit critiques the way that male domination intersects with class structural inequality in *Men Explain Things to Me*. In « The Longest War, » Solnit examines the experiences of women in the military, particularly in war zones. She writes, « The more I looked, the more it seemed that sexual harassment and assault were not side effects but intentionally-deployed weapons in a war against women's efficacy and autonomy » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 42).

Through this analysis, Solnit emphasizes how male domination and gender-based violence are embedded in larger systems of power, which intersect with other forms of oppression such as class and race, to perpetuate marginalization of women in the military.

Similarly, in « Worlds Collide in a Luxury Suite, » Solnit examines the intersectionality of oppression in the experiences of the global working class. She writes, « In the United States, where poverty tends to be conflated with racialization, the working class is overwhelmingly people of color, and the experience of Middle Eastern and South Asian workers in Qatar, facing racist and Islamophobic persecution, intersects in complex ways with the class draughts that force so many of them to leave their homes and migrate to the Gulf » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 81).

Solnit's analysis highlights how systemic oppression intersects with gender-based violence and perpetuates marginalization and trauma for marginalized communities.

In « Where the Boys Are, » Solnit examines the role of sports in American culture and the way that male domination in sports reinforces negative stereotypes and perpetuates gender-based violence. She writes, « Sports can be the playground where boys play at dominance, but it doesn't stop there. It's where men like that drill and condition and maim and go on to drive others around whether they're cops or soldiers or bosses » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 103).

Through this critique, Solnit highlights how male domination and gender-based violence in sports perpetuate a culture of violence that extends beyond sports to other areas of life.

In conclusion, through her analysis of characters and events in *Men Explain Things to Me*, Solnit highlights the importance of intersectionality in understanding the perpetuation of oppression and trauma. By examining the ways in which different forms of oppression intersect with gender-based violence, Solnit's work emphasizes the need for a broader framework that considers the complexities and intersections of systemic oppression and marginalization.

6_challenging gender based power through psychoanalytic perspective :

Solnit's analysis of gender-based power also provides a psychoanalytic perspective in *Men Explain Things to Me*. She examines not only the ways that structural inequalities perpetuate gender-based violence but also the deep-seated psychological and cultural roots of gendered power dynamics. For example, in the essay « *The Longest War*, » Solnit examines the role of patriarchy and Freudian psychoanalytic theory inequality and cultural production perpetuate gender-based power, but also the ways that individual psyche and behavior are influenced by patriarchal norms and expectations. For example, in « *The Night the Men Explain Things to Me*, » Solnit writes, « Male entitlement has acted like a virus in human social evolution, partially obscuring and altering many aspects of culture » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 1).

This quote highlights the idea that male entitlement and patriarchy have become deeply ingrained in human behavior and cultural norms, creating a system that perpetuates gender-based power.

In « *The Mother of All Questions*, » Solnit examines the social construct of motherhood and the way that it reinforces gender-based power. She writes, « So deeply ingrained is the belief in female inferiority that we measure achievement by how far women have come to be more like men » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*,65).

Here, Solnit is critiquing the idea that women must adopt masculine characteristics and behaviors in order to achieve equality or success, highlighting how deeply entrenched patriarchal norms are in our collective psyche.

In « Woolf's *Darkness: Embracing the Inexplicable* », Solnit examines the work of Virginia Woolf and the ways that her writing challenged patriarchal norms. Solnit writes, « She understood that women had been silenced, their stories untold or told by men, and the effect that had on how we see the world and ourselves » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 119).

Through this analysis, Solnit highlights the importance of challenging patriarchal norms and the ways that systemic marginalization can impact individual psyche and behavior.

Solnit's use of a psychoanalytic perspective in *Men Explain Things to Me* is not limited to examining gender-based power dynamics. She also delves into the ways in which feminism and social change operate on a psychological level.

One of the key themes that runs throughout the book is the idea that social change requires a shift in our collective imagination. Solnit argues that in order to create a more just into the psychological effects of patriarchal structures on individuals and society as a whole, as well as the potential for feminist movements to bring about social change.

One aspect of this psychoanalytic reflection is Solnit's analysis of the « mansplaining » phenomenon. By exploring why men feel the need to explain things to women even when they are not experts on the subject, Solnit reveals how gender-based power dynamics operate on an individual level. She notes, « The assumption that men know more than women, and that they are entitled to tell them what to do, pervades culture » (Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 15).

Moreover, Solnit notes that such behavior is not limited to the individual level, as it is often reinforced by societal norms and structures. By identifying these underlying psychological patterns and their root causes, Solnit suggests that feminist movements can bring about social change by challenging these norms and promoting gender equality.

Another psychoanalytic reflection in *Men Explain Things to Me* is Solnit's examination of the role of trauma in shaping gendered power dynamics. In the essay « *The Longest War*, » Solnit explores the impact of sexual assault on women and how it can shape their relationship with men and society as a whole. She writes, « Rape and sexual assault are among the most ancient weapons of war, but the traumatic aftermath can

destroy families and communities long after the conflict is over » (Solnit, Men Explain Things to Me, 27).

Here, Solnit highlights how trauma can perpetuate gendered power dynamics by shaping individual and collective behavior over time. However, she also suggests that feminist movements can serve as a means of collective healing, and help women to overcome trauma and to challenge the power structures that perpetuate it.

Solnit also provides psychoanalytic insights into how gendered power dynamics operate in everyday interactions. For example, in the essay « Woolf's Darkness, » Solnit reflects on Virginia Woolf's writing and how it illuminates the often unseen emotional labor that women perform in their relationships with men.

In another essay, « The Case of the Missing Perpetrator, » Solnit examines how the legal system and media often obscure the actions of male perpetrators of violence against women. She argues that understanding the psychological dynamics of victim blaming and gaslighting is crucial to challenging these systems of oppression.

Solnit's use of a psychoanalytic perspective in Men Explain Things to Me encourages readers to reflect on the ways in which gendered power dynamics operate in various spheres of life. By examining individual characters and societal structures, Solnit provides valuable insights into how feminist movements can promote social change by challenging these power dynamics.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, Solnit's Men Explain Things to Me combines feminist and psychoanalytic theories to explore the gender-based power dynamics and their emotional dimensions. Through her work, Solnit highlights the connection between individual experiences and the broader social structures that shape them. By analyzing gendered power dynamics in conversation, media portrayal, and legal systems, she exposes the insidious ways that patriarchal values continue to shape. Through her engaging and beautifully written essays, Solnit shows how gender inequality operates in different contexts, from everyday conversations to institutional power structures. She uses feminist theory to expose the systemic inequalities that underlie gender-based violence, while psychoanalytic concepts allow her to explore the unconscious motivations and emotional aspects of these experiences. Solnit's work is a testament to the value of combining

different theoretical perspectives to gain a deeper understanding of complex and often difficult issues. By drawing on both feminist and psychoanalytic insights, Solnit illuminates how gender-based oppression is produced and reproduced, as well as the individual and collective capacities for resistance and change

Men Explain Things to Me is an important contribution to feminist discourse and a compelling example of using interdisciplinary approaches to deepen our understanding of gender-based oppression. By bridging the gap between academic theory and personal experience, Solnit encourages readers not only to recognize the ways in which gender-based oppression shapes our lives but also to take action towards creating a more just and equitable society.

General

Conclusion

General Conclusion

In modern literature, the gender discourses are significant in portraying the challenges that women encounter in their pursuit of equality and equity. Women have been working hard to fight against gender discrimination, which is evident in modern literature through their voices and struggles. Their efforts have resulted in the emergence of female protagonists who are determined to overcome the obstacles imposed by the male-dominated society.

Through the portrayal of women in modern literature to voice their struggles and bring attention to the gender discrimination they face in various spheres of life. Through literature, women writers have brought to light various cultural, social, and political realities of their experiences in challenging the gender construct. They have highlighted how gender discrimination affects women's education, careers, and overall well-being. Literature has been an excellent platform for these voices to be heard and has contributed significantly to the ongoing conversation around gender equality. This dissertation has shed light on the importance of these voices and how they have made significant contributions to modern literature. The study has shown that work still needs to be done to ensure women's rights are recognized and respected in society. This dissertation offers recommendations for future research in this area, including the need for more intersectional approaches to the study of gender discrimination and literature. There is a need for studies that analyze how different forms of oppression overlap and intersect, including race, class, sexuality, and disability. Moreover, this dissertation highlights the need for more representation of diverse voices in literature, particularly those of marginalized groups, as This means that future research should not only examine the experiences of women, but also the ways in which race, class, sexuality, and other intersecting identities shape the experiences of oppression and resistance. Additionally, there is a need for more diverse voices to be included in the literary canon and for increased representation of women from diverse backgrounds in literature at large.

This dissertation underscores the importance of literature as a means of highlighting the struggles of oppressed groups and providing a platform for marginalized voices. Rebecca Solnit's "Men Explain Things to Me" exemplifies the power of literature in exposing the ways in which gender discrimination is perpetuated in modern society. By examining Solnit's work, we can better understand how gender discrimination manifests in everyday life, and the ways in which women resist and challenge such oppression.

General Conclusion

In conclusion, this dissertation contributes important insights into the ongoing struggle for gender equality and the role of literature in amplifying women's voices and experiences. Through continued research and advocacy, we can work towards a more just and equitable society in which all individuals, regardless of gender or other identities, are able to thrive and live free from discrimination and oppression.

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