

T.C.
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SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
AMERİKAN KÜLTÜRÜ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF WOMEN IN CHARLOTTE
PERKINS GILMAN'S WORKS

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Ülkü YAVAŞ

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Danışman: Asst. Prof. Mary Lou O'NEIL

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to analyze the works of Charlotte Perkins Gilman in terms of economic independence of women in the view of feminism and gender identity. Gilman advocated that women should work and take part in the labor market to eradicate their oppression and to contribute to women's improvement. Feminism means to struggle against men's patronizing and dominating over women legally, socially and economically and to defend that women are humans rather than sex. Feminists defend that women have the same intellectual and professional capacity to work as men. Accordingly, Gilman believed that women contribute more to human progress if they were given the same opportunity and freedom as men. She harshly criticized women's being parasite who were not working outside but imprisoned at homes doing only housework and childrearing. In this case, women are economically dependent to men: Husbands are employers while wives are employees.

Gilman wrote utopic novels to present solutions for economic inequities between men and women. She tried to reconstruct new modern gender roles for women, and to clear away the former constructed gender roles of the man-made world. In their utopic countries, Gilman's strong and independent women characters have no pressures of this man-made world. Adopting Herbert Spencer's conception of Social Darwinism, Gilman claimed that if women had to fall behind men in time by the social evolution; they can regain their economic, intellectual and social independence by social evolution. For Gilman, a social evolution is essential, and this needs women's economic participation.

ÖZET

Bu tezin amacı, Charlotte Perkins Gilman'ın eserlerindeki kadının ekonomik özgürlüğünü feminizm ve cinsiyet kimliği açısından incelemektir. Gilman, kadınların ezilmekten kurtulabilmeleri ve ilerlemeleri için öncelikle çalışmaları ve iş piyasasına girmeleri gerektiğini savunmuştur. Feminizm, erkeklerin kadınlara yasal, sosyal ve ekonomik olarak patronluk taslamalarına ve üstünlük sağlamalarına karşı mücadele etmek; ve kadınların, sadece cinsiyet olarak algılanılmasına karşı çıkarak birer “insan” olduğunu savunmaktır. Feministler, kadınların çalışabilmek için erkekler kadar entelektüel ve mesleki kapasitelerinin olduğunu savunurlar. Bu doğrultuda, Gilman kadınlara erkeklerle eşit fırsat ve özgürlük verildiğinde kadınların, insanlığın ilerleyişine daha fazla katkıda bulunacaklarına inanmıştır. Kadınların birer parazit gibi eve hapsedilip sadece ev işi ve çocuk bakımı ile görevlendirilmelerini sert bir şekilde eleştirmiştir. Bu durumda kadınlar erkeklere ekonomik olarak bağımlıdırlar: Kadınlar işçi iken kocaları patroneurlar.

Gilman, erkek ve kadın arasındaki ekonomik eşitsizliklere çözüm sunmak amacıyla ütopyik romanlar yazmıştır. Erkek dünyasının şimdiye kadar oluşturmuş olduğu eski kadın cinsiyet rollerini silerek yeni kadın rolleri oluşturmaya çalışmıştır. Gilman'ın güçlü ve özgür kadın karakterleri, kendi ütopyik ülkelerinde bu erkek dünyasındaki baskılardan kurtulmuşlardır. Herbert Spencer'in Sosyal Darwinizm kavramını eserlerinde uyarlayarak iddia etmiştir ki zaman içerisinde kadınlar, sosyal evrimle nasıl erkeklerin gerisinde kalmış iseler yeni bir sosyal evrimle yine ekonomik, entelektüel ve sosyal özgürlüklerini kazanacaklardır. Gilman'a göre sosyal evrim şarttır ve kadının ekonomik katılımını gerektirmektedir.

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INTRODUCTION

Due to rapid industrialization, in the late 19th century, American women who had been working with their husbands in order to contribute to the family's economy gardening, weaving or making pottery in agrarian society, were directed to their homes to rear children and to do all the housework themselves. That was because "home" was known as the best place for women; and no wonder, women's identity is firstly defined as "mothers" and also as "wives." Men started to work outside while women were sent homes to be the servants of their husbands doing only unpaid domestic work. Women's bosses were their husbands who had the task of supporting all the family-both their wives and children. Women fulfilled their duties at homes for many years being left ignorant under the shadow of men letting men to decide on the worldly matters. Soon after mankind had searched for equal rights and opportunities for every human, a restlessness awoke in the minds of women. It was a kind of restlessness blending with a dissatisfaction of being imprisoned at homes working long hours but left unpaid and unvoiced for years; and an impact desire of expressing loudly for their demand of the rights to be respected as "humans" as well as men.

This restlessness implanted a secret conflict deeper somewhere in their minds, and probably women had reared it for many years hoping for their salvation. The conflict was between their sex and humanity, actually, to separate their biological needs and social demands.¹ Women needed to prove that they deserved to have the same rights as men since they were all humans as well as men and also had their own intellectual ability, pleasures and interests. Thus, they wished to reconstruct the gender roles which had been constructed by men only to contribute to men's improvement. In addition, women became ambitious to move outside their homes in order to gain their legal and political rights; and, of course, to struggle with men in the labor market to have professions for their economic independence.

¹ Pitts, Rebecca, "Women and Communism." A documentary history of American Feminism. Ed. Dawn Keetley and John Pettegrew. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005.416

The restlessness of women would never end unless they had the same opportunity with the men in the society in terms of constitutional, social and economical rights.

Women writers and philosophers expressed their dissatisfaction on the inequality of the rights between men and women. All of their efforts were to make “women experiences and senses” considered as important as men’s. The knowledge is not for only men, but it is for women as well. Awakening with the revolutionary book of Mary Wollstonecraft, women were enlightened to have their legal, political and social rights; the knowledge and science should have become available for all humans, for women as well; thus, the ardent women’s movements launched in order to include women in public life. Along with the fact that women should be educated and also be enlightened in order to comprehend the importance of their struggle and to have well-paid jobs to gain their economic independence; they got also a terrific pleasure in being included in the intellectual life.

Women have struggled a lot to break the man-made constructed gender roles since the society is organized in favor of men, which is called patriarchy. Some feminists objected that “women’s work is biologically determined”² and thus it “is home based and restricted to nurturing and domestic chores.”³ However, this is because men are in need of seeing women at home serving men’s comfort and rearing the children of the future. Women’s gender roles were constructed by men in the man-made world due to their motherhood since women can reproduce and their major work is to feed their children.

Feminism movements were sparked and flourished in three waves. Mary Wollstonecraft wrote her famous book Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792) and asserted that women were enslaved in the man-made society and therefore the knowledge and the law were constructed in favor of men. After that, feminists started to debate on woman rights and demanded equal rights for women as well as men. First-wave feminism was launched with The Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. First-wave

² Parpart, Jane L, M. Patricia Connelly and V. Eudine Barriteu, ed. Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development. Canada: IDRC, 2000. 3

³ Ibid.

feminists demanded legal rights such as voting and property and they also struggled for economical rights. In the years of first-wave feminism, European women gained their right of vote, especially after the World War I from 1914 to 1939.⁴ In the USA, women gained the right of vote in 1920 with the Nineteenth Amendment.⁵ Women also appeared in the workplace to earn a livelihood. With the second-wave of feminism women struggled for their sexual, reproductive and socio-economical rights. Feminists advocated that women should also have control of their bodies organizing a very radical campaign of “birth control” in 1920s in order to contribute to the welfare of working mothers and their children, and also to struggle with the sexual division of labor. Since women were having less wages than men, feminists fought against employment discrimination to have “equal work” and “equal pay” asserting that women performed the same work as men. Finally, with the third-wave feminism, in the years of 1990s, women who had fought for the idea that women are the same with men started to claim that they are different from men and they struggled to construct a “different female identity” centering on the concepts of difference, particularity and identity. They also used the power of mass media and popular culture to express their struggle.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935), who lived in the years of first-wave feminism, was an editor, humanist, feminist writer, theorist, lecturer and a social commentator and she devoted all her life to enrich the women’s society. Above all, she never used the word “feminist” for herself, but she considered herself as a humanist who is uniting the world of men and women.⁶ She wrote many books on anthropology, biology, history, sociology, ethics, and philosophy in order to clarify human society and evolution. Her aim was to create a humanist social order. Working collectively with the intellectuals of her time such as Jane Addams, Lester Frank Ward, Patrick Geddes, and adopting the theories of Darwin, she molded her vision that she conveyed in most of her fiction. She became very popular feminist writer and lecturer in her time although she is

⁴ Ishay, Micheline R. The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era. California: University of California Pres, 2008.231

⁵ Williams, Peter ed. “The Changing Role of Women in American Society” The Changing Roles of Women in the United States. Washington: DIANE Publishing, 1997. 10

⁶ Kinkead, Joyce. “Charlotte Perkins Gilman.” *The English Journal*. 75,1 (1986).p75

less known today.⁷ She was a firm feminist who tried to make her contributions to eradicate women's oppression and to include women into the labor market and also public life. She also formed her feminist theories combining socialism and feminism; and applying Darwin's evolution theory into her arguments. She advocated the idea that firstly women should work in any case in order to earn their living and to eradicate their oppression, then to satisfy themselves intellectually and socially, and of course to contribute to the state's economy.

Gilman struggled for women's emancipation enthusiastically inspired by her own life experiences. She sympathized with women's oppression because of her abandonment and poverty in her childhood, financial difficulties in her girlhood and after divorce, and her psychological depressions related to her being non-working woman in her first marriage. Her psychological and economic depressions have particularly great impact on every sentence of her fiction. All her life she worked and worked: She wrote, lectured, preached-even only one week before her death- in order to construct new gender roles for oppressed women. After her second husband Houghton had died, she moved to a room near her daughter Katharine. Since she never wished to be a burden for her daughter, once she told Katharine "I tell you frankly that I do not intend to grow much older, with no work and no income!"⁸ Soon Gilman learnt that she had a breast cancer and would perhaps live no more than six months. She completed her autobiography, wrote her will wishing no funeral ceremony. On August 17, 1935, she took chloroform and ended her life herself⁹.

In her novels, articles and poems, her central aim was to awaken women first, and then to give detailed instructions and information about how to achieve new constructed modern gender roles for women, and clear away the misunderstandings of the former constructed gender roles by men of the man-made world. She claimed that with women's participation, the world would be more peaceful, more systematic in sense of both economy and welfare. For her, women should immediately awake and rise up to include in the worldly matters such as economy and politics in order to feed the

⁷ Lane, Ann J. To Herland and Beyond: The Life and Work of Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997. 230

⁸ Ibid. 350

⁹ Ibid.

world because it has been suffering at the hands of men so far, and also needs women to be healed.

Gilman portrayed an optimist feminist who believed that with radical social change, women would gain their rights and this would be beneficial for both women and all humanity. She accepted human life as dynamic and defended a new social evolution for all humanity ardently saying that “even rocks are slowly changing.”¹⁰ She asserted that men, becoming the masters of women by natural selection in centuries, had managed the world with their combat and desire instincts dragging it to warfare and poverty and this caused the retardation of human progress. She claimed that men considered everything in the sense of “sex,” but not in the sense of “humanness,” therefore they failed to progress. However, women could contribute more to human process than men if they included in labor market and public life because unlike men’s “desire and combat” women act by their instinct of “motherhood.” Gilman said “if we did not like the fruit, we might better change the tree,” thus for her, a radical chance in social and family relations was essential.¹¹

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the works of Charlotte Perkins Gilman in terms of economic independence of women in the view of feminism and gender identity. Gilman advocated that women should work and take part in the labor market to eradicate their oppression and also to contribute to women’s improvement. Analyzing the relations of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s strong women characters, we will see:

- how women could gain their economic independence, and
- how they could take part in the labor market as successfully as men , at least , if they were given the same opportunity and freedom as men.

¹⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. “A Human World.” Our Androcentric Culture, or the Man-Made World. Project Gutenberg. Jan.2009. 146

< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3015/3015.txt>

¹¹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 42

< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu./women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

I will also analyze Gilman's articles and some of her poems as a reference to make more contribution to understand her ideology, her views and hopes on women's advancement.

In Chapter I, I will firstly discuss the historical development of feminism focusing on the three waves to help us comprehend the works of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, who stayed in the first-wave feminism. I will also deal with feminism in terms of theories and some feminism subtypes.

As Charlotte Perkins Gilman considered herself as a humanist, and constantly emphasized that women are "humans" rather than "females," she clarified the distinction between gender and sex in her works. In Chapter II, I will discuss what is to be woman, and then I will deal with the issue of gender and gender roles of women introducing the distinction between gender and sex. In her articles and poems, Gilman exemplified her views focusing on the sex roles of all creatures, animals and human beings as well in order to clarify her claim that animals and human beings may have biologically the same sex roles and instincts in general, but humans are social creatures and instincts do not contribute to develop social relations. Gilman's emphasizing so much on the sex roles naturally reveals the distinction between sex and gender. In addition, she built her novels and stories intensifying the gender roles of women that were mostly reconstructed for the struggle of women's advancement. She wrote utopias to prove her claim how the life could be for women and, of course, for all humanity if women had the same opportunity with men to improve themselves.

Besides her being humanist, Gilman was the firm supporter of socialist feminism. In fact, her endeavor was to combine socialism with feminism and to present it as a strategy in order to progress on the path of women's economic advancement. In Gilman's fiction, gender is the main element; in addition, class is dealt as occupation-based emphasizing "working class women." As for race, generally it is dealt to demonstrate Gilman's humanistic views, to stress the "human race" and the distinction between animals and humans. In her articles and poems, we often encounter the words as "human race," "our race," etc. In Chapter II, I will also explain socialist feminism in order to comprehend Gilman's strategy and the way of women's search for their

economic independence. Gilman tried to create a thought, probably a kind of theory, combining feminism and socialism. Her endeavor was to present socialism as a charming and reasonable idea. To achieve her goal, she constructed a superior humanist-socialist world in her utopic novels such as Moving the Mountain(1911), Herland (1915) and its sequel With Her in Ourland (1916). Analyzing Marxism, socialism and also communism, we will see how feminists adopt Marxist and socialist theories into feminist theory in order to search their economic independence and eradicate the women's oppression.

In Chapter III, I will analyze Gilman's feminism and ideology to be able to understand how feminism, socialism and her other ideologies such as Darwinism, cultural feminism and Fabian socialism contributed to her fiction. Gilman adopted American socialism that was represented by Lester F. Ward, Edward Bellamy, Thorstein Veblen.¹² This American socialist tradition affected the country more than Marxism in the mid-nineteenth century.

Finally, in Chapter IV, I will analyze economic independence of women in the works of Charlotte Perkins Gilman. I will analyze women's gender roles and economic independence in three subtitles. No doubt that Gilman was a successful author who could convey her own life experiences and worldviews in her fictions, thus I will relate Gilman's experiences and their influences on her works. I will introduce her works to see their impact on the women's economic advancement.

The first subtitle of this chapter is "Motherhood and Marriage as a Profession." Gilman does not consider motherhood as profession that should be done only by mothers. She claimed that marriage should not be a way to have a financial insurance for women. I will argue how Gilman objected to the idea that motherhood prevents women from working. She harshly criticized the fact that women are not allowed to work outside after marriage since they are the responsible people to rear and educate their children because of their reproductive features. She also supported socialization of childrearing, thus she advocated childrearing and education should not be performed

¹² Rudd, Jill, Val Gough, ed. Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Optimist Reformer. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999. 152

only by untrained mothers at homes, but should be done at childcare services and schools by specialists and educated teachers. Childrearing needs special training so it should not be done only by maternal instincts. Gilman supported that mothers should work outside and their children should be entrusted to childcare services. Working mothers will be better for their children since they have the opportunity to feel more independent and fresh after work. They will be happier and more beneficial mothers and wives to fulfill their duties if they are not banned from working and earning their own living. Doing so, they can find the best opportunities to feel themselves more human and to realize and express themselves. In this chapter, I will also analyze Gilman's women characters who do not consider marriage as a way of financial insurance and struggle to search for their economic independence. Gilman advocated that marriage is not for financial insurance, but it is for only companionship and love.

The second subtitle is "Domestic Liberty for Economic Independence" that I will analyze why Gilman objected to domestic housework. For her, women should be rescued from too much herculean housework and can find time and energy to work outside as men to earn their living. Gilman determinedly supported socialization of housekeeping and cooking. Women who have the chance to work outside for a living cannot keep up with all the housework, childrearing and their professions at the same time. Hiring a housekeeper, women can gain their liberty when the domestic work is socialized, thus they can easily perform their professions and also save the money wisely to contribute to the economy of the family. Besides, I will support Gilman's claims with her innovations such as kitchenless houses. Gilman claimed that a traditional type of home which has a kitchen prevents women's domestic liberty to gain their economic independence. Women spend much time to do the shopping, selecting the best food, cooking it and feeding their families in their homes. However, Gilman advocated that the selection and preparation of food should be done by trained experts regarding the family members' health and their family budget. Thus, families should live in kitchenless flats. Gilman suggested a new type of home for the good of working class women. In this chapter, I will analyze Gilman's women characters who try to elevate housework business and voluntarily work at women's clubs and unions to educate and prepare housekeepers for domestic work and cooking. We will also see that

Gilman was very determined to eradicate men's common misconception: Women's earning money is a disgrace for the family.

The third subtitle is "Education for Economic Independence." In this chapter, I will analyze the importance of education for women's economic independence. For Gilman, education is important for women to have a good profession for economic independence and to learn to include in public life and labor market; to fulfill their professions more beneficently; and also to improve and satisfy themselves intellectually. Gilman also defends socialization of education and advocated that childrearing and education should be done at childcare services and schools by educated, experienced and skilled specialists and teachers. Then education becomes a path for women to gain their economic independence and also provides non-working women new professions as teachers and childcare specialists. Therefore it helps women's economic advancement. In this chapter, I will analyze these ideas presenting examples from Gilman's novels. I will present some of Gilman's educated women characters who set good example for the others. I will also deal with Gilman's anxiety about androcentric influences on education. For Gilman, women were needed at home as servants, thus they were deliberately not allowed to have a proper education in order to contribute to the patriarchy. Since it was improper for women to work, they had no share in the labor market.

Mary Wollstonecraft, who gave inspiration to the most feminist theories and works, again has its deep impact on Gilman's works, directly on Women and Economics and Our Androcentric Culture, or the Man-Made World; and indirectly on her novels. Thus, I have found it necessary to give references from the book Vindication of Rights of Women. Since Gilman's poems are so clear to understand her endeavor for her ardent contribution to women's advancement, I will analyze them with a great delight.

CHAPTER I

FEMINISM AND WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Feminism that is women's struggle for legal, political, economic or sexual rights accelerated intensely in the late eighteenth century with Mary Wollstonecraft's famous book Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792). She launched the Feminist Revolution with her book, being affected by the French Revolution, and opposed to the idea of rights regarding only "men," and some of Rousseau's ideas. "Rights of women" converted into a debate against oppression in the sense of "women resistance." After that, feminism appeared in three waves. With the first-wave of feminism, women, in the first round, demanded to have the rights of voting, property and working. Then came the second-wave feminism and women called for mostly their sexual, reproductive and socio-economical rights as well as in the former wave. Finally, with the third wave feminism women struggled to construct a "different female identity" focusing on the concepts of difference, particularity and identity. Feminism has proposed so many ideas, doctrines, solutions and resolutions for the sake of women's progress in the man-made world so far; it has developed, changed and fluctuated a lot in time; however, firstly it always endures determinedly to gain the equal political, economic and social rights with men.

Feminism has many definitions and most of them propose the same solution: to end women's oppression. Paula Treichler and Cheri Kramarae provided a collection of definitions for feminism in their book Feminism (1985). In this book Joan Kelly, who constructed new feminist theories combining history and women's oppression for the sake of future generation in 1970s, defined feminism as:

- (1) a conscious stand in opposition to male defamation and mistreatment of women; a dialectical opposition to misogyny.
- (2) a belief that the sexes are culturally, and not just biologically, formed; a belief that women were a social group shaped to fit notions about a defective sex.

(3) an outlook that transcended the accepted value systems of the time by exposing and opposing the prejudice and narrowness; a desire for a truly general conception of humanity.¹³

Feminism means to struggle against men's patronizing and dominating over women legally, socially and economically; and to defend that women are humans rather than sex. Feminists aimed to end the prejudice that women's work should be determined biologically as they reproduce and bear children. They also defended that women have the same intellectual and professional capacity to work as men. Feminism is to end misogyny and introduce "humanity" emphasizing the humanness part of women.

In 1792, with her book Vindication of the Rights of Women, Mary Wollstonecraft launched the women revolution; and addressing the question of "What is the woman virtue for?" She gave inspiration to many feminist theorists attracting the attentions to the point that women are enslaved in the man-made society; thus the knowledge and the law are shaped in favor of men.

After the French Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789) a new debate started because "man in this context is specifically male rather than generically human, and the rights of woman generally went unconsidered."¹⁴ Mary Wollstonecraft claimed that those rights were only addressed to male rights, but not to female's.

In her book, Mary Wollstonecraft opposed the idea that women's rise in an androcentric world is only gained by "marriage." She criticized many male scholars and male writers, especially Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and their doctrines regarding women. She firmly attacked on Rousseau's arguing that "a woman should never for a moment feel herself independent"¹⁵ and she is only a "sweeter companion" to man whenever he chose to relax himself."¹⁶ Since it is often proposed that women have "less mind than men," women's education is based on only to please men, and the man-made society

¹³ Kolmar, Wendy and Frances Bartkowski, eds., Feminist Theory: A Reader. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000. 7

¹⁴ Hudson, Jane. "Women Write the Rights of Woman: The Sexual Politics of the Personal Pronoun in the 1790s." Language and Literature 2007, 16;281

¹⁵ Wollstonecraft, Mary. Vindication of Rights of Women. 2008. 27

< www.forgottenbooks.org

¹⁶ Ibid.

enslaved women restricting their understandings and “sharpening their senses.” For Wollstonecraft, women are degraded with the opinion, from Rousseau to Gregory, of that they are “weak” characters and the “useless members” of society. Women have been kept in the state of “child” for many years since they are collocating with only the soft words as “innocent,” “virtuous” and “domestic.” Wollstonecraft asserted that women have been seen as “overgrown” children and only helpmates of men.¹⁷

According to Wollstonecraft, women have become more “constant” than men because of incorrect education, narrow and uncultured mind and certainly sexual prejudices. The sexual difference springs up with the fact that men have the superior advantage of their liberty that gives them more opportunity to see “more of life.”¹⁸ For Wollstonecraft, women should be given the same opportunity, and they should be educated, otherwise they will stop to be virtuous. Wollstonecraft says:

Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience; but, as blind obedience is ever fought by power, tyrants and sensualists are in the right when they endeavour to keep women in dark, because the former only want slaves, and the latter a play-thing. The sensualist, indeed, has been the most dangerous of tyrants, and women have been duped by their lovers, as princes by their ministers, whilst dreaming they reigned over them.¹⁹

The only way that women can cooperate with men is to include women, the half of the human race, into the society, and to give up neglecting them and being blind to their experiences and senses. Tyrants and sensualists deliberately keep women in dark to make them their slaves, and to have the power, indeed. Thus, women should be educated to understand why they ought to be virtuous and their mind should be strengthened in order to comprehend their duty and stop their blind obedience.

Mary Wollstonecraft, who fired the women’s revolutions and movements in the world, also hinted those forthcoming ardent struggles and movements in her famous book. She says:

¹⁷ Ibid. 33-40

¹⁸ Ibid. 32

¹⁹ Ibid. 45

But, till man become attentive to the duty of a father, it is vain to expect women to spend time in their nursery which they, 'wife in their generation,' choose to spend at their glass; for this exertion of cunning is only an instinct of nature to enable them to obtain indirectly a little of that power of which they are unjustly denied a share: for, if women are not permitted to enjoy legitimate rights, they will render both men and themselves vicious, to obtain illicit privileges.²⁰

Wollstonecraft states that women are given the duty of nursery and are stuck to live in a glass-that is home- because of their biological instincts. Women never share the power, but they are cunningly imprisoned in their homes. If women are not permitted to share the power, in other words, if they are not permitted to have legal, social and economical rights, they will stop to remain unvoiced at their homes and move out to struggle for their emancipation.

The first-wave feminism emerged in the nineteenth century and flamed up in early twentieth century, and went on until the late 1950s. The starting point of the first-wave feminism, no doubt, was The Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. With the first - wave feminism, women firstly struggled for their legal and economic rights such as voting rights, employment rights, property rights, divorce rights, etc. Women in Europe and the USA organized well and determined together to gain the same rights with men holding many conventions and establishing women suffrage associations. The leading theorists and activists of this wave contributed to the struggle giving speeches, raising money for the funds and editing newspapers.²¹

Before The Seneca Falls Convention (1848), there had been actions of women struggle both in Europe and the USA. The Women's Club had been established in Hamburg in 1847, and it encouraged and launched the movements of 1848 cooperating any other women's clubs. In France, some republican newspapers as *La Gazette des Femmes*, had made their efforts to contribute the feminist reform holding meetings for subscribers, demanding rights for women.²² Abolitionist movements and antislavery conventions also triggered the feminist revolution both in Britain and the USA. The two

²⁰ Wollstonecraft, Mary. *Vindication of Rights of Women*. 2008. xiii
< www.forgottenbooks.org.

²¹ LeGates, Marlene. *In Their Time: A History of Feminism in Western Society*. New York: Routledge, 2001.244

²² Ibid. 187-188

major activists of the Seneca Falls Convention, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott met at the first world Antislavery Convention in London.²³

Seneca Falls Convention (1848) set forth an important victory for women's revolution due to the fact that the women dared to speak aloud in public while many people had still disapproved women's speaking in public. Having been inspired by the Declaration of Independence (1776), Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote her Declaration of Sentiments (1848) which ends with twelve resolutions about the women's demands. Both men and women listened to the declaration carefully, discussed on the resolutions and finally sixty-eight women and thirty two men signed their names for the Declarations of Sentiments.²⁴

In Declaration of Sentiments, Elizabeth Cady Stanton expressed the situation of women of being usurped and cramped by men, and argued on their political and social rights. She started with the idea that all men and women are created equal; afterwards she defined the history of mankind as "a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman" to claim that men have had a dominance power on women. She presents her claims as:

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men-both in natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.²⁵

Stanton alleges that women are restricted and captured by the laws that are made by men, and thus they find no way out to express themselves. Women are unvoiced since they submit laws. Women are inferior to degraded native men and also foreigners.

²³ Mani, Bonnie G. Women ,Power and Political Change. United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2007. 61

²⁴ Burgan, Michael Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Social Reformer. Minneapolis: Compass Points Books, 2006.45

²⁵ Kolmar, Wendy and Frances Bartkowski, eds., Feminist Theory: A Reader. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000. 64

Stanton went on her claims stating that married women are civically dead due to the fact that with marriage women become the slaves of their husbands. She says,;

He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes, and in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of women, in all cases, going upon the false supposition of the supremacy of man, and giving all power into his hands²⁶

Furthermore, women are considered lower than the most degraded men. Stanton claims that married women are civically dead since they become the slaves of men who have the right to take their wives' freedom, and also to punish them. Even in the state of divorcement the laws are set in the favor of husbands. She also says that women are deprived of education, and also all the profitable employments are shut to them. Men constructed morals and sentiments in respect of only "men," and thus women are also excluded from society.

Finally, Stanton presented resolutions that are approved and signed by the attendants of the convention. Accordingly, women should be enlightened with the laws and should obtain the rights which they want and need. Men should encourage women to speak and teach in religious assemblies; assure equal participation with men in society.²⁷

With Declaration of Sentiments, suffragists struggled to "end husbands' power over their wives and their right of chastisement of their wives' bodies."²⁸ Elizabeth Cady Stanton seemed more radical than liberal advocating some radical reforms as self-sovereignty which means the women's ability to control their sexual and reproductive lives, free-love, etc. Stanton's ideas and resolutions challenged the conventions of the nineteenth century and she stayed as a central figure of her time fighting for women's

²⁶ Ibid. 64-65

²⁷ Stuhler, Barbara. For the Public Record: A Documentary History of the League of Women Voters. USA: Greenwood Publishing, 2000.7-8

²⁸ Kolmar, Wendy and Frances Bartkowski, eds., Feminist Theory: A Reader. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000. 35

rights, supporting women suffrage associations and writing books, journals; and affected considerably the development of feminist theory in the twentieth century.²⁹

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony allied with Working Women's Association(founded in 1868), that was the organization middle-class career women, and the National Labor Union (NLU), which was founded in 1866 and proposed some reforms of labor such as requesting eight-hour workday. In 1868, Elizabeth Cady Stanton attended the congresses of NLU supporting labor reforms. She demanded that poverty which was the consequence of human ignorance should have been healed and she expressed that "the highest good of the individual is the highest good of society."³⁰ Not supporting the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth Amendments, Stanton and Anthony organized the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) in 1869 to demand constitutional, marital, economic and educational rights for women.³¹ In 1872, Stanton advocated some reforms as "replacing wage labor with cooperation, ending capital punishment, enacting prison reform, extending charity and common sisterhood to prostitutes, reforming the criminal justice system, and working for international piece."³² She demanded child care for working mothers and a system of public education."³³

In 1895, Stanton wrote her book The Woman's Bible asserting that the Bible is not the "Word of God," but it is the "work" of men. For her, men translated and interpreted the Bible to keep their power over women.³⁴ In her book, Stanton wrote that women were confronted with the Bible whenever "they protested against their civil and political degradation."³⁵ She replaced patriarchal interpretations of the Bible with feminist ones.³⁶

²⁹ Davis, Sue. The Political Thought of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women's Rights and the American Political Traditions. New York: New York University Press, 2008. 1

³⁰ Ibid. 162

³¹ Ibid. 28

³² Ibid. 165

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Davis, Sue. The Political Thought of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women's Rights and the American Political Traditions. New York: New York University Press, 2008.194

³⁵ Kolmar, Wendy and Frances Bartkowski, eds., Feminist Theory: A Reader. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000. 95

³⁶ Ibid. 37

Like Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton's work was influenced by Social Darwinism and Fabian Socialism. Social Darwinism was the extension of Darwin's principles as natural selection and "survival of the fittest" to human's social existence³⁷. She linked her assertions of self-sovereignty to social Darwinism arguing that it would contribute to the progress of human race because this would cause to the birth of more intelligent children.³⁸ With Fabian socialism she advocated "community ownership of production" approving cooperative industry and cooperative unions.³⁹

John Stuart Mill wrote his masterpiece The Subjection of Woman in 1869. Mill sparked the women's revolution with this book in the nineteenth century. John Stuart Mill criticized women's being the slaves of men after marriage. Mill often used the words of "master and slave" to describe the husband-wife relationships,⁴⁰ and to emphasize women's subjection to men. He stated that women are treated as a slave by social and economic system especially within marriage. After marriage husbands have their power on their wives:

Meanwhile the wife is the actual bond servant of her husband: no less so, as far as legal obligation goes, than slaves commonly so called. She vows a lifelong obedience to him at the altar, and is held to it all through her life by law. [...] She can acquire no property but for him; the instant it becomes hers, even if by inheritance, it becomes ipso facto his. In this respect the wife's position under the common law of England is worse than that of slaves in the laws of many countries⁴¹

According to Mill, married women are the "actual slaves" of men. They are worse than slaves under the law since they cannot demand a property even after their husbands' death. Children also do not belong to women, but they are men's by law. If husbands wish, they can prevent their wives from seeing their children or corresponding with them. Wives cannot take anything with them, even their children if they want to leave their husbands. Men's property do not belong women, however, if men demand

³⁷ Davis, Sue. The Political Thought of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women's Rights and the American Political Traditions. New York: New York University Press, 2008. 199

³⁸ Ibid. 213

³⁹ Ibid. 206

⁴⁰ Mill, John Stuart, G.W. Smith. John Stuart's Social and Political Thought: Critical Assessments. London: Routledge, 1998. 248

⁴¹ Mill, John Stuart. The Subjection of Woman. 2008.39
> www.forgottenbooks.org

they can use the property of women that they earn, or are given to them by their relatives.⁴²

Mill claimed that women's duty was to live for the others, but not for themselves. Thus, the purpose of education was arranged for the good of men. Education was for men; however, abnegation was for women. He says:

The masters of women wanted more than simple obedience, and they turned the whole force of education to effect their purpose. All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self will, and government by self control, but submission, and yielding to the control of other. All the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women, and all the current sentimentalities that is their nature, to live for others; to make complete abnegation of themselves, and have no life but in their affections.⁴³

Government and moralities force women to abnegate and do not have education, but to marry and stay at homes to live for their husbands and children. If a woman does not choose to marry but to have education, she cannot attend universities easily. Supposing that she can have a job despite these difficulties, this time they are deprived of doing their jobs, or if she works, she will get low wages. For John Stuart Mill, society is shut to women who prefer earning their own living rather than being mothers or wives.⁴⁴

Women of this period also started to search for their sexual independence as well as their legal freedom. Feminists advocated that women should also have the control of their bodies. There was a radical campaign of "birth control" in 1920s and feminists were aiming to change "women's biological destiny."⁴⁵ This campaign was to contribute to the welfare of mothers and children, and to the need of working-class mothers; and to struggle with the sexual division of labor. In those years birth control

⁴² Mill, John Stuart. The Subjection of Woman. 2008. 41

> www.forgottenbooks.org

⁴³ Ibid. 18

⁴⁴ Mill, John Stuart, G.W. Smith. John Stuart's Social and Political Thought: Critical Assessments. London: Routledge, 1998. 249

⁴⁵ Digby, Anne John Stewart ed. Gender, Health and Welfare. New York: Routledge, 1996. 150

was both feminist and socialist issue and it was seen as a social reform that gives women to control their fertility.⁴⁶

In her book Woman and the New Race (1920), Margaret Sanger advocated birth control stating that a free race can be achieved only by “free mothers,” thus by means of birth control women can control her body and become freer. She said a woman cannot be free only by working and earning her life, but she should also make her own decisions on love and motherhood. She expresses her views as:

It does not greatly alter the case that some women call themselves free because they earn their own livings, while others profess freedom because they defy the conventions of sex relationship. She who earns her own living gains a sort of freedom that is not to be undervalued, but in quality and in quantity it is of little account beside the untrammled choice of mating or not mating, of being a mother or not being a mother. She gains food and clothing and shelter, at least, without submitting the charity of her companion, but the earning of her own living does not give her the development of her inner sex urge, far deeper and more powerful in its outworkings than any of these externals. In order to have that development, she must still meet and solve the problem of motherhood.⁴⁷

Margaret Sanger argues that birth control must be only women’s problem since they are burdened with the responsibility of bearing and rearing their children, thus it is their right to choose how many children they will have, or whether they will be mothers or not. For Sanger, women should not accept and follow any step and thought of men. They do not need to fear the “masculine mind,” but they should challenge and follow their own thought to create a new human world.⁴⁸

Struggles for the right of abortion flamed with the social and technological changes in 1950s. In 1959, American Law Institute suggested to expand the laws of abortion proposing that:

⁴⁶ Ibid. 144-148

⁴⁷ Kolmar, Wendy and Frances Bartkowski, eds., Feminist Theory; A Reader. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000. 118

⁴⁸ Ibid. 119

a licensed physician is justified in terminating a pregnancy if he believes that there is a substantial risk that continuance of the pregnancy would gravely impair the physical and mental health of the mother or that the child would be born with grave physical or mental defects or that pregnancy resulted from rape, incest, or other felonious intercourse.⁴⁹

This proposal suggested a reform and it raised movements on abortion in 1960s. Ardent debates started between anti-abortionists who defended that such reform would not reduce dangerous and illegal abortions and the activists who demand the repeal of abortion laws that restrict women's control of their bodies.⁵⁰

Charlotte Perkins Gilman appeared in the period of first-wave feminism struggling as an optimist feminist in the years of 1898-1935. She defended that women could gain their rights only with a radical social change and this would be beneficial for both women and all humanity. Like Wollstonecraft and Mill, Gilman objected women's subjection to men, and she defended that women should gain their economic independence to eradicate their oppression. She opposed the women's gender roles that had been constructed by the society as "wives" and "mothers." She criticized that women were considered as only "the sex" instead of humans, and deprived of intellectual, social and economical matters. Gilman harshly criticized women's being parasite who were not working outside but imprisoned at homes doing only unpaid housework and childrearing. She proposed socialization of domestic work and women's working outside in order to gain their economic independence and also to contribute to the state's economy. Gilman wrote many articles, novels and poems, and also gave lectures and held conferences to contribute to the women's emancipation. She spent most of her energy for her monthly journal Forerunner, her publication from 1909 to 1916, writing every line of the thirty-two pages herself. Gilman dealt with the issues of economic survival, unpaid domestic work, women in industrial society and service for all community in her fictions, mostly were influenced by her own life experiences.⁵¹

⁴⁹ McBride, Dorothy E. Abortion in the United States: a reference handbook. California: ABC-CLIO, 2008. 11

⁵⁰ McBride, Dorothy E. Abortion in the United States: a reference handbook. California: ABC-CLIO, 2008. 13-14

⁵¹ Nies, Judith. Nine Women: Portraits from the American Radical Tradition. California: University of California Press, 2002. 127-128

From 1820s to early 1950s, women gained more of their voices to express themselves freely by means of all of these developments of the first-wave feminism movements. Women obtained their legal rights of voting and employment; and also had much more opportunities to participate in public life and workplace.

In the end, after struggling many years, women in the USA gained the right of vote in 1920. The US Constitution passed the Nineteenth Amendment, which guaranteed the American women to vote.⁵² Other countries also gave women the right of vote after the World War I. From 1914 to 1939, twenty-eight countries granted women the right of vote.⁵³

Transition from the agricultural economy to the industrial economy considerably influenced women's roles. Women who had lived in farms had been working with their husbands and contributed to the family income⁵⁴. By 1900, with industrialization, majority of American women did not work outside their home; or women who were working gave up working after marriage. Men were expected to work outside to support their families and for this reason, it was improper for women to work.⁵⁵ By 1920, 9 percent of American married women, especially African-American ones worked outside.⁵⁶ Only when men were drafted into the army for the war, women were accepted to work outside.⁵⁷ In 1920, The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor was established and it was the first time that the federal government recognized the policy issues of working women.⁵⁸ Because of the Great Depression in 1930s women had to struggle against employment discrimination for "equal work" and "equal pay" since they were having less wages than men although they performed the same work. With the tensions of Great Depression, women were also dismissed from their

⁵² Williams, Peter ed. "The Changing Role of Women in American Society" The Changing Roles of Women in the United States. Washington: DIANE Publishing, 1997. 10

⁵³ Ishay, Micheline R.. The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era. California: University of California Pres, 2008. 231

⁵⁴ Williams, Peter ed. "The Changing Role of Women in American Society" The Changing Roles of Women in the United States. Washington: DIANE Publishing, 1997. 10

⁵⁵ Conway, M. Margaret, David W. Ahern, Gertrude A. Steuernagel. Women & Public Policy. Washington ,D.C.: CQ Press,1999. 69

⁵⁶ Williams, Peter ed. "The Changing Role of Women in American Society" The Changing Roles of Women in the United States. Washington: DIANE Publishing, 1997. 10

⁵⁷ Conway, M. Margaret, David W. Ahern, Gertrude A. Steuernagel. Women & Public Policy. Washington ,D.C.: CQ Press,1999. 69

⁵⁸ Ibid. 72

jobs because of the idea that men should support their families but not the women. Besides, women were accepted as “temporary substitutes” for men during the war years. After the World War II had ended, “women were encouraged” to return their homes to be housewives.⁵⁹ Employers did not hire married women and they dismissed pregnant women or single women if they married.⁶⁰ The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 including “fair treatment for wage and hourly workers” influenced women’s wages but not until 1963 equal pay legislation passed. In 1963, Congress passed the Equal Pay Act, which ended the gender discrimination in employment.⁶¹

1950s and 1960s were “lost decades” for women regarding higher education.⁶² For women, teaching became the best profession since the classroom is considered as an extension of home, and women were educated only to be better sisters, daughters and wives.⁶³ In Germany, Hamburg Academy trained women teachers to provide them economic independence, and since it is not possible for women to work in public schools, private schools and kindergartens were created for these teachers.⁶⁴ However, married women teachers were forced to quit their jobs to fulfill their duties as wives and mothers.⁶⁵

In spite of the fact that the term “feminism” was not used in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the women struggle that is defined mostly as “woman’s rights” and “woman suffrage” advanced widely in political and cultural life. Feminism was sometimes combined with liberalism, afterwards Marxism and socialism; and also was fired with the emergence of Darwinism.⁶⁶

The second-wave feminism that started in early 1960s and went on to 1970s, focused not only on legal and economic inequalities, but also on the issues of women

⁵⁹ Ibid. 69

⁶⁰ Ibid. 165

⁶¹ Ibid. 73

⁶² Ibid. 21

⁶³ Davis, Sue. The Political Thought of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women’s Rights and the American Political Traditions. New York: New York University Press, 2008. 19-20

⁶⁴ LeGates, Marlene. In Their Time: A History of Feminism in Western Society. New York: Routledge, 2001. 187

⁶⁵ Conway, M. Margaret, David W. Ahern, Gertrude A. Steuernagel. Women & Public Policy. Washington ,D.C.: CQ Press, 1999. 20

⁶⁶ Davis, Sue. The Political Thought of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women’s Rights and the American Political Traditions. New York: New York University Press, 2008. 25-28

sexuality, family and reproductive rights. Second-wave feminists empowered each other raising the slogan of “The Personal is political” claiming that “many personal problems have social, economic and political causes and their solutions require social and political change.”⁶⁷ Thus, they questioned the problems of the exploitation of women’s bodies in advertising, pornography, film, art or other visual media.”⁶⁸ They also objected violation of women’s bodies such as rape.⁶⁹ Women became more interested in the issues of employment, housekeeping and the labor of housewives, woman body and sexuality. The central women feminist leaders of this wave are American Betty Friedan, Kate Millett, Adrienne Rich and French Simone de Beauvoir.

In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir wrote her revolutionary book The Second Sex that includes “analysis on women’s status as secondary, the Other, the inessential, the less than human,” became a major influence for some essential feminists as Betty Friedan, Shulamith Firestone and Kate Millett. The book’s claim is that “there is a universal sexual asymmetry between women and men.”⁷⁰

For Beauvoir, men force women to eliminate their “subjectivities” and drag them into confusions and frustrations in man-made world. She explains this in her book La force des Choses (1963) as: “I looked and it was a revelation: the world was masculine world, my childhood had been nourished by myths formed by men, and I hadn’t reacted to them in at all the same way I should have done if I had been a boy”⁷¹ Certainly, her claim is that women could have been in much better condition if the same opportunity and upbringing had been given to them. Women have the same capacity with men; however, they can not reveal and display it since they are defined as only as the “object” and, of course these gender roles of women are constructed by men.

As the humanity is already “male” itself, the woman is considered only as a “sex,” she is defined with reference to man, and remains unimportant. “He (man) is the

⁶⁷ Keetly, Dawn. Public Women, Public Words: A Documentary History of American Feminism. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005. 248

⁶⁸ Kolmar, Wendy and Frances Bartkowski, eds., Feminist Theory: A Reader. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000. 35

⁶⁹ Ibid. 36

⁷⁰ Curthoys, Ann. “Adventures of Feminism: Simone de Beauvoir’s Autobiographies: Women’s Liberation, and Self-Fashioning.” Feminist Review. 64 (Spring,2000) 4-15

⁷¹ Appignanesi, Lisa. Simone de Beauvoir. London: Haus Publishing, 2005. 85

Subject, he is the Absolute, - she is the Other.” The woman is the “object” that the man desires to tame. Men always seem the masters of women, and women are “imprisoned in their secondary status.”⁷²

Beauvoir took the oppression of women as the other social groups’ like blacks, Jews, etc.⁷³ since they are treated as “objects” in the same way. Stating that “All oppressions create a state of war,”⁷⁴ she stressed the importance of women’s struggle believing that only when this oppression stops, an agreement can be built between men and women. In Beauvoir’s utopia, women who have been labeled as “female” and the “Other” for years, and who have been defined only with their “sexual difference,” will be considered as only “human beings” soon and they will not hear about this sexual difference again.

Like Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Beauvoir criticized women’s deprivation of economic independence because of their marriage and maternity. She stated that because of the fallacy that boys are better than girls, and girls’ capacities are limited, parents raise their daughters only for marriage instead of advancing their personal developments. Thus, women always fall behind in economic freedom, and they had the only chance to please and serve men:

The privileged place held by men in economic life, their social usefulness, the prestige of marriage, the value of masculine backing, all this makes women wish ardently to please men. Women are still, for the most part, in a state of subjection. It follows that woman sees herself and makes her choices not in accordance with her true nature in itself, but as man defines her. So we must first go on to describe for what-in-men’s-eyes-she-seems-to-be is one of the necessary factors in her real situation.⁷⁵

⁷² Ibid. 87

⁷³ Moi, Toril. Simone de Beauvoir: The Making of an Intellectual Woman. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. 226

⁷⁴ Moi, Toril. Simone de Beauvoir: The Making of an Intellectual Woman. USA: Blackwell Publishers, 1994. 209

⁷⁵ Beauvoir, Simone de. The Second Sex. New York: Bantam Books, 127-128

While men have their advantages because of their economic independence and social usefulness, women are forced to please men since their husbands are their bosses. Marriage contributes only to men because women still submit their husbands. This submission is because of women's being secondary and also not being described as she is but as how men consider them. Thus, women cannot use their capacities.

Simone de Beauvoir explained that marriage enslaves women as they become the servants of their husbands. Even though women are more emancipated, they still have the only chance to prefer marriage as a career since men have occupied all the economic advantages.⁷⁶ Thus, women are defined with the reference of marriage. Simone de Beauvoir said "Marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by society. It is still true that most women are married, or have been, or plan to be, or suffer from not being."⁷⁷ Girls consider marriage as a fundamental future plan whereas boys do not. Women become men's vassal by taking their names, religion, class and circle. Men continue to be a productive worker for the society, but women are only assigned with the care of the home and the continuation of species, kept far away from work places.⁷⁸ Beauvoir asserted that if a woman is economically independent, this time she has conflicts of their personal interests and the problems of their sexual life.⁷⁹

In 1963, Betty Friedan claimed that suburban middleclass housewives started to feel unsatisfied with their lives that are fully spent with housework and child rearing in her eminent book The Feminine Mystique. She knocked on the psychiatrists and scientists who advised women to live as only mothers and wives; and she encouraged women to find work outside home, far from those suburbs.⁸⁰

Friedan defined the dissatisfaction of the housewives jammed in their homes as "the problem that has no name" and stated that men are so content with their lives since they work outside as journalists, doctors, college professors, pilots, etc. Friedan emphasized the housewives' "the purposeless, uncreative, even sexually joyless lives"

⁷⁶ Ibid. 405

⁷⁷ Ibid. 401

⁷⁸ Ibid. 404

⁷⁹ Ibid. 655-656

⁸⁰ Leon, David de. Leaders from the 1960s: A Biographical Sourcebook of American Activism. USA: Greenwood Press, 1994. 249-250

and also argued that they are restricted and kept from using their full human capacities.⁸¹

For Friedan, women in 1950s and 1960s were not aware that something is wrong with their marriage and family life. She stated that when Simone de Beauvoir wrote her book The Second Sex, the Americans were not arguing whether women were inferior or superior to men.⁸² The women had been kept at home, mostly in the kitchens, and probably they were encouraged to be the best housewives. For Friedan, since science was considered as “unfeminine,” women did not wish to be scientists and did not study physics; thus they stayed as “unused brainpower.” The only thing that American women wanted was to marry, have four children and to have a wonderful decorated suburban house. Most of them have no jobs and are stuck at homes.⁸³

Friedan told that in 1959, suburban housewives felt a kind of dissatisfaction that they could not define, afterwards in 1960 the problem burst, were published on newspapers and mentioned on television programs, and finally could be defined as “trapped housewives.” She also pointed out that she felt happy that those women’s old problems had stirred the minds of doctors and educators; and some women problems such as childbirth depression, menstrual difficulties, pregnancy fears, sexual frigidity, etc were taken into granted.⁸⁴

1970s and 1980s were the years which women gained many more rights of economic equity, education, sexuality and childcare. In the USA, in 1974, Congress passed the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, which enabled any applicants to loan, prohibiting any kind of discriminations such as race, class, gender etc.; and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, which was to increase the security of requirement income, was again for everyone without any discrimination of race, class,

⁸¹ Wiker, Benjamin. 10 Books That Screwed up the World: and 5 others That Didn't Help . New York: Regnery Publishing, 2001. 212-215

⁸² Keetly, Dawn. Public Women, Public Words: A Documentary History of American Feminism. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005. 9

⁸³ Ibid. 8

⁸⁴ Ibid, 10-16

gender, etc.⁸⁵ Women were protected against gender discrimination in education with The Women's Educational Equity Act in 1974, and this act created series of programs in order to advance educational equity.⁸⁶ In 1975, Congress created the Child Support Enforcement program⁸⁷. In 1978, Congress passed the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, which prohibited discrimination against pregnant women who demand working.⁸⁸ In 1984, the child support and the pension rights of divorced women and widows were enlarged.⁸⁹ In 1980s, childcare problem gained more importance, and in 1988 The Act for Better Child Care was proposed.⁹⁰

The 1990s was the time of third-wave feminism that focused on the experiences of young women of those years claiming that the "historical and political conditions in which second-wave feminism emerged no longer exist."⁹¹ Third-wave feminists also discovered and used the power of mass media and popular culture to express their struggle. For example, Riot Grrrl, a punk music group held a convention in 1992 focusing the issues of sexuality, rape, racism, and domestic violence.⁹²

Barbara Arneil stated in her book Politics and Feminism that in contrast to second-wave feminism arguments on universality, sameness and unity; third-wave feminism presented the issues of difference, identity and particularity. It welcomed the idea that women are different, but not the same with men. Women bothered being neither an outsider, nor an insider.⁹³

Regarding the theoretical aspect of feminism, feminist scholars mostly asserted that "knowledge based mainly on male" and thus this does not reflect the reality but

⁸⁵ Conway, M. Margaret, David W. Ahern, Gertrude A. Steuernagel. Women & Public Policy. Washington ,D.C.: CQ Press,1999. 101-103

⁸⁶ Ibid. 25

⁸⁷ Ibid. 139

⁸⁸ Ibid. 166

⁸⁹ Williams, Peter ed. "The Changing Role of Women in American Society" The Changing Roles of Women in the United States. Washington: DIANE Publishing, 1997. 12

⁹⁰ Conway, M. Margaret, David W. Ahern, Gertrude A. Steuernagel. Women & Public Policy. Washington ,D.C.: CQ Press,1999. 164

⁹¹ Pilcher, Jane and Imelda Whelehan. Fifty Key Concepts in Gender Studies. London: Sage Publications, 2004.169

⁹² Ibid., 171

⁹³ Ibid. 187

only the “partial knowledge.”⁹⁴ To correct this, women’s daily experiences and informal theories should be considered carefully and these feminist theories are supposed to be adopted to construct new theories and knowledge so as to affect the policy and the lives of women.⁹⁵

For many years, knowledge was presented with the male perspective; yet the political, social and the economical order was set up by men, and women were restricted in any sphere since “women experience” had never been taken into account by men. The most disturbing part of the problem, for feminists, is this negligence of “women experience.” Feminist theorists had to set up their assumptions to present an objective reality and to wrap up these women experiences into theories in the androcentric world. Sandra Harding gives her views on the matter as:

Knowledge is supposed to be based on experience, and the reason the feminist claims can turn out to be scientifically preferable is that they originate in, and are tested against, a more complete and less distorting kind of social experience. Women’s experiences, informed by feminist theory, provide a potential grounding for more complete and less distorted knowledge claims than do men’s.⁹⁶

Feminists, proposing their theories, tried to renovate the male-centered concepts, build up new policies and create new conditions for women’s lives. All feminist theories are political and they aim to portray women’s oppression, to clarify its “causes and consequences” and finally to present strategies to liberate women from their submission.⁹⁷

Charlotte Bunch advocated that by means of analyzing personal experiences, feminist theory produces new approaches in order to understand and to end female oppression.⁹⁸ In her book Not by Degrees: Feminist Theory and Education, she explained feminist theory as a need to end women’s oppression. She defines the theory:

⁹⁴ Parpart, Jane L, M. Patricia Connelly and V. Eudine Barriteau, ed. Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development. Canada: IDRC, 2000. 1

⁹⁵ Ibid. 1

⁹⁶ Ibid. 17-18

⁹⁷ McLaren, Margaret A. Feminism, Foucault and Embodied Subjectivity. New York: New York Press, 2002. 5-6

⁹⁸ Ibid. 12-15

Feminist theory provides a basis for understanding every area of our lives, and a feminist perspective can affect the world politically, culturally, economically, and spiritually. The initial tenets of feminism have already been established—the idea that power is based on gender differences and men’s illegitimate power over women taints all aspects of society, for instance.⁹⁹

Since there had been a shift from hierarchical society to contractual society, individualism and human freedom became essential. Accordingly, feminists criticized the idea that women’s primary function is reproduction which is considered within the biological aspect; and they highlighted women’s “human” side, not sexual identity. Feminists accepted women as free individuals having their own experiences, activities, and above all, having own choices of career or marriage. Most feminists argued that women have the same capacity with men and “if only educated properly can do everything can men” and, this has been the major perspective of liberal feminism which advocates the “sameness” of two sexes.¹⁰⁰

As liberal feminism depends on the “notion of rights,” liberal feminists defended that women and men have the same “rational capacities,” thus they must be “treated equally.” Women’s inclusion in public life will enable them to “develop exercise their rationality.”¹⁰¹ Liberal feminists believe that these desired legal, political and social changes can be only achieved through the feminist movements.¹⁰²

Radical feminists, like liberal feminists also defended that women should have the equal rights and opportunities with men to get rid of the oppression, but apart from this, their central focus was that men are responsible for the exploitation of women. They believed that women are exploited and repressed in patriarchy; and the exploitation starts at home, within family when women are described in respect of their gender roles as “mothers.” Shulamith Firestone denoted that as women give birth and rear children, they are dependant to their husbands for “protection and livelihood.”¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Kolmar, Wendy and Frances Bartkowski, eds., Feminist Theory: A Reader. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000. 12

¹⁰⁰ Marshall, Jill. Humanity, Freedom and Feminism. USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2005. 19-34

¹⁰¹ McLaren, Margaret A. Feminism, Foucault and Embodied Subjectivity. New York: New York Press, 2002.6

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Giddens, Anthony, Simon Griffiths. Sociology. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006. 471

For Kate Millet, a stereotype woman is the “wife and mother,” emotional, passive and much more concerned with domestic work.¹⁰⁴

Marxist feminists concerned with the issue of women oppression in terms of capitalism and economic oppression. They argued that the objectives of the liberal feminists are not sufficient. Capitalism strengthens the patriarchy because women work at home caring, cleaning and cooking; however, their labor is left unpaid.¹⁰⁵ Socialist feminism and Marxist feminism are so much interrelated since the socialist feminism concerns the both social and economic perspectives of the patriarchy. They considered women as a class who are not recognized in the capitalist system of production, and also dealt with the materialist analysis of “woman exploitation.”¹⁰⁶

Feminism is mostly against the gender roles which were constructed by men as “wife and mother,” and it aims to end women’s oppression. In the late nineteenth century, it launched the search for women’s legal and political rights. Women gained many legal rights of voting and employment; and they also had many opportunities to participate in public life and the workplace. With the economical and technological changes, women struggle also shifted and altered by 1920s. In the mid-twentieth century women focused on sexuality, family and reproductive rights. Employment, housekeeping and the labor of housewives, woman body and sexuality were the central issues. Through 1980s women gained many rights of economic equity, education, sexuality and childcare. Relieving with these rights and due to changing conditions, feminists again shifted their search in 1990s. They emphasized the fact that women are “different” rather than being “same” with men as in the earlier periods of women struggle; thus they searched for a new particular identity. Above all, the endeavor of all feminists is mostly to emphasize their “humanness” part as men, and to include women in the political, economic and intellectual world.

¹⁰⁴ Adams, Ian. Political Ideology Today. UK: Manchester University Press, 2001. 301

¹⁰⁵ Giddens, Anthony, Simon Griffiths. Sociology. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006. 470

¹⁰⁶ Greene, Roberta R. ed. Human Behavior Theory and Social Work Practice. New Jersey: Transaction Books,2008. 357

CHAPTER II

GENDER ROLES AND SOCIALIST FEMINISM

2.1. TO BE WOMAN AND GENDER ROLES

When we think about “women,” the images that we have in our mind are mostly the same: mostly long haired and skirt wearing people having more velvety skin and more mellow voice than men. As for their character and mood, they are more emotional than men, and also more caring and affectionate. Most of them are mothers or surely future mothers concerning with child-rearing, cleaning and cooking at home. What happens if a woman does not want to be a mother? Are women really emotional? Does being emotional mean “not being rational” as men? Or are they expected to be non-rational, emotional affectionate mothers and wives? Then, what is to be woman?

Feminists had their sensitiveness to make the distinction between “sex” and “gender.” Greer Litton Fox and Velma McBride Murry convey this distinction in their article “Gender and Families: Feminist Perspectives and Family Research” as:

When gender is understood as the product of social processes and as embodying cultural meanings of masculinity and femininity, then it becomes possible to distinguish a person’s gender from his or her sex. The former can be understood as socio-cultural, the latter as biological; and while the two are correlated, they are not synonymous or isomorphic. This distinction offers clarity on often-confusing matters of measurement and interpretation of data by sex and gender.¹⁰⁷

Gender is related to social and cultural constructions such as class and race, while sex is seen as biological. According to role theory, gender is considered as a social role that is identified by “a set of attitudes and behaviors,” and played “according to scripts that are carefully taught and repeatedly rehearsed” until it becomes the natural part of a person.¹⁰⁸

Sex creates a privilege mostly for men rather than women, and thus this causes the differences between men and women. As a result of the social interactions of the

¹⁰⁷ Fox, Greer Litton, and Velma McBride Murry. “Gender and Families: Feminist Perspectives and Family Research”. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62, 4. 2000. 1164

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 1163-1164

two sexes, gender is constructed culturally. Gender is also not a synonym of “self” since men and women do not differ as masculine or feminine, but they are constantly convinced to be so. Then, they are obliged to “do” gender rather than “be.”¹⁰⁹

Gender roles of men and women are different since gender is identified by the interpretation of the attitudes and behaviors. In the article “Gender and Families: Feminist Perspectives and Family Research,” Mason’s (1999) analysis of the matter was presented as an example. Accordingly, men and women convicts made different interpretations about the reason of their crime: Women told they were motivated by family needs, stealing small amounts of money for family necessities such as groceries whereas men told they were motivated by their desire for stealing large sums of money. The reason of the difference of these interpretations definitely depends on their differences of sexes- biologically and also gender-culturally.¹¹⁰

Women’s gender roles have been constructed by the society as “wives” and “mothers.” They are imprisoned at homes to be the domestic servants. Wollstonecraft notes in her book Vindication of the Right of Women:

Ignorance is a frail base for virtue! Yet, that is the condition for which woman was organized, has been insisted upon by the writers who have most vehemently argued in favour of the superiority of man; a superiority not in degree, but essence, though, to soften the argument, they have laboured to prove, with chivalrous generosity, that the sexes ought not to be compared; man was made to reason, woman to feel: and that together, flesh and spirit, they make the most perfect whole, by blending happily reason and sensibility into one character.¹¹¹

Women existed to please their husbands and children, in a sense, to please others rather than themselves. For Mary Wollstonecraft, women had only learnt to please men¹¹² and obey their rules. They were not allowed to be like men, earning their lives and improving themselves through science, constantly hearing the same justification of men: They were not the same but different biologically, and even in the sense of ration. Therefore, they were deliberately left ignorant.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 1164

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 1165

¹¹¹ Wollstonecraft, Mary. Vindication of Rights of Women. 2008. 66

> www.forgottenbooks.org

¹¹² Ibid. 99

Wollstonecraft criticized Rousseau because of his idea that women are naturally, by sex, weak and passive and they exist to please and submit to men. Once again, women are presented as complement of men:

Sophia, says Rousseau, should be as perfect a woman as Emilius is a man, and to render her so, it is necessary to examine the character which nature has given to the sex.

He then proceeds to prove that woman ought to be weak and passive, because she has less bodily strength than man; and hence infers, that she was formed to please and subject him; and that is her duty to render herself agreeable to her master- this being the grand end of her existence. Still, however, to give a little mock dignity to lust, he insists that man should not exert his strength, but depend on the will of the woman, when he seeks for pleasure with her.¹¹³

Wollstonecraft criticized that women exist to feel and they are only the masters of feelings and sensibility whereas men are the masters of “reason” that is brain and knowledge, “science” and improvement, in other words. Women do not suit to be “reason,” and they are left to be the compliment of men as “sensibility” that means they must always be beside men.

Emphasizing that “I am a woman,” Simone de Beauvoir argued that liberation calls for woman’s gaining her subjectivity. She confessed about her book The Second Sex (1949), stating that to write it is to reveal her own subjectivity. Complaining that men are the people who should be blamed for women’s being the “Other” because of their ambitions of ruling the world, Beauvoir states:

One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological or economic fate determines the figure that human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine¹¹⁴

Beauvoir asserts that children apprehend the universe not through their sexual parts, but through their eyes and hands. They cannot understand that they are sexually different. Their attitudes are the same during the first three or four years, but the imposes of their parents urge them to have different sex behaviors. Boys are expected to

¹¹³ Ibid, 171

¹¹⁴ Beauvoir, Simone de. The Second Sex. New York: Bantam Books, 1970. 249

be “little men” who never cry; and girls are expected to appear more coquettish wearing “sweet little dresses.”¹¹⁵ Girls are taught to please, and then they make themselves “object.” They start to give up their autonomy. Beauvoir says:

If the little girl were brought up from the first with the same demands and rewards, the same severity and the same freedom, as her brothers, taking part in the same studies, the same games, promised the same future, surrounded with women and men who seemed to her undoubted equals, the meanings of the castration complex and the Oedipus complex would be profoundly modified.¹¹⁶

For Beauvoir, if little girls were encouraged, they could also display the same boldness as boys, on the contrary, the girls face many problems when they behave like boys.¹¹⁷ Beauvoir, who argued that Oedipus complex is the result of the inner conflicts of instinctual tendencies and social regulations, suggested that girls can recover such complexes when they are brought up with freedom as boys.

According to Beauvoir, for men, women are only a “sex,” no less. Women are defined with reference to men, while men are absolute: subject, but women are object: the “Other.” She notes:

Woman is lost. Where are the women? The women of today are not women at all! We have seen what these mysterious slogans mean. In men’s eyes-and for the legion of women who see through men’s eyes-it is not enough to have a woman’s body nor to assume the female function as mistress or mother in order to be a ‘true woman.’ In sexuality and maternity woman as subject can claim autonomy; but to be a ‘true woman’ she must accept herself as the Other. The men of today show a certain duplicity of attitude which is painfully lacerating to women; they are willing on the whole to accept woman as a fellow being, an equal; but they still require her to remain the inessential.¹¹⁸

Women are expected to make themselves object, the other, in order to be accepted as “true woman” while men have the right to concern with work and worldly matters. Beauvoir states that today women are still not accepted as subject since men seem to appreciate women as fellows; however, women are still “objects” in the eyes of men.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. 249-252

¹¹⁶ Ibid. 683

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 264

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 245-246

Since women do not produce new things for the society, they are categorized as “passive” while men as “active.” Accordingly, Beauvoir presented dualities that result from this duality of Subject/ Object to refer men / women as:

- Masculine / Feminine
- Human / Animal
- Culture / Nature
- Intellect / Instinct
- Production / Reproduction
- Activity / Passivity
- Rational / Irrational¹¹⁹

As seen, the first one refers to men, the dominant and idealized; and the second one refers women that seem reserved. Like Wollstonecraft’s duality of reason / sensibility, Beauvoir presents similar example with the duality of “Rational / Irrational.” Once more, men symbolize “mind” while women are deprived of it.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman presented the similar assertion of women’s being “secondary” in her article “As to Humanness” in her book Our Androcentric Culture, or the Man-Made World, stating that men symbolize “mind” and women are described only in relation to men:

She has held always the place of a preposition in relation to men. She has been considered above him, or below him, behind him, beside him, a wholly relative existence—“Sydney’s sister”, “Pembroke’s mother”—but never any chance Sydney or Pembroke herself.

Acting on this assumption, all human standards have been based on male characteristics, and when we wish to praise the work of woman, we say she has “a masculine mind.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Appignanesi, Lisa. Simone de Beauvoir. London: Haus Publishing, 2005. 87-88

¹²⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. “As to Humanness”. Our Androcentric Culture, or the Man-Made World. Project Gutenberg. Jan.2009. 5
< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3015/3015.txt>

Charlotte Perkins Gilman states that gender roles are constructed by men according to sexes, without considering the “humanness” part of the human beings. Women are described only in relation to men, mostly as other men’s sisters or mothers but not as themselves. Once again, women stand as the complement of men.

Gilman mockingly exemplified her views focusing on the sex roles of all creatures, animals and human beings as well in order to make the distinction of sex roles and gender roles. She tried to prove her claim that animals and human beings may have biologically the same sex roles and instincts; however, humans are social creatures. Women are also humans as well as men, and deserve being “rational.” She criticized men’s ambitions for dominating the world themselves depriving women of taking part in the intellectual and public life. In one of her poem called “ Females” Gilman says:

The race is higher than the sex,
Though sex be fair and good;
A human Creature is your state,
And to be human is more great
Than even womanhood!

The female fox she is fox;

The female whale a whale;
The female eagle holds her place
As representative of race

As truly as the male!¹²¹

¹²¹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. In This Our World and Other Poems. American Libraries. 7 Dec. 2006
< <http://www.archive.org/stream/inthisourworld00gilmiala#page/50/mode/2up>

In the poem, she defends that being human is nobler and greater than being only the “sex” since humanity refers much more than the sex. She stresses the point that womanhood is also nobler than being only the sex since women are humans. Gilman presents examples of the animals as foxes, whales, and eagles introducing their sex as females and emphasizing that they are only the animals. The satire of the poem stands in the last three lines: The female eagle also has her place and power as well as the male eagle to represent her race. Probably, Gilman is jeering at patriarchy, in other words, at men who have deliberately constructed the gender roles of women only related to their sex roles such as reproduction, childrearing etc.

Presenting examples of the animals, Gilman stressed that women are not animals, but they are humans that should their social relations with the other humans. In her poem “Females,” in the last four stanzas she says:

The female bird doth soar in air;
The female fish doth swim;
The fleet-foot mare upon the course
Doth hold her own with the flying horse

Yea, and she beateth him!

One female in the world we find
Telling a different tale.
It is the female of our race
Who holds a parasitic place

Depend on the male.
Not so, saith she, ye slander me!

No parasite am I !
I earn my living as a wife;
My children take my very life¹²²

¹²² Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. In *This Our World and Other Poems*. *American Libraries*, 7 Dec. 2006
< <http://www.archive.org/stream/inthisourworld00gilmiala#page/50/mode/2up>

In this poem, Gilman is once more satirizing that all the female animals can do freely what they are capable of, live apart from their males and improve their abilities. Even a female mare can beat the male horse while running, but the females of humans live depending on males like a parasite! In the end, she, the female human refuses to submit men and earns her own living. Herein, Gilman gives her message that women should not submit men and start up to earn their living.

Gilman stated that in animal beings sexes are mostly indistinguishable in terms of appearance or behavior; however, as human beings, we have marked sex-distinctions. From childhood, a girl and a boy are obliged to dress and behave differently. In other species, males are the “ornamented” ones to compete with other males to be selected by females, and females are simple and plain. On the contrary, as for human beings, males select their mates, thus females are ornamented to compete. We say “Do” to the boys, but we say “Don’t” to the girls. We describe women as having “the weaker sex” calling them “feeble” while men have the strong one.¹²³

For Gilman, human beings have their roles according to their instincts and sex relations. She objected that women are seen as only mothers:

Evolution needs more than mothers! It is not enough to live, not enough to reproduce one’s kind: We have to change progress, improve-and instinct is no help here. Instinct is nothing but inherited habit. It always dates a long way behind us. It is never any guide in new conditions or an incentive to betterment. Instinct holds us in chains to the past; or it would if it could.¹²⁴

For Gilman, social evolution does not need passive maternal instincts but women’s participation. Men are outside home because of their instinct of “combat” and women are inside home because of their maternal instincts. For this reason, women become passive consumers as “mothers” while men are “producers” since they have the right to work to support their family. When women are imprisoned due to their maternal instincts and live dependent to their husbands economically, they cannot contribute to social production. For Gilman, this “perverts the economic development of the world.”

¹²³ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 23-30
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵However, humans are social beings, and instincts do not contribute to develop social relations and also to human advancement.¹²⁶

Likewise, Mary Wollstonecraft makes an emphasis on “instinct”:

Or, granting brutes, of every description, a soul, though not a reasonable one, the exercise of instinct and sensibility may be the step, which they are to take, in this life, towards the attainment of reason in the next; so that through all eternity they will lag behind man, who, why we cannot tell, had the power given him of attaining reason in his first mode of existence.¹²⁷

Both Gilman and Wollstonecraft criticized the fact that women have the sex roles based on their instincts and they are described as weak with the words of “sensible,” “unreasonable” or “feeble.” As a result, their gender roles are constructed by men based on only these instincts. They both had the same idea that this will prevent women’s improvement, thus women will always fall behind men.

In her utopic novel Herland, Charlotte Perkins Gilman presented very different gender roles for women. The male visitors of Herland Terry, Jeff and Van become very astonished when they encounter those self-sufficient, genuine and strong women. Herland, (1915) is about an isolated female dominant country. Since there is no man in this country, the women have never been restricted by men. Thus, their gender roles have never been constructed by men. Besides, the women are very different with their appearances, behaviors and reactions. They reproduce parthenogenically,¹²⁸ and always have female babies. Three men, a sociologist Vandyck Jennings, a poet and botanist Jeff Margrave, and a geographer Terry O. Nicholson land on Herland and experience the life of the female dominant society. When the men first land on Herland, they meet a very civilized country, and thus they think that there must be surely men. Analyzing the women’s lifestyle, education system, relationships, history and government, three men

¹²⁵ Ibid. 61

¹²⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins ed. “Our Overworked Instincts.” The Forerunner (Volume 1: November 1909- December 1910). Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 653
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext02/forer10.txt>

¹²⁷ Wollstonecraft, Mary. Vindication of Rights of Women. 2008. 66
< www.forgottenbooks.org

¹²⁸ Parthenogenesis is a particular form of asexual reproduction, in which virgin females produce eggs that develop without fertilization, without males. It occurs in some plants and animals, for example algae, fungi, molluscs, insects, and some reptiles.

get gradually astonished by their perfection. Gilman also amazed the reader by women's unusual gender roles which are neither manly nor womanly.

The isolated women of Herland are not similar to the women of their world. Gilman deliberately constructed dominant women gender roles in Herland in order to demonstrate what would happen if women had all the opportunities of improvement without having the dominancy of men. Herlander women's gender roles have never been constructed by men. They do not need to be selected by men as mates, thus they do not have ornaments. They have short hair and plain clothes. They are kind and patient. For Terry, who has the most man-dominancy in his character, claims that in Herland, there is no man, thus there is no competition, no fight and jealousy. He states that those women are not "womanly" although their most important interest is "motherhood," because for him men want women more than motherhood. Terry misses out a fact that Van confesses as a narrator:

As to Terry's criticism, it was true. These women, whose essential distinction of motherhood was the dominant note of their whole culture, were strikingly deficient in what we call "femininity." This led me very promptly to the conviction that those "feminine charms" we are so fond of are not feminine at all, but mere reflected masculinity-developed to please us because they had to please us, and in no way essential to the real fulfillment of their great process. But Terry came to no such conclusion.¹²⁹

Van, the narrator of the book, suddenly feels that the feminine charms that men always search for women are not necessary in fact. The women in his country, or the women of the world that is full of men, develop those feminine charms only to please men to be selected as mates. In Herland, there is no man, thus women do not need to be charming. Gilman, tries to demonstrate what would happen if women did not have to be selected, and did not have to please men.

Terry describes the women of Herland as "neuters" saying that they are deprived of both the "vices of men" and also the "virtues of women." For Terry, these women have no modesty and "no submissiveness, none of that natural yielding which is

¹²⁹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Herland. London: The Women's Press, 2001. 58-59

woman's greatest charm."¹³⁰ As Terry considers all women with the aspect of man-constructed gender roles, he cannot realize the difference. However, these women have no man in their isolated country, have no sex motive, thus they do not have man-constructed gender roles. These women have no idea about the marriage, so they associate the gender roles of the couple as "fathers" and "mothers." After the three male visitors have married to the three young girls of Herland, they have many problems in their relations since the girls cannot take in the roles of wives and husbands:

The big point at issue between us and our wives was, as any easily be imagined, in the very nature of the relation.

"Wives! Don't talk to be about wives!" stormed Terry. "They don't know what the word means."

Which is exactly the fact –they didn't. How could they? Back in their prehistoric records of polygamy and slavery there were no ideals of wifehood as we know it, and since then no possibility of forming such.

"The only thing they can think about a man is *Fatherhood!*" said Terry in high scorn. "*Fatherhood!* As if a man was always wanting to be a father!"

This was also correct. They had their long, wide, deep, rich experience of Motherhood, and their only perception of the value of a male creature as such was for Fatherhood.¹³¹

Since their only concern is motherhood, the girls cannot adjust to the roles of wives, and consider their husbands only as "fathers." Being considered only as "fathers," certainly, offend and irritate these three men. As Terry claims, men do not always want to be "fathers." Herein, presenting the reversed gender roles with a sense of humor, Gilman makes all readers-men and women- think deeply about how the men of our world would feel offended and irritated if they were considered as only "fathers." Gilman provokes a sympathy for men who see women only as "mothers."

For years, women's gender roles had been constructed by the society, especially the androcentric one, as "wives" and "mothers." Human beings had their roles according to their instincts and sex relations, thus the human part of women had been neglected. They were mostly imprisoned at home to do the domestic work and to please their husbands rather than themselves. Science and improvement were given to

¹³⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Herland. London: The Women's Press, 2001. 98

¹³¹ Ibid. 124

men whereas women had the sensibility and maternity that is based on their maternal instincts. Children were encouraged to behave according to their sexes and brought up differently. Boys were educated to have jobs and to have economic freedom; however, girls were expected to develop only feminine charms to please men to be selected, and they were brought up for only marriage. Women were obliged to remain as secondary, passive and inferior to men. Therefore, most feminists objected these duplicities and sexually constructed gender roles. They also asserted that women are social beings and have the same humanness as men; and if they were not considered as only sex and instincts and were given the same opportunities, they would demonstrate the same achievements.

2.2. SOCIALIST FEMINISM AND WOMEN'S SEARCH FOR ECONOMICAL INDEPENDENCE

Socialist feminism combines Marxism that centers on the economy with the feminism whose center is sex. It states the issue of women and sexual oppression with the criticism of capitalism and economic oppression.¹³² Since feminism has the similar arguments with Marxism, feminist theory embraces the most doctrines of socialism, or Marxism in order to achieve its goals of defacing women's oppression and creating new policies for women's life. Marxist theory centers on work and its division, whereas feminist theory centers on gender equality and its division.¹³³

As Catharine A. MacKinnon stated, Marxist theory claims that "work is the social process of shaping and transforming the material and social worlds, creating people as social beings as they create value."¹³⁴ Thus, its structure is class; and production is its consequence. In feminist theory, sexuality is a social process that creates and manages the desire (it is used as a term comparable with "value" in Marxism) of the social beings and their social relations. They have the similar feature: Marxism focuses on the deprivation of work while feminism focuses on the deprivation of one's sexuality.¹³⁵

Communism is the "equal division of products, or an allowance according to 'needs' " whereas socialism is the division of "deeds" which means people can obtain "the product-value" of their labor.¹³⁶ For Robert Blatchford, as he described in Merrie England, with an ideal socialism people do not need money or wages since they can take what they want from the common stock. The needs as food, fuel, clothing, etc. will be free for everybody¹³⁷. Marx also stated that in communist society, producers can

¹³² McLaren, Margaret A. Feminism, Foucault and Embodied Subjectivity. New York: New York Press, 2002. 10-11

¹³³ MacKinnon, Catharine A. "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory." Signs, 7.3, Feminist Theory (1982): 515-516

¹³⁴ Ibid. 515

¹³⁵ Ibid. 516

¹³⁶ Boyle, James. What is Socialism?: An Exposition and a Criticism, with Special Reference to the Movement in America and England. BiblioBazaar LLC, 2009 45

¹³⁷ Ibid

receive what they have given after the needs of the society have been deducted.¹³⁸ The aim of socialism is to have no class, therefore, socialists intend to abolish “private ownership of the production” to reduce the inequality of prosperity and to abolish “class stratification of society.”¹³⁹ The advantage of the socialization of the production is clearing away the waste of unplanned production. In socialism, the socialized and economically planned production belongs to whole community whose members can benefit equally from it. This equality is dealt in the following senses:

- (a) a greater approach to equality in the distribution of wealth;
- (b) equality of economic opportunity, in a more genuine sense than that of bourgeois liberalism;
- (c) distribution according to need rather than according to effort or product.¹⁴⁰

Grace Hutchins alleged in her article “Women under Capitalism” (1934) that working class women in capitalist society have no freedom to have the opportunity of doing creative work, or make a contribution to human knowledge like men or some women of privileged groups as they are forced to work since their teens at homes and also fulltime jobs outside. They do the work of two persons and always fight with illness and poverty. She affirmed Marx’s attention of the “brutality of modern capitalism in its treatment of women workers” as women are “underpaid, exploited and ruined in health.” For Hutchins, only communist society can secure women presenting social conditions for mothers and children and abolishing the exploitation of women. Lenin stated that “The full liberation of woman and her real equality with man requires a communist economy,” thus as men many women were employed in social production.¹⁴¹ Giving the U.S.S.R as an example, Hutchins says:

The U.S.S.R has already established not only the most complete system of social insurance in the world, for the protection of all workers, but also cooperative kitchens and dining rooms, cooperative laundries, day nurseries and nursery schools which are freeing the women from the impossible task of caring for home and children while working also outside the home...¹⁴²

¹³⁸ Ibid, 46

¹³⁹ Dickinson, Henry Douglas. Economics of Socialism. USA: Books for Libraries, 1971. 8

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. 9-10

¹⁴¹ Hutchin, Grace. “Women under Capitalism” Public Women, Public Words: A Documentary History of American Feminism. Ed. Dawn Keetly. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005. 409-411

¹⁴² Ibid. 411

The main difference between the capitalist society and the socialist society is stated as socialist society presents full social responsibility for women and children's welfare and health. Herein, Like Gilman, Hutchins also supports the socialization of domestic work and nursery of mothers; and she defends that this would enable women to find the opportunity to work outside and also contribute to the economy.

Socialist feminists believe that traditional economic and social institutions such as family and the capitalist economic system should be renovated since this patriarchal capitalism keeps specific sex roles and causes sexual division of labor. Accordingly, men are employed for manual labor jobs whereas women work in service sector or secretarial office jobs.¹⁴³ Besides, the non-waged labor that is done mostly by women is also essential as waged labor. Since patriarchy and capitalism are the systems that create the women oppression, they are considered as a threat for women's economic independence. Capitalists obtain free profits from the non-waged work that is done by women. Patriarchy gets its advantages of the capitalism since it supports that women have their responsibilities because of their reproductive and biological differences. These women's domestic responsibilities produce "gender-based labor market inequities." With free domestic services from their wives at home and having well-paid jobs in the labor market working class men become more advantageous. The better paying jobs are always for men; therefore, unpaid women or low-paid working women always remain dependent to their husbands.¹⁴⁴

It is clear that the women's work at home or in the labor market is valueless. The results of an investigation on women's work that is given by some researchers are presented as:

- Some women do unpaid work at home;
- Some women do both unpaid work in the home and waged and unpaid work in wider society;
- Some women work only in wider society and employ other women to work in their homes;

¹⁴³ McLaren, Margaret A. Feminism, Foucault and Embodied Subjectivity. New York: New York Press, 2002. 10-11

¹⁴⁴ Chafetz, Janet Saltzman. "Feminist Theory and Sociology: Underutilized Contributions for Mainstream Theory." Annual Review of Sociology. 23(1997): 105

- Women are found in a variety of occupations;
- Women work all levels in the workplace; and
- Women both in their paid and their unpaid work, contribute greatly to the national economy.¹⁴⁵

The gender inequalities are also related to women's non-waged domestic work. This means that by means of the exploitation both at home and in the labor market women produce more value than men do for capitalists¹⁴⁶. In the same sense, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, who defended socialization of "domestic work," criticizes the system in her book Women and Economics:

The labor of women in the house, certainly, enables men to produce more wealth than they otherwise could; and in this way women are economic factors in society. But so are horses. The labor of horses enables men to produce more wealth than they otherwise could. The horse is an economic factor in society. But the horse is not economically dependant, nor is the woman.

The wild cow is a female. She has healthy calves, and milk enough for them. And that is all the femininity she needs. Otherwise than that she is bovine rather than feminine. She is a light, strong, swift, sinewy creature, able to run, jump, and fight if necessary. We, for economic uses, have artificially developed the cow's capacity for producing milk. She has become a walking milk-machine, bred and tended to that express end, her value measured in quarts.¹⁴⁷

Gilman hints that women's labor at home directly contributes to patriarchy enabling men to produce more wealth. Women are like horses since they are dependent to their owners-their husbands. In return for women's work, their husbands feed them as horses are fed by their owners. Horses do not work for themselves, but for their owners. They do their best to survive. Likewise, women work only for their husbands and get their payment in order to live or survive, and to work more for their husbands. Women are economic factors in society as horses, but only for the good of patriarchy. In addition, Gilman criticizes that women's work is considered as cows'. For Gilman, women's capacity is exploited only for the good of men's economic advancement.

¹⁴⁵ Parpart, Jane L, M. Patricia Connelly and V. Eudine Barriteu, ed. Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development. Canada: IDRC, 2000. 5

¹⁴⁶ Chafetz, Janet Saltzman. Feminist Theory and Sociology: Underutilized Contributions for Mainstream Theory. Annual Review of Sociology. 23(1997): 105

¹⁴⁷ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 23
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

Simone de Beauvoir outlined the history of women referring Engel's book The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. She cited that in stone age, men and women had a simple but equal division of labor themselves: Men hunted and fished, women stayed at homes, but doing the work of gardening, weaving or making pottery. Women had an important role on the family's economy. After the discovery of plow, agriculture expanded, thus people needed the help of other people. This brought slavery and private property. Beauvoir explained this as "the great historical defeat of the feminine sex." Then patriarchal families appeared, and thus women were oppressed economically and also socially when they were assigned only for domestic work. Beauvoir quoted that woman could be liberated only when she was included in the production. Thus, she considered the fate of woman and socialism was "intimately bound up together."¹⁴⁸

Like Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Simone de Beauvoir criticized women's being "parasite," not working outside but imprisoned at homes doing only unpaid housework and childrearing. Women are not working for society, thus they do not contribute to the production. They are "secondary" as they are not independent, but are economically dependent to their husbands. She says:

Thus woman's work within the home gives her no autonomy; it is not directly useful to society, it does not open out on the future, it produces nothing. It takes on meaning and dignity only as it is linked with existent beings who reach out beyond themselves, transcend themselves, toward society in production and action. That is, far from freeing the matron, her occupation makes her dependant upon husband and children; she is justified through them; but in their lives she is only an inessential intermediary. That 'obedience' is legally no longer one of her duties in no way changes her situation; for this depends not on the will of the couple but on the very structure of the conjugal group. Woman do not allowed to *do* something positive in her work and in consequence win recognition as a complete person. However respected she may be, she is subordinate, secondary, parasitic. The heavy curse that weighs upon her consists in this: the very meaning of her life is not in her hands. That is why the successes and the failures of her conjugal life are much more gravely important for her than for her husband; he is first a citizen, a producer, secondly a husband; she is before all, and often exclusively, a wife; her work does not take her out of her situation; it is from the latter, on the contrary, that her work takes its value, high or low.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Beauvoir, Simone de. The Second Sex. New York: Bantam Books, 1970. 48- 49

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. 430

Simone de Beauvoir argues because of domestic work, women cannot be independent and they live as parasites. That is the domestic work which makes women “secondary” and “incomplete” since they are considered as only wives with respect to their sex roles while men can realize their potential fully as citizens and producers for the society. Women remain as consumers while men are producers.

In her famous book The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir defended that feminism should ally with socialism and quoted Bebel’s saying “woman and the worker have this in common that they are both oppressed,” and argued that they should escape together from oppression.¹⁵⁰ Beauvoir, who claimed that women are secondary and remain as “object” and the “Other” in patriarchy, stated that socialists’ ideologies defend the equality of all humans. Thus they refuse any humans to be an object. In the society that Marx described, there is no place for the “Other” since women are considered as “humans.”¹⁵¹ Simone de Beauvoir also defended that civil liberties remain theoretical and they are not sufficient to emancipate women. Women are men’s vassal as long as they have no economic independence, thus they should cease to be parasites as soon as possible.¹⁵²

Gilman reveals her thoughts on socialism successfully in her poem “Our Human Kind-Nationalism”:

Our liberty belongs to each of us;
The nation guarantees it; in return,
We serve the nation, serving so ourselves.
Our education is a common right;
The state provides it, equally to all
Each taking what he can, and in return
We serve the state, so serving best ourselves.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 104

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 132

¹⁵² Ibid. 639

¹⁵³ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. In This Our World and Other Poems. American Libraries, 7 Dec. 2006
< <http://www.archive.org/stream/inthisourworld00gilmiala#page/108/mode/2up>

Combining feminism and socialism, Charlotte Perkins Gilman states that “we receive nourishment from society as a right from the moment we are born”,¹⁵⁴ thus, we should work to pay back the community in return of its support. Since the individuals are the part of the society, they deserve to be supported; and therefore individuals owe to the society for this support.¹⁵⁵

Repeating that socialism means “public ownership of public things,” Gilman defended socialism in her article “Why We Honestly Fear Socialism.” Gilman stated that most people have not understood socialism clearly or have blurred ideas about it, thus she tried to clarify the misunderstandings. She makes detailed explanations for the false impressions:

ERROR 2. Socialism would reduce us all to a dead level.

ANSWER. Quite wrong. Eating at the same table in the same family does not reduce brothers and sisters to the same level; some remain far smarter and stronger than others. By a wiser system of education we may greatly increase the difference in people-Socialism would not hinder it. A higher average level income-which is what Socialism ensures, will give people a chance to differ more they do now. Our machine-like educational system, long hours of labor, specialized monotony of mill work, and “the iron law of wages” do tend to reduce us to a dead level. Socialism does not.¹⁵⁶

Gilman criticizes capitalism and its false strategies that exhaust the community. She also hints that community members do not get enough service such as education from the state despite their working long hours. Capitalist system leaves the members at dead level since present educational system makes people the same as if they are the same machine products. However, socialism gives the members the opportunity to improve themselves to become different.

Gilman also opposes the misconception that socialism causes people do not work because it supplies the needs of people without working and because people want to work only to obtain something:

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 153

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 154

¹⁵⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins ed. “Why We Honestly Fear Socialism”. The Forerunner (Volume 1: November 1909- December 1910). Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 76-77
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext02/forer10.txt>

To remove the easiest one first let us observe the absurdity of the idea, that Socialism will provide for people without their working. Provide them with what, pray? All wealth is produced by human labor-there is no socialist patent for drawing bread and circuses from the sky. People must always and forever work for what they have, and have in proportion to the quantity and quality of their work.

So thoroughly is this true that socialist grieves to see so many people living to-day without working; receiving wealth out of all proportion to their uselessness. If this was common to all of us it would mean the downfall of civilization. As we live now a great many people work hard, too long, under unsanitary conditions, a sort of living sacrifice to the rest of the world; and a few people do visibly and ostentatiously consume and waste the very things the workers so painfully lack.

Socialism claims to ensure decent payment for all labor, and see that we all receive it-all of us; not the same for everyone; but enough for everyone. Further, Socialism claims that by such procedure the quantity and quality of human work would be improved; that more wealth would be produced-far more.¹⁵⁷

Gilman verifies that socialism repays the community members in return to their labor as social services and people can obtain payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor. She also emphasizes that nonworking but consuming members give a great damage to the system because they cause inequalities in division of income. Besides, these nonworking but consuming members harm the state economically. Once more, Gilman corrects the misconception that people get the same payment expressing that it will be the enough payment for everyone. In socialism, wealth will increase more and more when more work is produced.

Adopting and also constantly lecturing on these socialist doctrines and strategies, Gilman, probably, hinted indirectly at the inequalities that are imposed to unpaid labor of women who are imprisoned at home, working long hours but get nothing. Although they do all the domestic work, they remain unpaid and they can never have their payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor. Proposing that domestic work and childrearing should be socialized, Gilman tried to make the women's work "waged;" therefore labor would not be wasted.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. 79-80

For socialist feminists, socialism embraces women's economic advancement because in socialism, the socialized and economically planned production belongs to the whole community and it enables both men and women to work freely and get their payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor. All members can benefit equally from production. Socialist feminists harshly criticize capitalism because it only contributes to men's economic advancement while women are exploited at homes by doing unpaid nursery and domestic work. However, women are the part of the society as well as men. Gilman emphasizes that nonworking but consuming members give a great damage to the system since they cause inequalities in division of income, and this also harms the state economically. Thus, Gilman supports socialism and defends that women should find the opportunity to work outside and also contribute to the economy. With socialism, domestic work and childrearing can be socialized, women's work can be "waged;" therefore labor would not be wasted. Since socialism gives all members the opportunity to improve themselves, women would also improve as well as men, and they can recover from their economic oppression.

CHAPTER III

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN'S FEMINISM AND IDEOLOGY

Charlotte Perkins Gilman was a nineteenth-century intellectual, feminist writer who tried to make her contributions to eradicate women's oppression, and also, to include women into public life. She was also a lecturer and a social commentator, but modestly describing herself as only a "humanist." She was related to the Beecher family: She was the great-niece of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher.

She made her feminist theories combining socialism and feminism; and like Lester F. Ward and Patrick Geddes, she applied Darwin's evolution theory into her arguments. She also inspired by cultural feminism of Jane Addams and Lester F. Ward, and the Fabian socialism of Patrick Geddes and Jane Addams. She openly displayed these influences in her works, and deliberately wrote utopic novels to present idealized socialist solutions for economic inequities.

Gilman, firstly, tried to awaken the women with her novels, articles and poems, and then she presented detailed solutions and instructions about how to construct new modern gender roles for women, and clear away the former constructed gender roles of the androcentric world. Her claim was that with women's participation the world would be more peaceful. She expresses her view on her claim in the last two stanzas of her poem called "Woman- To Mothers":

Rise now, in the power of The Woman!
Rise now, in the hour of our need!
The world cries in hunger and darkness!
We shall light! We shall feed!

In the name of our ages of anguish;
In the name of the curse and the stain;
By the strength of our sorrow we conquer!
In the power of our pain!"¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸. Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. In This Our World and Other Poems. American Libraries. 7 Dec. 2006

Gilman wishes to light the world that is crying and suffering under the system of patriarchy. The women who have been left ignorant at homes to be only wives and mothers doing only domestic work and childrearing so far will change the world with the strength coming from their pains and suffers formed in the man-made world. Women, the half of the human beings, are imprisoned at homes (this imprisonment is the curse and stain for Gilman) and world needs them. Women should awake and rise up to include in the world matters as economy and politics in order to feed the world since it needs women, suffering at the hands of men. The suffer symbolizes both women and the world since the system is patriarchic.

Gilman influenced by Jane Addams and her Fabian socialism and cultural feminism especially while she was staying at Jane Addams' Hull-House. Hull-House was a settlement house which was also the center of the social reform for women. It was also "an unemployment agency, a battered-wives shelter, a day care center, a public kitchen, and a cooperative boarding club for factory girls."¹⁵⁹ Gilman worked for the suffrage movement and lectured at Hull-House, and above all, she set the outlines of her famous novel Herland there since Hull-House life inspired Gilman of a self-sufficient women community.¹⁶⁰

Jane Addams and Charlotte Perkins Gilman were the firm cultural feminists of late nineteenth century. Cultural feminism claims that there are special differences between men and women, and aims to "overcome sexism with the women's experiences and women's special qualities."¹⁶¹ Jane Addams believed that "women's distinctive values would humanize the world and change society."¹⁶² Likewise, Gilman also contributed to cultural feminism claiming that women are race-type and would change the world because women are the ones who could perform the race processes. In her book Our Androcentric Culture or The Man-Made World, Gilman says:

< <http://www.archive.org/stream/inthisourworld00gilmiala#page/40/mode/2up>

¹⁵⁹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins, Mary A. Hill. A Journey Within: The love Letters of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1897-1900. NJ: Associated University Presses, 1995. 201

¹⁶⁰ Cole, Jean Lee. The Literary Voices of Winnifred Eaton: Redefining Ethnicity and Authenticity. USA: Rutgers University Press, 2002. 45-46

¹⁶¹ Tandon, Neeru. Feminism: A Paradigm Shift. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2008. 52

¹⁶² Enns, Caroline Zerbe. Feminist Theories and Feminist Psychoterapies: Origins, themes, and diversity. 156

The female is the race-type—the man the variant.

The female, as a race-type, having the female processes besides; best performs the race processes. The male, however, as with great difficulty developed them, always heavily handicapped by his maleness; being in origin essentially a creature of sex, and so dominated almost by sex impulses.¹⁶³

In addition to Jane Addams criticisms on men's fondness of fighting, carelessness about health, cleanliness, victims as prostitutes, and also their emphasis on profit,¹⁶⁴ likewise, Gilman also attacks men's emphasis on amusement and their instincts of "Desire and Combat" that corrupted the world. For Gilman men, by instinct, are only fighters and hunters, thus they contributed nothing to industry. Their abnormal predominance of masculine impulses injured human processes.¹⁶⁵

In her book Our Androcentric Culture or The Man-Made World she states:

In a male culture the attracting forces must inevitably have been, we have seen, Desire and Combat. These masculine forces, acting upon human processes, while necessary to the uplifting of the man, have been anything but to civilization. A sex which thinks, feels and acts in terms of combat is difficult to harmonize in the smooth bonds of human relationship; that they have succeeded so well is a beautiful testimony to the superior power of race tendency over sex tendency. Uniting and organizing, crudely and temporarily, for the common hunt; and then, with progressive elaboration, for the common fight; they are now using the same tactics-and the same desires, unfortunately-in common work.¹⁶⁶

Gilman alludes that men, with their combat and desire impulses, consider everything in the sense of "sex," but not in the sense of the humanness, thus they fail to progress. However, women could contribute more to human process than men since they act by their instinct of "motherhood." For Gilman, Woman's Club has proved

¹⁶³ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Our Androcentric Culture or The Man-Made World. Project Gutenberg. Jan 2009 87-88

< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3015/3015.txt>

¹⁶⁴ Enns, Caroline Zerbe. Feminist Theories and Feminist Psychoterapies: Origins, Themes, and Diversity. New York: The Haworth Press, 2004. 155-156

¹⁶⁵ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Our Androcentric Culture or The Man-Made World. Project Gutenberg. Jan 2009. 85-86

< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3015/3015.txt>

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. 88

what women want to do and can do so far as they have worked with strong, loving and serviceable manners whereas men did everything only for their pleasure.¹⁶⁷

Charlotte Perkins Gilman conveyed Fabian socialism in her works as Jane Addams, Patrick Geddes and Bernard Shaw. For Fabian socialists, there is no necessity for violence to achieve socialism, but over time socialism would be achieved reasonably.¹⁶⁸ Bernard Show argued that “capitalism had to be transformed into socialism”¹⁶⁹ because capitalism forced women “to enter into sexual relations for money, in marriage or out of it.”¹⁷⁰ Fabian socialism defends “collective ownership and democratic control of resources”¹⁷¹ and Gilman openly conveyed these assertions in her novels Herland and With Her in Ourland.

Gilman’s socialism focused on women’s work and economic development in order to search remedies for eliminating women’s oppression and, no doubt, for getting more economic efficiency and production in the case of women’s inclusion to the public and economic life. She criticized capitalism and its burden that is overwhelming the world, and damaging especially women. As the world is androcentric and the system is capitalism, Gilman associated capitalism with patriarchy, therefore associating socialism with women’s welfare she presented her utopic novels Herland and With Her in Ourland. She deliberately presented Herland, which is the country of dominant women as a socialist country to prove that socialism is the best system that includes all the members of the society, of course women as well as men; and eliminates all kinds of oppressions and inequalities both socially and economically. Presenting the novel With Her in Ourland, Gilman let the reader to compare the perfect organization of socialism in Herland and the destructive features of capitalism of this real world, which Gilman constantly describes as “androcentric.”

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. 95

¹⁶⁸ Lane, Ann J. To Herland and Beyond: The Life and Work of Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997. 184-185

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 185

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Appellrouth, Scott, Laura Desfor Edles. Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Text and readings. California: Fine Forge Press, 2008. 199

Gilman's feminism has its full meaning with socialism because only socialism will include women who were kept at homes into public and economic life. Gilman presented socialism as a remedy for women's improvement in Herland. Herland is a female dominant country, thus, naturally far-off from patriarchy, it should have a socialist perspective. In Herland, all women work and get the equal payment that is enough for them. They can get their payment in proportion to the quality and the quantity of their labor. All the services that the system presents women in return of their labor are perfect. They have perfect educational system, schools and universities, kindergartens for childrearing, perfect green cities, perfect clean roads decorated with all fruit-rearing trees, gardens, perfect food supplies etc. With a socialist idealism, in the country, women are spending all their energy and effort to make things better and better. There is no waste of labor so there is no poverty in this country. Gilman describes Herland in the sense of socialism:

Having improved their agriculture to the highest point, and carefully estimated the number of the persons who could comfortably live on their square miles; having then limited their population to that number, one would think that was all there was to be done. But they had not thought so. To them the country was a unit, a conscious group; they thought in terms of the community. As such, their time sense was not limited to the hopes and ambitions of an individual life. Therefore they habitually considered and carried out plans for improvement which might cover centuries.¹⁷²

In Herland, women who are the members of a female community, gladly devote themselves to the welfare of the whole community in a socialist sense, and as long as they work, the wealth increases. They try to make their country more comfortable place to live, thus they improve their agriculture but limit their population. They consider the whole country as a unit group and work for in favor of all community. They believe that when there is more work, then there is more wealth.

Gilman presented a utopic country of Herland to show and prove that socialism serves more and efficient strategies for feminism and women's emancipation since socialism calls for women's participation in the economic life as well as men. Under socialism all the members-women and men are the part of the community, they work

¹⁷² Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Herland. London: The Women's Press, 2001. 79

equally having well-paid jobs, and of course they get their payment in proportion to the quality and the quantity of their labor. Socialism will end women's living parasitically tied to men at homes, and give them the opportunity to get the pay of their labor. Gilman criticized capitalism because people work hard long hours but they are exploited and cannot have the pay of their labor. Likewise, she considered husbands as "capitalism" for women since women are tied to men, work hours and hours to present a good service for their husbands but do not get their pay. With the socialization of the domestic work and childrearing there will be more housekeepers and kindergartens, thus women will have more time and chance to work collectively with men and improve themselves intellectually. Women will not work only for their husbands but work for all the community. Gilman expresses her assertions in her book Herland as: "All the surrendering devotion our women have put into their private families, these women put into their country and race. All the loyalty and service men expect of wives, they gave, not singly to men, but collectively to one another."¹⁷³

In her novel With Her in Ourland (1916), Ellador criticizes the man-made world firmly saying that "the world has not civilized yet." With Her in Ourland is the sequel of Herland. In the novel, Gilman brought out all the destructiveness and exploitation of patriarchy. Ellador, who has moved out of her perfect Herland, starts to travel the real world and the USA with her husband Vandyck Jennings. She gets extremely disappointed after she has witnessed the bad sides of the world such as poverty, wars and crippled people, hopeless oppressed women and poor children. Ellador gets very astonished when she learns that the humans who are fighting and killing each other are just "men." Talking to her sociologist husband Van, she makes diagnoses while they are debating on the world policy.

Ellador says that people in the world have not understood the "democracy" yet. For Ellador, democracy "means people socially conscious and doing for themselves,"¹⁷⁴ and "it is a game everybody has to play"¹⁷⁵ but half of the people, women are left out of this play in the world. People follow their instincts and ancient beliefs thus they cannot

¹⁷³ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Herland. London: The Women's Press, 2001. 95

¹⁷⁴ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. With Her in Ourland. Praeger, 1997. 122

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

improve and change. They even do not limit the population to live more comfortably. The main character of the book, Ellador has difficulty to understand why the people of the world do not deliberately limit the population:

“Then why do not the women limit the population, as we did?”

“Oh, Ellador, Ellador-you cannot seem to realize that this world is not a woman’s world, like your country. This is man’s world- and they did not want to limit the population.”

“Why not?” she urged. “Was it because they did not bear the children? Was it because they would rather fight than live in peace? What was the reason?”

“Neither of those,” I said slowly. “The real reason is that neither men nor women have been able to see broadly enough, to think deeply enough, sufficiently to visualize these great racial questions. They just followed their instincts and obeyed their ancient religions, and these things happened without their knowing why.”

“But women!” protested Ellador. “Surely the women could see as simple a thing as that. It’s only a matter of square miles; how many people to a mile can live healthfully and pleasantly. Are these women willing to have their children grow up so crowded that they can’t be happy, or where they’ll have to fight for room to live? I can’t understand it.”¹⁷⁶

Although Van opposes, Ellador claims that men did not want to limit the population because they prefer fight and war to peace. They do not visualize the questions because they do not rear children as women, and thus they do not have the women’s perspectives. Accordingly, Van states that both men and women followed their instincts and old beliefs and could not improve themselves. Herein, Gilman again highlights the men’s dominance by their instincts of desire and combat which prevented them to think deeply and consider the problems analytically. For Ellador, limiting the population will bring solutions for the problems of poverty and war since people can find enough land to live and find no reason for to fight. However, Ellador cannot see the fact that the man-made world has restricted women and blinded people-both men and women of the real world. Therefore there could be no solutions for the problem of oppression as well. Ellador also claims that there is no democracy because there are so many poor and oppressed ones in the country implying the immigrants in the USA. She says they are socially excluded and could not become the part of the society. After Van opposes that all those immigrants are equal in his country under democracy, Ellador

¹⁷⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. With Her in Ourland. Praeger, 1997. 100

asks how many Chinese, Japanese and African citizens are treated equally under his democracy. She states that they are loaded to serve and fight for them, but then left socially excluded out of the democracy; and they are tenth of the population and not part of the democracy and do not belong to the country. As for the servants that have never been asked to come, Ellador says:

“To legitimate immigrants, able and willing to be American citizens, there can be no objection, unless even they come too fast. But to millions of deliberately imported people, not immigrants at all, but victims, poor ignorant people scraped up by paid agents, deceived by lying advertisements, brought over here by greedy American ship owners and employers of labor-there are objections many and strong.”¹⁷⁷

Herein, beyond the race discrimination, once more the exploitative policy of the man-made world is criticized. The greedy employers of labor are exploiting humans to get more production for themselves but do not give the employees’ payment properly. Furthermore, tenth of the population is turned to be an outsider far away from the democracy. Talking hours and hours Ellador cannot understand why the members of the world can solve their problems. Is it because of the men’s dominancy and egoism?

Ellador proposes socialism as a solution again because it guards the welfare of all the community as:

“We isolated Herlanders, never heard Socialism.” She answered. “We had no German-Jewish economist to explain to in interminable, and, to most people, uncomprehensible, prolixity, the reasons why it was better to work together for common good. Perhaps ‘the feminine mind’ did not need so much explanation of so obvious fact. We co-mothers, in our isolation, with a small visible group of blood relations (without any Father Boss) just saw that our interests were common. We couldn’t help seeing it.”¹⁷⁸

Ellador praises Herland’s socialism and its government that balanced the land equally for everyone; and describes the duty of government as “to preserve justice, to prevent the selfish and ambitious from injuring the others, to see to it that production is increased and distribution fairly carried on.”¹⁷⁹ Socialism that is to think in terms of the community but not only in terms of the family could be the best remedy for the world.

¹⁷⁷ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. With Her in Ourland. Praeger,1997. 119

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. 132

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. 142

In the world, common income is distributed regarding only families, and the wage is given to the husbands only, and then it is distributed to the members of the family by the husbands. Thus, this makes husbands the boss, the wives the workers of their husbands. However, socialism suggests the full contribution of women to the state's economy and the distribution of the income to all members of the community not regarding only family.¹⁸⁰

Gilman, inspired by Lester F. Ward, Patrick Geddes, and Herbert Spencer, applied Darwin's evolution theory into her arguments in her works. Gilman was a social Darwinist who tried to apply Darwin's theories of "natural selection" and "survival of the fittest" to societies, races and individuals.¹⁸¹ According to Darwin, female became inferior over centuries because of the fact that men were more competitive and selfish.¹⁸² Likewise, Social Darwinists believed that the sex differences were the result of sexual selection, thus women with evolution fall behind men and became passive needing men's protection.¹⁸³ Charlotte Perkins Gilman adapted natural selection to support women's advancement and to challenge women's subordination inspired by Lester Ward's Our Better Halves (1888), Patrick Geddes' The Evolution of Sex (1889).¹⁸⁴ Lester Ward in his Gynocentric Theory, emphasized the male dominance over women's lives;¹⁸⁵ likewise, Gilman wrote her Our Androcentric Culture or The Man-Made World (1911) expanding Lester Ward's assertion of "the female is the general race type while male is a sex type,"¹⁸⁶ and her Women and Economics (1898), which was described as a "masterpiece" by Jane Addams, to show how males dominantly conquered the social and economic life over centuries; and also to suggest solutions for women to be saved from male dominance to reconstruct gender roles and to gain their social, political and economic independence. Women and Economics is a

¹⁸⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. With Her in Ourland. Praeger, 1997. 138

¹⁸¹ Appelrouth, Scott, Laura Desfor Edles. Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Text and Readings. California: Fine Forge Press, 2008. 201

¹⁸² Davis, Sue. The Political Thought of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women's Rights and the American Political Traditions. New York: New York University Press, 2008. 204

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins, Mary A. Hill. A Journey Within: The love Letters of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1897-1900. NJ: Associated University Presses, 1995. 85-86

¹⁸⁵ Keetly, Dawn. Public Women, Public Words: A Documentary History of American Feminism. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005. 48

¹⁸⁶ Allan, Kenneth. Explorations in Classical sociological Theory: seeing the Social World. California: Pine Forge Press, 2010. 286

sociological work which is based on Social Darwinist Theory and proves that “women’s subjugation is an unnatural aberration that is impeding the progress of the race.”¹⁸⁷ *The Nation* considered Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s Woman and Economics as “the most significant utterance on the subject of women since Mill’s The Subjection of Woman.”¹⁸⁸ Gilman suggested radical changes in society and family life for racial and social development asserting that human relationships are arranged in terms of only sex relations without regarding social needs. Gilman criticized men’s paralyzing economy by eliminating women workers claiming that women are the weaker sex and should stay home to do domestic work and rear their children.

Adopting Herbert Spencer’s conception of Social Darwinism,¹⁸⁹ Gilman stated that with “the survival of the fittest” and “the elimination of the unfit” theories men have dominated over women in all fields, and they have excluded women from economic workplace, science and politics claiming that women are insufficient.¹⁹⁰ Gilman tried to prove that if women had to fall behind men in time by the social evolution; they can regain their economic, intellectual and social independence by social evolution. Thus, a social evolution is essential. In her novels, Gilman portrayed very strong female characters who are enthusiastically struggling for their economic independence. Gilman’s characters have, or struggle to have the same opportunities with the men in terms of profession, education and social life; and they all display much more success than men.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman wrote utopian novels to contribute to the women’s advancement and also social growth. Feminist utopians criticized the patriarchy which emphasizes “society’s habit of restricting and alienating women.”¹⁹¹ Feminist utopians

¹⁸⁷ Donovan, Josephine. Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Traditions. New York: Continuum Press, 2004. 59

¹⁸⁸ Vertinsky, Patricia Anne. The Eternally Wounded Woman: Women, Doctors and Exercise in the Late Nineteenth Century. New York: Manchester University Press, 1990. 219

¹⁸⁹ Tucker, Kenneth H. Classical Social Theory: A Contemporary Approach. USA: ,Blackwell Publishers, 2002. 241

¹⁹⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Our Androcentric Culture, or the Man-Made World. Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 85

< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3015/3015.txt>

¹⁹¹ McKenna, Erin. The Task of Utopia: A Pragmatist and Feminist Perspective. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002. 138

aimed to make a better future for everyone, not only for women.¹⁹² Besides, feminists presented “alternative versions of working conditions” regarding some suggestions by Marx and Engels.¹⁹³ Charlotte Perkins Gilman deliberately wrote utopias to prove her claim: How could be the life for women and, of course, for all humanity if women had the same opportunity with men. Inspiring by Edward Bellamy’s Looking Backward(1888) she wrote her famous utopic novel Herland, presenting an alternative utopian environment to justify her economic theories. In his Looking Backward, Edward Bellamy exemplified a well organized society of socialist Boston, which is full of happy citizens because of specialized services contributing to the national production and growth.¹⁹⁴ Likewise, in Gilman’s Herland, there is no individual household production, thus there is no “gender division of labor between housework and market work.”¹⁹⁵ There is a woman’s community without sexuality. There are no men, no families, and children are brought up by women.¹⁹⁶ Gilman presented a “radical, alternative vision of collective motherhood.”¹⁹⁷ In Herland, “it is women who have the knowledge and power, and “the men have to adjust to the values and expectations of the society in which they find themselves.”¹⁹⁸ Herland was created by Gilman as a perfect, ideal country with its “peaceful, nonhierarchical and noncompetitive society.”¹⁹⁹

In her book Women and Economics Gilman objected that human beings arrange their economic relations considering their sex-relations instead of their social relations. Women are marked only as “wives” and “mothers” and they are locked at homes, thus they are deprived of having their economic independence and building social relations with other humans. She said as natural selection develops the race, regarding human beings, sexual selection develops the sex, and under our sexu-

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Schönflug, Karin. Feminism, Economics and Utopia: Time Travelling through Paradigms. New York: Routledge Publishers, 2008. 105

¹⁹⁴ Hayden, Dolores. The Grand Domestic Revolution. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2000. 136

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. 106

¹⁹⁶ Lane, Ann J. To Herland and Beyond: The Life and Work of Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997. 293

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ferns, Christopher S. Narrating Utopia: Ideology, Gender, Form in Utopian Literature. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999. 178

¹⁹⁹ Dotterer, Ronald L. and Susan Bowers ed. Politics, Gender and the Arts: Women, the Arts and Society. NJ: Associated University Press, 1992. 58

economic relation the balance of forces changed as human females are dependent to their males.²⁰⁰

For this reason, men become the master, the strongest force to eliminate the unfit-women:

Man, in supporting woman, has become her environment. Under natural selection, every creature is modified to its environment, developing perforce the qualities needed to obtain its livelihood under that environment. Man, as the feeder of woman, becomes the strongest modifying force in her economic condition. Under sexual selection the human creature is of course modified to its mate, as with all creatures. When the mate becomes also the master, when economic necessity is added to sex-attraction, we have the two great evolutionary forces acting together to the same end; namely, to develop sex-distinction in the human female. For, in position of economic dependence in the sex-relation, sex-distinction is with her not only means of attracting a mate, as with all creatures, but means of getting her livelihood, as is the case with no other creature under heaven. Because of the economic dependence of the human female on her mate, she is modified to sex to an excessive degree.²⁰¹

Since men are the feeders of women, they become the masters to select their mates. Women have to attract men to obtain their livelihood. This causes sex-distinction in the human females to be chosen by best feeders. Thus, women have to develop their feminine charms and they struggle to be chosen as “wives” to be fed. Gilman states relations are based on only “sexes.” She claimed that if women were not dependent to men economically and both sexes obtain food through the same condition, then they would act alike.²⁰²

Gilman noted that “the history was made and written by men.”²⁰³ Women were considered as only “the sex” and deprived of special services because of their femininity. Since human beings have their roles according to their instincts and sex relations, women- half of the race- were seen as only consumers having only the task of reproduction. However, Gilman stated that human beings are not like other animals since they are sociable:

²⁰⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 21-22
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

²⁰¹ Ibid. 22

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid. 4

Our power to make use things is essentially human; we alone have extra-physical tools. We have added to our teeth the knife, sword, scissors, mowing machine; to our claws the spade, harrow, plough, drill, dredge. We are protean creature, using the larger brain power through a wide variety of changing weapons. This is one of our main vital distinctions.²⁰⁴

Gilman aims to make a clear differentiation between the human nature and the sex nature. For Gilman, human beings are sociable; thus, they cannot be in the same category with animals. The distinction is about the fact that we, the humans have social relations. Besides, it is about “what we do” and “how we do” rather than “what we are.”²⁰⁵ Insisting on “what we are” means insisting on being only the sex and having sex roles which are also observed on animals. However, all kinds of specialties such as science, art, religion, education and all kinds of amusement wait for humans to improve themselves.

Gilman asserted that men, becoming the masters of women by natural selection in centuries, have managed the world with their combat and desire instincts dragging it to warfare and poverty and this caused the retardation of human progress:

Combat is not a social progress at all; it is a physical process, a subsidiary sex process, purely masculine, intended to prove the species by the elimination of the unfit. Amusingly enough; when applied to society, it eliminates the fit, and leaves the unfit to perpetuate the race!²⁰⁶

Gilman opposes combat because life does not mean “fight” but it means “growth” and androcracy averts growth.²⁰⁷ War paralyses the progress of art and science as well, and it damages civilization.²⁰⁸ Thus, a radical change is essential for social evolution and racial process; and it should be by changing the family relations under the male dominancy, and of course by including women into economic workplace and politics.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. 3

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 4

²⁰⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Our Androcentric Culture, or the Man-Made World. Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 72

< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3015/3015.txt>

²⁰⁷ Ibid. 74

²⁰⁸ Ibid. 73

For Gilman, relations are based on sex. Couples do not marry for “love” or “companionship.” Men need women for domestic service at home, and women need men to be supported economically. Since men have the instincts of combat and desire, and they are “fighters,” they have the right to work outside while women have the duty to rear their children inside homes because they are “protectors” by their maternal instincts. This is due to the sex-distinction, and Gilman illustrated it as “the tendency to ‘sit’ is a sex-distinction of the hen; the tendency to strut is a sex-distinction of the cock.”²⁰⁹ In addition, men have their sex-advantages as Gilman said “She [woman] gets her living by getting a husband. He [man] gets his wife by getting a living.”²¹⁰

Gilman harshly criticized women’s being parasite who were not working outside but imprisoned at homes doing only unpaid housework and childrearing because women were considered as only “the sex” instead of humans. For this reason, they are deprived of intellectual, social and economical matters. Gilman stated that human beings are “the only animal species in which the female depends on the male for food,” and “the only animal species in which the sex-relation is also an economic relation.”²¹¹ Men earn their livings by working outside while women earn theirs by house service by their husbands. The economic status of women depends on men. Then, men become “employers” and the women are “employees” in their relation.²¹²

Gilman also criticized women’s being consumers in their economic relations with men saying that “As long as what I get is obtained by what I give, I am economically independent.”²¹³ Men produce something while they are working outside; however, women produce nothing economically while rearing children and doing domestic work at homes. Gilman stated that women consume economic goods, but do not give economic product in exchange for they consume.²¹⁴ At this point, Gilman opposed the common belief that “marriage is a partnership” because couples do not

²⁰⁹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 23

< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

²¹⁰ Ibid. 55

²¹¹ Ibid. 9

²¹² Ibid. 8

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid. 5

produce together to share the income. Women do not contribute to family income since they do not work. They remain as only “consumers” because women do not “give anything except their womanhood.”²¹⁵

Gilman stated that when women are economically dependent, marriage and motherhood are their economic status.²¹⁶ For women, the purpose of marriage is supporting themselves economically. Marriage is not for “love” or “companionship” but to have a family, a home and especially an income. Women are imprisoned at homes to work for their husbands to deserve their income. They have to serve their husbands doing all the cooking, washing and cleaning as well as rearing and educating their children. Then women become only “wives” and “mothers.”

While women have their roles of “wives” and “mothers” being imprisoned at homes as consumers, science and improvement are given to men. Education is also for men as professions are for them. Boys are educated to have professions; but girls are expected to develop feminine charms to please men to be selected, and they are brought up for only marriage. Gilman opposed that humans have their roles according to their instincts and sex relations, thus the humanness part of women have been neglected. She proposed the idea that half of the human race-women should rise up to work and gain their economic independence. They should stop to consume or to take, but start to “make” as men. Then they will stand as “themselves” rather than being as “the complement of men.” Therefore, in her works Gilman presented her female characters having no pressure of sex relations of this man-made world. For her, only when women and men have no sex-distinctions, they can earn their living through the same condition, and they would act alike.²¹⁷ Gilman believed that women’s inclusion to the public and economic life will humanize the world and change society to perform the racial progress.

²¹⁵ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 60
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu./women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

²¹⁶ Ibid. 11

²¹⁷ Ibid.

CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS ON ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF WOMEN IN
GILMAN'S WORKS

4.1. MOTHERHOOD AND MARRIAGE AS A PROFESSION

Like all feminists, Charlotte Perkins Gilman opposed the idea that motherhood and wifehood are the only professions for women as their gender identities are constructed according to marriage and women's reproductive instincts. Women are marked only as "wives" and "mothers" and they are locked at homes, thus they are deprived of having their economic independence and building social relations with other humans-both men and women. Women are kept at homes for the welfare and education of the children. In other words, women are for feeding, rearing and educating their children. After all, since they cannot work outside to contribute to the family income, women have become economically dependent to their husbands. Thus they have to serve their husbands doing all the cooking, washing and cleaning as well as rearing and educating their children. Hence, for women the purpose of marriage is supporting themselves economically. According to Gilman, for years needs of human beings have been connected to their sex-relations; thus women want marriage because of their needs of shelter, food and clothes, and men want marriage because they need cooks and housekeepers. Marriage has never been for "love," but to have a family, a home and especially for an income.²¹⁸ Gilman argued that "the marriage and the family are two different institutions, not one."²¹⁹ Family is not identical with "marriage" and it cannot be connected to sex-relationships.²²⁰ Family also needs social relations because we are all persons; and thus we need a "change of economic relation in families from a sex-basis to a social basis."²²¹ Marriage should be freed from the assigns of being only

²¹⁸ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 146-148
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

²¹⁹ Ibid. 104

²²⁰ Ibid, 107

²²¹ Ibid, 148

“mothers” and “wives” and should be for only the companionship and mutual love of the couples. For Gilman, motherhood is not a job of every woman, but is only a “process of life” and it should not be performed with only a simple “maternal instinct.” It should serve the “purpose of improving all human race”²²² and the progress of social evolution. Childcare and nursing need more education and specialization than reproduction and maternal instincts. Only maternal sacrifice is not sufficient to be a good mother, thus motherhood needs more assistance and should be supported with the childcare centers. Mothers, or in other words, wives should work outside to contribute to the family and the state’s income; and the process of child-rearing and education should be performed by the child-care centers. Economically independent women are always better wives and mothers since they feel as satisfied self-realizing individuals.

For Gilman, motherhood should not be a simple unpaid profession that is done for only the good of family. Women should not be aware of only the personal joy of motherhood but they should take it as a social duty. This is because “by right motherhood they can build the world: by wrong motherhood they keep the world as its is-weak, diseased, wicked.”²²³ As a feminist, she never underestimated the duty of mothers; on the contrary, she assigned mothers a very essential mission: motherhood is a very holy and fundamental task since they are responsible for the preserving and improving the race. However, Gilman criticized that all women are deprived of working outside and imprisoned at homes because they are burdened with the duty of rearing their children by only their simple maternal instincts. She asserted every woman may not have the special qualities to be a good mother, thus there is no need for every woman to be a mother. Mothers should learn and apply what is best for young species, thus this will help them to rear more mature generations who are better than their parents.²²⁴ Motherhood is not a personal duty or an individual function, but a social function; and for sure, children require more care and instruction besides their mothers’ love and embrace. Most of mothers are devoid of the instructions that are needed for the perfect motherhood. This is the same case with that all men are left to the battle-field to

²²² Ibid, 87-88

²²³ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins ed. “The New Motherhood”. The Forerunner (Volume 1: November 1909-December 1910). Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 659-660
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext02/forer10.txt>

²²⁴ Ibid, 88

make the fate of nations but without any special military education.²²⁵ For Gilman, mothers are responsible for the vice people in the country as well as well-educated good people, thus she criticized that mothers are left untaught to fulfill their duty only by maternal instincts.

For the best race development, motherhood should be a scientific process and a branch of education that needs the best instructions of nutrition, hygienic knowledge, etc. Thus, Gilman supported child-care services and kindergartens. Home is not the best place for the education of children because the primitive motherhood instincts do not respond the best child-care service. Therefore, women should work outside and leave the domestic work and child education to the hands of specialists. Women are more than being females; they are still wives and mothers but they are humans as men.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman also argued that mothers should have an education as well as men to work outside their homes and they should be social servants for their state gaining their domestic liberty; and doing so, they can be better wives and mothers contributing to the family and country income, and also can be better, more conscious and happier mothers. Above all, they are social mothers. Gilman illustrates the duty of mothers as in her essay “The New Motherhood” as:

A mother who is something more—who is also a social servant—is a nobler being for a child to love and follow than a mother who is nothing more—except a home servant. She is wiser, stronger, happier, jollier, a better comrade, a more satisfying and contented wife; the whole atmosphere around the child at home is improved by fully human mother.

On the second demand, that of a full conscious knowledge of the primal conditions of her business, the New Motherhood can cleanse the world of most of its diseases, and incidentally of many of its sins. A girl old enough to marry, is old enough to understand thoroughly what lies before her and why.²²⁶

Mothers are burdened with all the overwhelming work of the house, child-caring and education at homes. However, the first four or five years of the child’s life are very important and require a special care, training and experience. How can a very young, inexperienced mother find time to do all the housework of the house and to

²²⁵ Ibid, 95

²²⁶ Ibid. 660

serve her husband and at the same time to care, rear and educate her children? Children need a house to live, however fathers do not have to build a house. All children need clothes, shoes, hats and toys, and fathers do not have to make them for their children.²²⁷ Instead, fathers have specialized jobs and they can work outside to supply these to their children. Fathers are educated well to have better jobs in order to have their economic independence, and thus they also have social relationships outside their homes. Fathers can realize themselves and also express themselves as “human beings” at work whereas mothers are asocial, kept alone at homes to do the unpaid housework and child rearing. While fathers have intelligence, training and education for their jobs, mothers are left alone with their “maternal instincts.” However, the highest death rates of the children are while they are in their mothers’ care at their first years. This means that children need more specialized care service than their individual mothers’.

Gilman never abolished the duty of mothers, on the contrary, she claimed that “mothers would not be excluded, but supplemented”²²⁸ with the teachers and specialists of the kindergartens. Children can be more peaceful, safer and heavily loved as well as their mothers in the child-care centers than in the very busy household. Gilman exemplified her claims in her famous utopic fiction Herland. Motherhood is dealt with a very great attention in the novel since mothers are responsible for caring and educating all the children of the country. A perfect motherhood is searched for not only their own children, but it is also for all the children and for the common good of the whole country. To increase their standard of perfection in life and to make their country more peaceful, the women of Herland firstly regard the importance of the motherhood. They make the girls showing bad qualities renounce their motherhood, because they are unfit to fulfill this supreme task. They consider the racial and social evolution of their country, thus they work for the good of the whole country with an awareness of socialism. Some women are not allowed to perform the duties of motherhood or are not allowed to be mothers. The women of Herland separate the duties of maternity and child

²²⁷ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins ed. “Genius, Domestic and Maternal”. The Forerunner (Volume 1: November 1909- December 1910). Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 354
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext02/forer10.txt>

²²⁸ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 140
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu./women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

rearing since they are all aware that every woman cannot have the same quality to rear children. Most of the women are eager to be mothers and do their best to bear and reproduce their children; however, they are willing to sacrifice of rearing their children themselves and voluntarily leave them to the hands of the specialists for their children's sake. In Herland, mothers live with their babies for one year, nursing and caring them proudly. Then after one year, mothers do not stay with the babies so closely but they do not go far away, either. Babies are entrusted to the co-mothers of the child service.

Mothers are not allowed to work outside since they are the responsible people to rear and educate their children perfectly as “females” because of their reproductive features and the need of their maternal instincts. Many people claim that mothers should not work because their children need them at homes. Gilman did not believe the idea that motherhood prevents women from working. She supports it very mockingly as:

In spite of her supposed segregation to maternal duties, the human female, the world over, works at extra-maternal duties for hours enough to provide her with independent living, and then is denied independence on the ground that motherhood prevents her working!

If this ground were tenable, we should find a world full of women who never lifted a finger save in the service of their children, and of men who did all the work besides, and waited on the women whom motherhood prevented from waiting on themselves. The ground is not tenable. A human female, healthy, sound, has twenty-five years of before she is a mother, and should have twenty-five years more after the period of such maternal service as is expected of her has been given. The duties of grandmotherhood are surely not alleged as preventing economic independence.²²⁹

No doubt, Gilman hints the work of the house and their husbands that are more overwhelming than the maternal duties at home; and women do these duties to provide their living. As they are dependent to their husbands, women pay for their food and other supplies doing all the housework, cooking and the washing. This is the implicit ground of their economic independence; however, men claim that they keep women at homes because they are needed for the child-rearing. As Gilman asserts with humor, nobody notes that women do not live their whole lives as mothers, however they are

²²⁹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 13-14
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

mostly banned from working. In addition, women are also banned from making social relationships. While fathers, the male humans, have their economic independence and make social relationships outside their homes; mothers, female humans, are kept alone and asocial at homes to do the housework and child rearing. Fathers have intelligence, training and education for their jobs and live their lives fully satisfied, feeling their “humanness” whereas mothers are left alone at home with only their simple maternal instincts. Hereupon, nobody should get astonished with the idea that most women as mothers live unhappily and depressed at their homes because they do not realize themselves and feel their humanness.

In her masterpiece “The Yellow Wallpaper” (1899), Gilman presented a very depressed woman who goes mad after the birth of her child. Gilman expressed her own anxieties, depressions and emotional disturbances that emerged from her conflicts of being a “human” and also a “wife” and a “mother” at the same time. She was not ready for these gender roles after her marriage and motherhood, thus she lost her temper. Her husband tried to help taking her to see Dr. Weir Mitchell, whose name is the same with the name of the doctor whom the hero of the story “The Yellow Wallpaper” consulted for her own depression. In her famous story “The Yellow Wallpaper”, the young mother gets depressed as Gilman after her marriage and motherhood. Since Dr. Weir Mitchell advises the young mother not to work, and even to fancy anything; her husband rents a house in a country to make her rest. Going gradually mad, she tries to tear the yellow wallpaper, or to rescue the hopeless woman that she sees on the wallpaper. What is more, the young mother sometimes cannot stand to see her child.

A British study of Gilman’s time indicated that 64 percent of one hundred and thirty-seven mothers were suffering from emotional disturbances like Gilman after childbirth. It was because of “postpartum depression” that caused anxiety, depression and some fantasies of suicide. It was because the women had to give up their outside interests and activities after marriage and especially childbirth.²³⁰ In those years, probably there was not an accurate diagnosis for this kind of depression, thus nobody could understand the reason of the misery of the mothers. Gilman, who experienced

²³⁰ Nies, Judith. Nine Women: Portraits from the American Radical Tradition. California: University of California Press, 2002. 134

these emotional disturbances herself, proposed her solutions in her works: Mothers should work and can entrust their babies to kindergartens with peace of mind. Doing this, they would not cut off their jobs, outside interests and activities and would feel more free and “human.” Hence, motherhood would not be a “burden” for them, and probably they would feel the “joy” of it. Gilman states:

The mother as a social servant instead of a home servant will not lack in true mother duty. She will love her child as well, perhaps better, when she is hourly contact with it, when she goes from its life to her own life, and back from her own life to its life with ever new delight and power. She can keep the deep, thrilling joy of motherhood far fresher in her heart, far more vivid and open in voice and eyes and tender hands, when the hours of individual work give her mind another channel for her own part of the day. From work, loved and honored though it is, she will return to the home life, with an eager, ceaseless pleasure, cleansed of all the fret friction and weariness that so mar it now.²³¹

Working mothers will be better for their children since they have the opportunity to feel more independent and fresh after work. They can find the best opportunities to feel themselves more humans, to realize and express themselves. They will be happier and more beneficent mothers and wives to fulfill their duties if they are not banned from working and earning their own livings.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman claimed that marriage should not be a way to have a financial insurance for women, or it should not be to get home services for men. Marriage should be only for companionship and love. It should not be connected only to “family” because today these are two different institutions. For Gilman, today we are not in the times when there was no state or country; and the fathers and the grandfathers had to govern the big families as kings. Those patriarchal families were in need of “women slavery;” however, in time we have improved as individuals, and humans-both women and men have socialized.²³² For this reason, married couples should develop love and mutual social relationships instead of getting together for only financial or servicing purposes. They should cease “the primitive economic necessities of the

²³¹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 141
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu./women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

²³² Ibid. 104-105

family.”²³³ For Gilman, love of the married couples needs to consider what to share and what to do together:

When two young people love each other, in the long hours which are never long enough for them to be together in, do they dwell in ecstatic forecast on the duties of housekeeping? They do not. They dwell on the pleasure of having a home, in which they can be ‘at last alone’; on the opportunity of enjoying each other’s society; and always, on what they will do together. To act with those we love,-to walk together, work together, read together, paint, write, sing, anything you please, so that it be together,-that is what love looks forward to.²³⁴

With love, couples search companionship, but the economic status of marriage harms this love. Couples do not become lovers after marriage, but they are the boss and the servant: The husband is the boss who gives the money, and the wife is the servant who works for her husband and earns money in return. Gilman, in this case, opposes the claim that “marriage is a partnership.”²³⁵ Partnerships work together to share the profit, however, the wife is not the partner of the husband but she is the servant who earns by her house service. Unless wives work outside, they do not become business partners.

Since “marriage is the one road to fortune, to life,”²³⁶ girls are prepared for marriage all their lives. They are trained to use their feminine tricks and charms. While “boys plan for what they will achieve and attain, young girls plan for whom they will achieve and attain.”²³⁷ In this respect, girls generally sit and wait to be chosen to marry, in other words, to be supported economically by a man. It is not proper for a girl to ask a man to support her, thus if girls are not chosen, or left with broken hearts it is their fault to be “old maids.”²³⁸ Gilman said that girls must be accepted and welcomed as humans and need not marry the wrong man only for their livelihood. She claims that economic independence of women will eradicate all these misfortunes inequities:

²³³ Ibid. 106

²³⁴ Ibid. 107

²³⁵ Ibid. 9

²³⁶ Ibid. 44

²³⁷ Ibid. 45

²³⁸ Ibid. 46

Observe the ingenious cruelty of the arrangement. It is just as humanly natural for a woman as for a man to want wealth. But, when her wealth is made to come through the same channels as her love, she is forbidden to ask for it by her own sex-nature and by business honor. Hence the millions of mismade marriages with “anybody, good Lord!” Hence the million broken hearts which must let all life pass unable to make any attempt to stop it. Hence the many ‘maiden aunts,’ elderly sisters and daughters, untouched women everywhere, who are a burden on their male relatives and society at large. This is changing for the better, to be sure, but changing only through the advance of economic independence for women. A “bachelor maid” is a very different thing from “an old maid”²³⁹

In her novel The Crux, Gilman illustrated a group of women who leave their small town and move to Colorado in order to search for their economic independence or to have more chances to marry. Vivian Lane, who is the main character of the book, often quarrels with her father about marriage. Vivian wishes to go to a college to have her economic independence but her father claims that “a girl’s place is at home till she marries” because “marriage is woman’s duty.”²⁴⁰ Vivian tries to convince her father:

“Some men have no husbands to cleave to, Father.”

“They’d have husbands fast enough if they’d behave themselves,” he answered. “No man’s going to marry one of these self-sufficient independent, professional women, of course.”

“I do hope, Viva” said her mother, “that you’re not letting that Dr. Bellair put foolish ideas into your head.”

“I want to do something to support myself-sometime, Mother. I can’t live on my parents forever.”

“You be patient, child. There’s money enough for you to live on. It’s a woman’s place to wait,” put in Mr. Lane.

“How long?” inquired Vivian. “I’m twenty-five. No man has asked me to marry him yet. Some of the women in this town have waited thirty-forty-fifty-sixty years. No one has asked them.”²⁴¹

²³⁹ Ibid

²⁴⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. The Crux. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003. 29-30

²⁴¹ Ibid. 43

Herein, Vivian's father is ready to support her daughter; however, Vivian does not want to be a burden for her family forever. Vivian is not a character that has the fear of not marrying, but she is mostly anxious about her economic independence. She really wishes to go to a college to have a job to support herself. She promises her boyfriend Morton to marry him, but she never considers marriage as a "way to financial insurance." She wants to marry Morton because they really love each other.

In fact, the problem of the women in Vivian's small town is that most men go to West for college or to find better jobs. Women have to stay in the small town to wait for their chances for marriage. Apparently, as Vivian states, women in the town wait forty, fifty, even sixty years to marry. Since it is not proper for a girl to ask a man to support her, these women's only duty is to wait for men to come and ask them to marry. As there are no more men in the town, there will be no more chances for them to marry. And obviously these women, themselves, will be responsible for being "old maids." What is more, these women are not allowed to go to a college and have their own jobs to support themselves. As Vivian's father states, no man wants to marry to self-sufficient, independent and professional women. Thus, the women in this town are trapped by their fates.

In her novel, Gilman exemplified an utopical way of what women can do for themselves eluding their fate and leaving the small town to search for freedom. In the novel, we observe what women can do if they are given the same chance with men to gain their economic independence and also to choose their matches to marry. Around Vivian, there are many women some of whose hearts were broken by men years ago, or who are divorced or could not have the chance to marry. Vivian also has to wait for her boyfriend Morton since he goes to west for a job and college. These women leave their town to plan their own lives running a boarding house.

Vivian has a difficulty with explaining her father and mother that she will leave the town to search for her economic independence. They claim that a daughter should be obedient to her family. The surprise of the novel is that Vivian's grandmother Mrs. Pettigrew decides to go with Vivian to Colorado to "enjoy her life" although she is sixty

years old. She supports Vivian and agrees with her saying that mothers are so dependent to their families-both to their mothers, their husbands and also their children.

Gilman's women characters never submit to men who oppose women's working. By not marrying the wrong men, women should contribute to the purpose of the marriage and parentage, and also change the world getting rid of all the falsities and inequities of the patriarchal system. In her novel What Diantha Did, the main character Diantha refuses to marry to Ross when Ross wants Diantha to forego her job. Although she really loves Ross and has waited for him, Diantha can give up him. Ross cannot understand Diantha's ambitions for her job and gets very depressed:

“Do you realize that you're saying no to me, Diantha?”

“You are mistaken dear. I have said that I will marry you whenever you choose.

But it is you who are saying I will not marry a woman with a business.”

“This is foolishness!’ he said sharply. ‘No man-that is man-would marry a woman and let her run a business.’

“You're mistaken” she answered. “One of the finest men I ever knew has asked me to marry him-and keep on with my work!”

“Why didn't you take him up?”

“Because I didn't love him”²⁴²

Diantha wishes to give Ross a chance only when he is ready to marry a woman who has a business. Unless Ross accepts Diantha as a working wife, she will not marry to him. Although Diantha turns down another man who can accept her with a business, she is challenging the society order expecting that the man whom she really loves should admit her as a “working wife.” She persistently waits for Ross to accept her as she is, and finally Ross admits to marry to Diantha as a very successful businesswoman. In the end, Ross grasps the importance of Diantha's business and he becomes very proud of his wife. In her novels, Gilman shows how a woman can change the misconceptions and prejudices and can reconstruct the women's gender identities if she behaves persistently and does not marry the wrong man.

²⁴² Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. What Diantha Did. Project Gutenberg. 26 Jan 2009. 117
< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3016/3016.txt>

In What Diantha Did, Gilman deliberately portrayed a very successful and enthusiastic architect Isabel Porne. Isabel is a married young woman and has a baby. She cannot keep up with all the housework, childrearing and her occupation and she makes a monologue:

“Do you love me?” they ask, and, ‘I will make you happy!’ they say; and you get married-and after that it’s Housework!’

“They don’t say, ‘Will you be my Cook?’ ‘Will you be my Chamber maid?’ ‘Will you give up a good clean well-paid business that you love- that has big hope and power and beauty in it-and come and keep house for me’”²⁴³

Isabel Porne cannot perform her job while struggling with the baby, the burning meals, the kitchen that is full of grease, dust and flies. She confesses that sometimes she is in need of running away from both her baby and husband. She sometimes feels regretful for her marriage since that domestic work has made her marriage turn into a nightmare although she has spend five years to be a good architect. She realizes that after marriage her husband does not have to change his business, however she is always fighting overwhelming domestic work and has no time for her occupation. Only after hiring Diantha as a housekeeper, Mrs. Isabel Porne gains her domestic liberty and has more time to perform her job. She becomes a satisfied happy woman and appears fresher and young again. She saves her from getting depression.

Women feel miserable and depressed after marriage because they become a cook, housekeeper and a nursemaid of the house rather than a spouse for their husbands. The marriages which are based on only the sex-relations and also the needs of women’s care and services really damage the love and the relation between the couples. What is more, these are seriously destroying the psychology of the women. The main character of the story “The Yellow Wallpaper” has a serious depression after her marriage and childbirth. This young woman has no name, and through the story we comprehend that she is a writer. The real cause of her depression is that the young woman is being banned from working, from writing and even thinking about her work in order to recover her depression more rapidly. She has some hallucinations about the yellow

²⁴³ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. What Diantha Did. Project Gutenberg. 26 Jan 2009. 36
< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3016/3016.txt>

wallpaper of her bedroom. She sees a “woman” creeping on the wallpaper as if she needs to escape from her oppression. She often fancies people walking around her. Her husband John wants her not to think or fancy something:

There is a beautiful shaded lane that runs down there from the house. I always fancy I see people walking in these numerous paths and arbors, but John has cautioned me not to give way to fancy in the least. He says that with my imaginative power and habit of story-making, a nervous weakness like mine is sure to lead to all manner of excited fancies, and I ought to use my will and good sense to check the tendencies. So I try.

I think sometimes that if I were only well enough to write a little it would relieve the press of ideas and rest me.

But I find I get pretty tired when I try.

It is so discouraging not to have any advice and companionship about my work.²⁴⁴

The woman is aware that fancying is the best thing for her profession, and it is the only way to express and relieve herself, thus she cannot stop herself thinking and fancying. Probably, her subconscious is challenging to the idea that she should not work for the sake of her child and husband. She sometimes works, in other words, writes something secretly in her room when John is not at home.

The young woman has some hallucinations about the yellow wallpaper of her bedroom. She sees an image of a “woman” creeping on the wallpaper as if she needs to escape. She often gets very unhappy and cries in her room. Gilman describes her depression:

I don't feel as if it was worth while to turn my hand over for anything, and I'm getting dreadfully fretful and querulous. I cry at nothing and cry most of the time.

Of course I don't when John is here, or anybody else, but when I am alone.

And I am alone a good deal just now. John is kept in town very often by serious cases, and Jennie is good and lets me alone when I want her to.²⁴⁵

It is obvious that her husband John is not aware the fact that this woman is in need of expressing and realizing herself. She has depressions because she is rebelling to her dependence and gender roles that require only staying alone at home passively. Her

²⁴⁴ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. The Yellow Wallpaper. London: Virago Press, 2008.16

²⁴⁵ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. The Yellow Wallpaper. London: Virago Press, 2008. 19

husband John warns her not to fancy something for the sake of her psychology, yet her doctor Weir Mitchell has advised her doing so. Herein, Gilman tries to reflect her own depressions of her first marriage and she strictly criticizes the patriarchal system which imprisons women at homes claiming that home is the best place for women; and they should become happier staying away from working at their homes. She criticizes the mentality which asserts that marriage is for childrearing and being a housekeeper for women. Gilman persistently defends that marriage is for companionship and love in her novels and other intellectual works, and she alludes that both men and women will see marriage as a way of companionship only after women gain their economic independence.

As a socialist feminist, Gilman opposed that women who are marked as only “wives” and “mothers” doing all the domestic work and the child-rearing; but they remain unpaid and they can never have their payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor. Proposing that domestic work and childrearing should be socialized, Gilman tried to make the women’s work “waged,” and thus there would be no waste of labor. The duties of women as “home duties” and “child-caring duties” must be changed into “social duties,” and women must be freed from being only the consumers, housekeepers and child educators. They should work as social workers to contribute to the common good of the state, and can obtain their payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor. In socialism, wealth will increase more when more work is produced. Women’s gender identities that are defined by only “maternity” should be reconstructed and women should also have their statuses outside homes; and finally they should have the duties of financial maintenance of their homes and families. Doing so, women can find the best opportunities to feel themselves more “humans,” to realize and express themselves, and they can make social relations outside home; thus with the feelings of “full humanness” they will be happier and more beneficent mothers and wives to fulfill their duties. For Gilman, when the mother of the race is free, we shall have a better world.²⁴⁶ Then women can eradicate their oppression and subjugation to men. Marriage and motherhood will gain more meaning and importance for women,

²⁴⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 167
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

thus no women will consider marriage as the only way to financial security and if they work and earn their own living.

4.2. DOMESTIC LIBERTY FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Women have struggled to have their legal, social and economic rights in order to live as social and active citizens who are the part of the democracy; and to earn their own living as the members of community. Men have deprived women of their economic independence asserting women's reproductive differences and assigning them the duties of being "mothers" and "wives." Therefore, women have been kept at homes only to serve their husbands and feed and rear their children. For many years, women's gender roles have been constructed by men according to sex-relations without considering the fact that women are in need of developing social relations as well as men because they are also "human beings." Marriage has become the duty of women and "home" is known as the best place for women. Nevertheless, they are deprived of making social relations with other people while working hours alone at home. As humans are social creatures, they need social relations making friendships to work, associate and also to entertain together. Having been kept alone at homes, women are devoid of being fully humans.

Feminists tried to search and develop solutions for women's social and economic independence. Mary Wollstonecraft, the writer of Vindication of the Rights of the Women, appraised women's working in her book saying "How much more respectable is the woman who earns her own bread by fulfilling any duty, than the most accomplished beauty!"²⁴⁷

They criticized women's domestic slavery at home and claimed that women also should work to gain their economic independence. Gilman claimed women should be freed from their domestic slavery with the socialization of the domestic housework and cooking. She also proposed kitchenless hotel-like houses which enable women to gain time and energy to fulfill their jobs to earn their livings. What is more, they can

²⁴⁷ Wollstonecraft, Mary. Vindication of Rights of Women. 2008. 164
< www.forgottenbooks.org

also find the opportunity to develop more social relationships since they can feel much of their humanness.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman advocated the idea that women should work in any case, firstly in order to be independent economically, then to satisfy themselves intellectually and socially, and of course to contribute to the economy. Having seen her mother trying to support her children struggling with piled debts and working fourteen hours a day in a textile mill,²⁴⁸ Charlotte experienced of “what life was like for a woman who did not have a man to support her.”²⁴⁹ Charlotte was also free to support herself until the age of twenty-four. While living with her abandoned miserable mother, she was teaching art, painting advertising cards, drawing designs for monument and selling her paintings, because there was no man in their house to support the family. She wrote magazine articles and ran a boarding house to earn her living. She also conveyed her experiences of running a boarding house in her novels The Crux (1911) and What Diantha Did (1912) to illustrate economically free women characters. In her novels, Gilman tested how a woman could take part in labor market and run a business successfully as a man if she had the same opportunities.

Gilman dealt with the issue of women’s economic independence and emphasized that women’s economic relation is constructed according to their sex-relations stating that human beings are “the only animal species in which the female depends on the male for food,” and “the only animal species in which the sex-relation is also an economic relation.”²⁵⁰ She demanded that women should get rid of their domestic slavery and independency on their husbands and can find the opportunity to work outside homes. She also advocated that work done at home by the housewives could be paid more if it were at a workplace. She said “To segregate half the productive energy of the world and use it in private service of the crudest sort is economic

²⁴⁸ Nies, Judith. Nine Women: Portraits from the American Radical Tradition. California: University of California Press, 2002. 128

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 5
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

waste.”²⁵¹ Housewives work hours and hours at home but they are paid nothing. For this reason, Gilman determinedly supported socialization of housekeeping and cooking so that women can get rid of those herculean housework and can find time and energy to work outside as men to earn their living.

Gilman wrote What Diantha Did (1912) to praise the “socialization” of domestic work. In the novel, Diantha, who has graduated from college, gives up her job as a teacher and intends to go to Orchardina to do housekeeping business. Diantha’s father and boyfriend Ross oppose her going to another city to work as a “housekeeper” to earn money. Diantha portrays a determined and dominant female character who opposes both her father and boyfriend Ross. Diantha leaves home and goes to Orchardina and becomes the housekeeper of Mr. and Mrs. Porne. For most of men, working and earning their own livings do not fit for women. Their place is home and their duty is to do the domestic work. Diantha’s father describes her as “unfamiliar daughter” and her boyfriend Ross never accepts her earning money. Ross, who is working a lot to get rid of the debts of his dead father, thinks that earning money is the duty of men’s, not women’s:

“Now, Ross, will you be perfectly frank with me? May I ask you –an impertinent question?”

“You may ask me any question you like; it couldn’t be impertinent.”

“You’ll be scandalized, I know-but-well, here goes. What would you think if Madeline- or any of the girls- should go away to work?”

He looked at her lovingly, but with a smile on his firm mouth.

“I shouldn’t allow it,” he said.

“O--allow it? I asked you what you’d think.”

“I should think it was a disgrace to the family, and a direct reproach to me,” he answered. “But it’s no use talking about that. None of the girls have any such foolish notion. And I wouldn’t permit it if they had”

Diantha smiled. “I suppose you never would permit your wife to work?”

“My widow might have to-not my wife.”²⁵²

²⁵¹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. “How Home Conditions React Upon The Family.” The American Journal of Sociology. University of Chicago Press, 14.5 (mar. 1909): 599

²⁵² Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. What Diantha Did. Project Gutenberg. 26 Jan 2009. 7

As every man in the society, Ross considers women's earning money as a disgrace for the family, especially for the "man" of the house. He insists on saying that he "would not allow" her wife or sisters to work. In his opinion, it is the men's duty to work. Ross thinks that only his "widow" could work after his death. For him, a woman only works if she does not have a husband to support her. Ross, who has non-working five sisters and a mother at home, objects women's working outside. He never fancies his sisters' and mother's working to help him to get rid of the debts of his dead father. However, Diantha considers those non-working sisters as a loss for the family economy.

Ross thinks that work is only for "money" and he cannot consider women's satisfaction of developing success and more social relations. After Diantha's going to another city to do the business of "housekeeping," he cannot accept the idea why a woman needs to work and earn money. He writes a letter to Diantha to confess about his confusions:

"In the first place I love you. I shall love you always, whatever you do. But I will not disguise from you that this whole business seems to me unutterably foolish and wrong.

I suppose you expect by some mysterious to "develop" and "elevate" this housework business; and to make money. I should not love you any better if you made a million—and I would not take money from you—you know that I hope. If in the years we must wait before we can marry, you are happier away from me—working in strange kitchens—or offices—that is your affair.

I shall not argue nor plead with you, Dear girl; I know you think you are doing right; and I have no right and power to prevent you. But if my wish were right and power, you would be here to-night, under the shadow of the acacia boughs—in my arms!"²⁵³

Ross faces with Diantha's determination and also her ideals for elevating housework business which will also elevate the socialization of housework as Gilman always supported. Herein, Gilman portrays Diantha as a very strong female character since she does not pay heed to her boyfriend who considers her ideals as mysterious, foolish and wrong. This young woman is given as a sample who takes on a very hard work to gain her economic independence despite men's dissatisfactions and confusions.

< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3016/3016.txt>
²⁵³ Ibid. 43

Gilman also portrayed Diantha as a humble, modest housekeeper. However, she is very capable of doing her work properly. She knows how to manage her business applying her knowledge of statics into it. She does the work quickly and easily, and can seem fresh and full of energy even after all those “herculean labors” working full ten hours a day. Diantha, who has arithmetical capabilities, saves the money and contributes to the economy of the house since she knows well about marketing. Diantha shows her figures her employer Isabel Porne:

“Breakfast. Coffee at thirty-five cents per pound, one cup, one cent. Oatmeal at fourteen cents per package, one bowl, one cent. Bread at five cents per loaf, two slices, one-half cent. Butter at forty cents per pound, one piece, one and a-half cents. Oranges at thirty cents per dozen, one, three cents. Milk at eight cents per quart, on oatmeal, one cent. Meat or fish or egg, average five cents. Total—thirteen cents.”²⁵⁴

She consumes no more than two dollars and a half a week for the costs of food and other materials. Mr. Edgar Porne also appreciates her good cooking, cleaning and good economy; and states that the bills have reduced more than “a third.” Mrs. Porne does not need to tell her what she must do the next, and astonishes when she sees that her own house looks like another place.

The most astonishing thing for Mrs. Porne is that all of them cost so little, and Diantha explains it is the matter of “labor”:

“There! And show me dinner and lunch the same way. I had no idea food, just the material, cost so little. It’s the labor, she says that makes it cost even in the cheapest restaurant.”

“I see,” said Mr. Porne. “And in the case of the domestic servant we furnish the materials and she furnishes the labor.”²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. What Diantha Did. Project Gutenberg. 26 Jan 2009. 46
< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3016/3016.txt>

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Gilman emphasizes on the “labor” that is sold in reply to the work is especially sold more than the cost even in the cheapest restaurant. Herein, Gilman is making an indirect emphasis on the idea that the work done at home by the housewives could be paid more if it were at a workplace. The fact is that housewives already work hours and hours at home on these “herculean labors” but they are paid nothing.

The novel What Diantha Did is a good example of a woman who can take part in labor market and run a business successfully as a man having the same opportunities. Diantha has arithmetical capabilities; therefore she saves the money wisely and contributes to the economy of the Porne family since she knows well about marketing. Mr. and Mrs. Porne solve their problem hiring Diantha as a domestic housekeeper considering the fact that it is worth the money to have a housekeeper like Diantha. They think Diantha deserves the wages that she demands. In her six-month contract Diantha writes that:

Household labor calls for the practice of several distinct crafts, and, to be properly done, requires through training and experience. Its performer is not only in a position of confidence, as necessarily entrusted with the care of the employer’s goods and with knowledge of the most intimate family relations; but the work itself, in maintaining the life and health of the members of the household, is of most vital importance.

In consideration of existing economic conditions, however, I am willing to undertake these intricate and responsible duties for a seven day week at less wages than are given the street-digger, for \$1.50 a day.²⁵⁶

Gilman stresses that the work of “housekeeping” requires more training and experience than the housewives try to do. Besides, it is essential to “socialize” the domestic work to gain the money, time and energy that untrained housewives lose because of their inability to plan the work properly. Presenting an educated collegian woman as Diantha, who gives up teaching at schools and takes up this housekeeping business, Gilman wishes to emphasize that the domestic work needs also training and brain capacity, and also she honors the labor. Diantha’s abilities on statics and arithmetical calculations make her work more efficient.

²⁵⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. What Diantha Did. Project Gutenberg. 26 Jan 2009. 45
< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3016/3016.txt>

For Gilman, domestic work is the work that should be done meticulously, thus it should be socialized and should be paid for ten hours a day. She explains the attention of the work that a housekeeper-that is Diantha in the book- performs as:

Labor performed, average ten hours a day, as follows: Preparation of food materials, care of fires, cooking, table service, and cleaning of dishes, utensils, towels, stove, etc., per meal-breakfast two hours, dinner two hours, dinner three hours, supper or lunch one hour-six hours per day for food service. Daily chamber work and dusting, etc., one and one-half hours per day. Weekly cleaning for house of nine rooms, with halls, stairs, closets, porches, steps, walks, etc., sweeping, dusting, washing, mopping, scouring, etc., averaging two hours per day. Door service, waiting on tradesmen, and extras one-half hour per day. Total ten hours per day.²⁵⁷

The shocking part of these mind scrambling domestic labors is how a housewife can perform all these work properly when she does not hire a housekeeper. Gilman tries to demonstrate the enormity of the domestic work, and how a woman can gain her liberty when the domestic work is socialized. Herein, she presents Dianta's employer, Isabel Porne, who is a very capable architect but not an efficient in doing domestic work. Isabel Porne is a different woman in her office while she is working. She is eager to work with a practical knowledge and full of ideas and ideals.²⁵⁸ However, she cannot keep up with all the housework, childrearing and her occupation.

In the house, Isabel Porne has an office full of waiting work: plans for houses, design of kitchens etc. However, she cannot perform her job while struggling with the baby, the burning meals, the kitchen that is full of grease, dust and flies. Stating that she cannot bear housework, she thinks she would rather plan a dozen houses than clean one. After hiring Diantha as a housekeeper, Mrs. Isabel Porne gains her domestic liberty. She seems more fresh, young and happy again. She confesses if Diantha had not come, Mrs. Isabel's designs might have been untouched. She says happily:

“Why that's best of all! she cried triumphantly.

“I can work again! When Baby's asleep I get hours at a time; and even he's awake I've fixed a place where he can play-and I can draw and plan-just as I used to- better than I used to!”²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ Ibid. 47

²⁵⁸ Ibid. 41

²⁵⁹ Ibid. 50

Socialization of housekeeping will help women gain their time and energy, and give them opportunity to perform their professions and to develop social relations outside their home. This will support women a domestic liberty which makes them feel more humans and enjoy their new constructed female roles as working mothers for both their own families and the state.

In time, Diantha's success and reputation spread, and Women's Clubs ask Diantha to lecture on her housework business. Then, Diantha starts to operate "House Worker's Union," which educates and prepares housekeepers for domestic work. She also starts to run "Men's Lunch Café," which is to socialize cookery labor preparing lunch for businessmen, and a hotel for especially unmarried women. Ross finally gets rid of his debts and wants Diantha to forego her job for marriage. However, Diantha refuses to marry him since she works enthusiastically not for only money but for her own satisfaction.

For Gilman, another important factor that prevents women's domestic liberty to gain their economic independence is a traditional type of "home." Homes make women dependant and fully occupied with housework and prevent women from economical, social and also family relationships. While non-working women are kept at homes, the world is left to men. Thus, improvement is for men only, while women remain the same. Our typical homes are the causes of those overwhelming herculean housework that make people devoid of social companionships and also family relationships. Gilman considered that homes are also in favor of domestic and social customs that are originated from the sexuo-economic relations. Thus, homes never contribute to human advancement and need a radical change.²⁶⁰

Women are assigned to do the shopping, selecting the best food, cooking it and feeding their families in their homes. Women work in the kitchens hours and hours and cook to please the family members first, decide what to cook according to their husbands' and their children's favorites without regarding their health. For Gilman, "the

²⁶⁰ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 144
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

selection and preparation of food should be in the hand of trained experts”²⁶¹ because cooking should be done with knowledge but not with only affection.²⁶² Gilman advocated that cooking should be done by experts and families should live in kitchenless flats. She suggested a new type of home for families especially having working class women:

If there should be built and opened in any of our large cities to-day a commodious and well-served apartment house for professional women with families, it would be filled at once. The apartments would be kitchens; but there would be a kitchen belonging to the house from which meals could be served to the families in their rooms or in a common dining-room, as preferred. It would be a home where the cleaning was done by efficient workers, not hired separately by the families, but engaged by the manager of the establishment; and a roof garden, day nursery, and kindergarten, under well-trained professional nurses and teachers, would insure proper care of the children. The demand for such provision is increasing daily, and must soon be met, not by a boarding-house or a lodging house, a hotel, a restaurant, or any makeshift patching together of these; but by a permanent provision for the needs of women and children, of family privacy with collective advantage. This must be offered on a business basis to prove a substantial business success; and it will so prove, for it is a growing social need.²⁶³

For Gilman, homes should be only for shelter and retiring, a place of rest and peace, and thus they should be reconstructed. Gilman suggests hotel-like, or kitchenless family homes instead of having detached ones claiming that today it is essential for the new living conditions of working women. She also defends that cooking and eating should be done in a “common kitchen” in an apartment, and once again she supports her ideals on socialization of all kind of housework such as cleaning and nursing.

Gilman asserted that these kitchenless homes require less cleaning, and these types of homes will be pure and hygienic. Having no kitchen will not mean separate family members, on the contrary, all family will gather in the common dining-room at meals. Gilman suggested one room for each person in homes. She claimed that decorating homes is the need of “women’s expression” when they are kept at homes as housewives. Economically independent women express themselves by their activities

²⁶¹ Ibid. 116

²⁶² Ibid. 113

²⁶³ Ibid. 118

and social relations. Thus, homes should be “simple” and there will be “more beauty and less work.”²⁶⁴

In her utopic novel Herland, Gilman exemplified her assertions. Women in Herland have university-like buildings as homes and people do not live in separate houses with their families. Alima, Celis and Ellador cannot understand Terry when he asks why Herland people do not have their family homes:

But when we began to talk about each couple having ‘homes’ of our own, they could not understand it.

“Our work takes us all around the country,’ explained Celis. ‘We cannot live in one place all the time.’”

“We are together now,” urged Alima, looking proudly at Terry’s stalwart nearness. (This was one of the times when they were ‘on’ though presently ‘off’ again.)

“It’s not the same thing at all,” he insisted. “ A man wants a home of his own, with his wife and family in it.”

“Staying in it? All the time?” asked Ellador. “Not imprisoned, surely!”

“Of course not! Living there naturally,” he answered.

“What does she do there-all the time?” Alima demanded. “What is her work?”

Then Terry patiently explained again that our women did not work-with reservations.

“But what do they do-if they have no work?” she persisted.

“They take care of the home –and the children.”

“At the same time?” asked Ellador.

“Why yes. The children play about, and the mother has charge of it all. There are servants, of course.”²⁶⁵

Women of Herland are astonished when they learn that people of the world need home to keep their women imprisoned to take care of their children and also of the “home.” In Herland, women have professions and they work for the common good of whole country travelling; and they have all kinds of works socialized such as cleaning, cooking and child-rearing. Herland women realize themselves outside their homes as individuals, in other words as “humans.”

²⁶⁴ Ibid. 126

²⁶⁵ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Herland. London: The Women’s Press, 2001.96-97

In her novel What Diantha Did, Gilman presents her suggestions for a new type of house. Mrs. Porne, who is a successful architect, makes plans of houses regarding practical advantages for women:

She pointed out in the new drawings the practical advantages of kitchen and pantry; the simple but thorough ventilation, the deep closets, till her friend fairly laugh at her.

“And you say you’re not domestic!”

“I’m a domestic architect, if you like,” said Isabel; “but not a domestic servant.”²⁶⁶

Diantha also asked Mrs. Porne to make plans for a boarding-house for girls having a big dining-room, office, thirty bedrooms, laundry and kitchen and a hall for dancing. Likewise, in Gilman’s novel The Crux, women who leave their small town to search for their economic independence start to live in a boarding house grouping together. They are freed from all domestic work outside their typical homes and can easily develop social relations with other people organizing parties in the boarding-house.

Gilman stated that “only as we live, think, feel and work outside the home, do we become the humanly developed, civilized, socialized”²⁶⁷ and she criticized the idea that bachelor apartments for men and also women have a bad influence on marriage and family life. On the contrary, men and also women are individuals who have the right to own their houses if they are unmarried. People can have their home for shelter and comfort without regarding marriage and sex-relations.²⁶⁸ Gilman said “if all men had to be hunters from day to day, the world would be savage still. While all women have to be house servants from day to day, we are still a servile world.”²⁶⁹ Women should be freed from the gender roles as only “dependent mothers” and “servant-wives” kept at homes.

²⁶⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. What Diantha Did. Project Gutenberg. 26 Jan 2009. 41

< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3016/3016.txt>

²⁶⁷ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 110

< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu./women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

Ibid. 110

²⁶⁸ Ibid. 145

²⁶⁹ Ibid. 128

Gilman opposed that people have strict gender roles based on their family relations. She stated that we are “persons” as well as the members of our families, and thus, getting rid of our sex-relationships we all need more to associate with other people. She opposes that women do not work outside and thus they are stuck to their homes and remain asocial:

Men have satisfied this desire in large measure; but between women, or between men and women, it is yet far from accomplishment. Men meet one another freely in their work, while women work alone. But the difference is sharpest in their play. “Girls don’t have any fun!” says boys, scornfully; and they don’t have very much. What they do have must come, like their bread and butter, on lines of sex.²⁷⁰

Herein, she criticizes the fact that men can easily develop social relationships outside home at work while women are deprived of it. Gilman asserts that “humanity means being together”²⁷¹ and emphasizes the pleasure of deep friendships at schools, colleges, in camping trips and in business.

Women, the part of the democracy and the members of the community as men, should be freed from the domestic slavery moving outside their homes firstly by gaining their economic independence. With the socialization of the domestic housework such as cooking, cleaning and also childrearing, and living in kitchenless houses or family-hotels, women will gain time and energy to fulfill their professions to earn their living first, and then to express themselves with their outside interests and intellectual studies, and also will find the opportunity to develop more social relationships feeling much of their humanness instead of being marked only as “females” with the gender roles of mothers and wife-servants.

²⁷⁰ Ibid. 150

²⁷¹ Ibid. 149

4.3. EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Education is important for women for three reasons: to be awakened and learn to include in public life and labor market that is at the hands of men; to improve themselves in order to have a good profession for economic independence; and to improve and satisfy themselves intellectually. Firstly, education is essential to mold the young girls and help them have strong gender identities to realize themselves, and secondly to fulfill their professions more beneficently. When women work outside as social workers, they still remain as “mothers” and “wives;” however, they are, surely, unlike the mothers who are not educated to be more beneficial for their children, their husbands and homes. However, women have been kept at homes and deprived of education because they do not need professions to support themselves and their families. Education and professions have become the men’s concern, not the women’s. Women who do not prefer to marry but to go to college to have a well-paid job as men are considered to be “unfamiliar” ones by men. All the opportunities of education and profession have been shut to women. Thus women have lived an asocial parasitic life at homes dependent to men for years. For Gilman, education is a collective, human and “social” function;²⁷² thus, it should be given to the young people in groupings of peers, and really should require the teaching of socialization. Girls are educated for only “marriage” by their mothers, and they are only taught to use their feminine charms as because they have to sit and wait to be chosen by men to marry. However, for social evolution, girls should be educated to have their economic independence and to be more intellectual citizens in the society to eradicate the women’s oppression. For Gilman, education has been performed with androcentric prejudices so far to contribute to the instincts of “desire and combat.” This is good only for patriarchy and of course for men’s economic development. It needs only the men’s participation. However Gilman supported socialism which will give all women the opportunity to contribute to the state’s economy. Thus, all women will work as social workers and can get their payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor. Clearing away the

²⁷² Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 138
< <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

androcentric influences of education women will change the world. By means of education, women will also rebuild the world and eradicate its all falsities, inequities and diseases.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman attracted the attentions to the point that women who are assigned to rear children and do housekeeping are left untrained and inexperienced. They are left alone to perform their work only by their “instincts;” however, no business can be performed by instincts. Gilman said “No great man runs a business by instinct; he learns how.”²⁷³ All social work in the world needs three powers: special ability or genius, education and experience.²⁷⁴ While men are educated to perform their well-paid professions, women are left ignorant at homes to do their unpaid motherhood. Then, why are women deprived of education and experiences to be able to perform their supreme task? Emphasizing this androcentric hypocrisy, Gilman advocated that women should be educated to perform their own professions to be economically free. Thus, she advocated that childrearing and education should be done at childcare services and schools by the specialists and teachers who are educated, experienced and skilled, and learnt well to do their business. Improvement of the race requires more educated and civilized children. Charlotte Perkins Gilman stated that education is the most important thing to have more civilized nations and this should be started at childcare services and schools:

Teaching is a specialized motherhood. It gives ‘the mother love’-an attribute of all female animals toward their own young –a chance to grow social form as a general love of children, and through specialization, training, experience, it makes this love far more useful. The teacher is to some degree a social mother, and the advantage of this social motherhood is so great that it would seem impossible to question it. Motherhood is common to all races of humanity, down to the Bushmen, as well as to beasts and birds. Education is found only with us; and in proportion to our stage of social progress. Where the teacher comes, and in proportion to the quantity and quality of teachers, so advances civilization. In Africa there are mothers, prolific and affectionate; in China, in India, everywhere. But the nations with the most and best education are those which lead the world.²⁷⁵

²⁷³ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins ed. “Genius, Domestic and Maternal”. The Forerunner (Volume 1: November 1909- December 1910). Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 352

<<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext02/forer10.txt>

²⁷⁴ Ibid .

²⁷⁵ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins ed. “Genius, Domestic and Maternal”. The Forerunner (Volume 1: November 1909- December 1910). Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 353-354

<<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext02/forer10.txt>

Herein, Gilman suggests a “social parentage” which is given to all children by social educators at childcare centers and schools. She combines education and motherhood excluding it from being only women’s untrained and unpaid profession that is done at homes. What’s more, all the mothers in the country do not have the same conditions, so they cannot give the same care and education to their children. How can the rich men’s wives and the poor men’s wives perform the same motherhood? And also how can the mothers of many children can find more time to rear and educate them than the mothers of only one?²⁷⁶ Thus, girls should be educated to have their economic independence so that they can provide better education and care for their children. Besides, trained and educated women are the best teachers working at childcare services and schools. For this reason, women should have education to be teachers and also social workers for the good of all country, and can get their payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor. Gilman presented education with a dual necessity: It is a path for women to gain their economic independence and also provides non-working women new professions as teachers and childcare specialists. Therefore, socialization of education helps women’s economic advancement.

When the education is not left to the untrained and unpaid mothers, children will be cared and educated in well-organized and improved environments and with the best methods within the children of their ages at childcare centers and schools. These will contribute to the socializing purposes. Children can obtain much more skills and abilities at childcare centers than their households. For example, they can benefit from the skills of their dancing-teacher, music teacher, etc.²⁷⁷ Charlotte Perkins Gilman exemplified her suggestions about education perfectly in her utopic novel Herland. In Herland, mothers live with their babies for one year, nursing and caring them, and after one year, not staying with the babies so closely but also not going far away, they entrust their babies to the co-mothers of the child services. Then the education starts for the children. The children of Herlanders are reared and educated with the “fully awakened

²⁷⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution. Project Gutenberg. Jan, 2002. 93
<<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html>

²⁷⁷ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins ed. “Genius, Domestic and Maternal”. The Forerunner (Volume 1: November 1909- December 1910). Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 352
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext02/forer10.txt>

motherhood plans”²⁷⁸ in an environment that has been deliberately improved for the good of the child. All children are educated to be better than the preceding generations to contribute to the social evolution. In the novel, “social parentage” is presented and exemplified perfectly. Education is considered as “developed motherhood”, thus the specialists and teachers are to some degree social mothers. The children of Herland are born into a world full of many materials and opportunities to learn and also “into the society of plentiful numbers of teachers” who are trained well to do their business.²⁷⁹

Women of Herland have a perfect education to do their business first, then to educate their children. They have two kinds of knowledge: common knowledge and special knowledge. Common knowledge is for everyone, but special knowledge is to anyone who desires.²⁸⁰ Some people specialize in one field; and most people learn more than a few jobs to do regularly or to only improve themselves. Ellador decides to be a forester when she has found a different butterfly and takes it to her insect teacher. She says Ellador that she has prevented the butterfly to lay eggs and destroy thousands of nut trees. Everybody congratulates Ellador and her achievement encourages her to choose a branch to specialize in the future:

“Everybody congratulated me. The children all over the country were told to watch for that moth, if there were any more. I was shown the history of the creature, and an account of the damage it used to do and of how long and hard our foremothers had worked to save that tree for us. I grew a foot, it seemed to me, and determined then and there to be a forester.”²⁸¹

Ellador is taught the history of that butterfly and educated well do her business in the future. The things that they learn are related to each other, and children are very determined about their future jobs even from their early ages.²⁸² Children are educated unconsciously and naturally so that they feel no pressure and easily choose a branch to specialize.²⁸³ In her utopic Herland, Gilman exemplified her suggestions about the methods of teaching and education of the young generation in the sense of socialism so

²⁷⁸ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Herland. London: The Women’s Press, 2001.102

²⁷⁹ Ibid. 107

²⁸⁰ Ibid. 104

²⁸¹ Ibid. 101

²⁸² Ibid. 101-102

²⁸³ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Herland. London: The Women’s Press, 2001. 95

as to build up a great race for the common good through the children. Herland women have their education freely to gain their economic independence and as a result they can collectively build a perfect country to live. In Herland, there is no man, thus there is no misconception of that “women are improper for education”. Herland women have the chance of having education, specializing in one field, and above all having satisfying professions, and therefore there is no oppression in their perfect country as in our world.

In her novel The Crux, Gilman presented a brave young woman Vivian Lane, who is mostly anxious about her economic independence. She really wishes to go to a college to have a profession to support herself. In Vivian’s small town most men go to West for college to find better jobs. Women have to stay in their small town to wait for their chances for marriage. Education is men’s duty while it is a women’s place to wait. Vivian cannot accept this and she opposes her family:

“I don’t know why you’re all so down on a girl’s going to college. Eve Marks has gone, and Mary Spring is going- and both the Austin girls. Everybody goes now.”
“I know one girl that won’t,” was her father’s incisive comment, and her mother said quietly, “A girl’s place is at home-’till she marries.”
“Suppose I don’t want to marry?” said Vivian.
“Don’t talk nonsense,” her father answered. “Marriage is a woman’s duty.”
“What do you want to do?” asked Miss Josie in the interests of further combat. “Do you want to be a doctor like Jane Bellair?”
“I should like to very much indeed,” said the girl with quiet intensity. “I’d like to be a doctor in a babies’ hospital.”
“More nonsense,” said Mr. Lane. “Don’t talk to me about that woman! You attend your studies, and then to your home duties, my dear.”²⁸⁴

Herein, for her family Vivian has to choose marriage instead of going to college since “marriage is a woman’s duty.” She finds her own solution: She chooses not to marry but to have an education to be a doctor. If a woman has to marry, and education is only thing to be blamed, Vivian thinks that she has to give up her marriage. Once again, women confront with the common misconception that women do not need any education and a profession because they should stay at home to do housework and

²⁸⁴ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. The Crux. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003. 29 -30

childrearing. Vivian prefers to support herself than to be dependent to a husband, thus she wishes to have a proper education.

In The Crux, Gilman presented a well-educated and independent woman Dr. Bellair to be a good example for Vivian and the other women. Although Vivian's parents do not like Dr. Bellair because they think she puts foolish ideas into their daughter's head, she leads Vivian to leave her town, to have a good profession for her economic independence, and also advises Vivian not to marry a man who has syphilis for her future children's sake. Dr. Bellair is not a woman who waits to be chosen to marry to be supported economically all her life, but she chose to have an education instead, going to a college and then a medical school. She leads a group of women to leave their small town to search for freedom. She persuades all those women and explains that moving to the west will open them the gate and an opportunity of a new life. As an educated woman, Dr. Bellair sets a good example for those women and helps them to get rid of their oppression and become free.

In her novel What Diantha Did, an educated collegian woman Diantha can make use of the advantages of her education. When Diantha takes up housekeeping business to earn money, her abilities on statics and arithmetical calculations make her work more efficient and she can easily overcome the herculean housework. Gilman emphasized that the domestic work also needs training and education. Taking the advantages of their education, housekeepers never lose money, time and their energies, thus they can find the opportunities to earn more money and even entertain themselves making more social relations. Since Diantha is a very qualified and efficient housekeeper, her employers Mr. and Mrs. Porne think Diantha deserve the wages that she demands.

In the novel, Gilman presented an elevated domestic business done by well-educated housekeepers. Diantha is hired to educate the housekeepers in the city. Diantha claims that housekeeper girls "are not servants but employees" thus they need a good education to fulfill their work perfectly. She teaches them arithmetic, simple dressmaking, and also gives them easy methods of housework. The girls are picked and trained in House Work Union, and after their education they can work an agreeable

number of hours and are paid by the hour or day. They can earn more than they earned a week as home servants. These well-educated girls work ten hours a day, can perform much more work than before and they can even find time to rest and entertain themselves dancing or having tea together. At the same time, their mistresses have their domestic liberty thus they can find time and energy to fulfill their outside professions and to make social relations. They become independent women who can get rid of their oppression.

When women are imprisoned and left ignorant at homes they cannot have the chance to overcome their oppression. They have no economic independence thus they have no voice to change anything in the house since they have to obey their husbands. All these contribute to the men's independence and economic advancement. For Gilman, women's participation is essential for a social evolution to heal the androcentric world, so girls should be educated well to have their economic independence and to be more intellectual citizens in the society to eradicate the women's oppression.

For Gilman, so far education has been performed with androcentric influences. Girls were discriminated and left untrained to be the best servants as their mothers while boys were educated to work and manage the world:

This conscious education was, for long, given to boys alone, the girls being left to maternal influence, each to learn what her mother knew, and more. This very clear instance of the masculine theory is glaring enough by itself to rest a case on. It shows how absolute was the assumption that the world was composed of men, and men alone were to be fitted for it. Women were no part of the world, and needed no training for its uses. As females they were born and not made; as human beings they were only servants, trained as such by their servant mothers.²⁸⁵

For Gilman, women were deliberately left ignorant in order to contribute to the patriarchy. Since women were needed at home as servants, they were not allowed to have a proper education. Since it was improper for women to work, education was also

²⁸⁵ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Our Androcentric Culture, or the Man-Made World. Project Gutenberg. Jan.2009. 47
< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3015/3015.txt>

improper for them. Then the world was shut to women, and they had no share in the labor market. How men went wrong thinking that “the world was composed of men” only!

Besides, this androcentric education system contributes to the men’s instincts of “combat and desire” causing the children competing each other and making effort to learn only to take pleasure as in sports and games. With the women’s inclusion, education would be more maternal than competitive. It will aim to exercise the mind more than to take pleasure or improving “manliness.” Since education is a human process, it should develop human qualities instead of sex qualities.²⁸⁶

To sum up, women who have been kept at homes and deprived of education for years should be educated to have their economic independence and to be more intellectual citizens in the society to eradicate the women’s oppression. Education and professions have become the men’s duty instead of women’s because of the misconception that women do not need professions to support themselves and their families. Therefore, women have faced with the conflict of choosing marriage to be dependent to their husbands or education for a profession to be economically independent. Gilman also defended socialization of education because she thought it helps women’s economic advancement. Education should not be left only to mothers to be performed at homes; however, with the childcare centers children should be educated within their peers. By doing this, children are not separated from their mothers; on the contrary, the mothers are supplemented with the help of specialists since education needs more skills and specialization. All children are educated to be better than the preceding generations to contribute to the social evolution. For Gilman, education is a human process, thus it should not contribute to the men’s instincts of combat and desire, and thus it should not develop only sex qualities. With the women’s inclusion, education would be more maternal than competitive. By means of conscious education and social parentage all kinds of androcentric prejudices and inequities could be defaced easily to contribute more to the women’s economic advancement.

²⁸⁶ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. Our Androcentric Culture, or the Man-Made World. Project Gutenberg. Jan.2009. 49-50
< <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/3/0/1/3015/3015.txt>

CONCLUSION

Being awakened with feminism and its revolutions, women who had been left unpaid and unvoiced for years at homes to fulfill their jobs as wives and mothers struggled to have their legal, social and economical rights. They fought to eradicate the women's former gender roles and attempted to break the rules that had contributed to patriarchy and also capitalism so far. Feminists objected women's gender roles because they had been constructed by men in the man-made world due to their motherhood since women can reproduce and feed their children. All the efforts of feminists were to enlighten women to rise up to have the same legal, social and economical rights as men and also to include women into public life and labor market. The knowledge and science should have become available for all humans, not for men only... Feminists proposed their theories to renovate the male-centered concepts in order to build up new policies and create new conditions for women's lives. With feminism movements women could debate on woman rights publicly and demanded equal rights for women as well as men. Gaining property and voting rights brought them the opportunity to struggle for their sexual, reproductive and economical rights. Besides, women could appear in labor market to have their economical independence and also to contribute to the economy.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman proposed her own resolutions as a humanist, feminist writer supporting a radical social change which was based on social evolution so that women could gain their rights and she emphasized that this would be beneficial for both women and all humanity. She made her feminist theories combining socialism and feminism; and inspiring by like Lester F. Ward and Patrick Geddes, she applied Darwin's evolution theory into her arguments in her works. Like Jane Adams, as a cultural feminist, Gilman claimed that women are race-type and would change the world by their affection, serviceable manners and mother instincts eradicating men's instincts of desire and combat. She criticized women's being parasite since they do not work outside but are imprisoned at homes doing only unpaid housework and childrearing. She objected the misconception that women should stay at home to do the housework and childrearing. On the contrary, women should work for their own good

and also to contribute to the production. Women are dependent to their husbands economically and thus they are considered as “secondary” and “complement” of men. Therefore, Gilman believed that women can be emancipated only when they gain their economical independence. Working outside their homes would also bring them free social relations.

Gilman combined socialism and feminism because, for her, socialism enables women’s work and economic development and this contributes to the elimination of women’s oppression and also getting more economic efficiency and production in the case of women’s inclusion to the public and economic life. Gilman claimed that socialism repays the community members in return to their labor as social services and people can get payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor. Thus, wealth will increase more and more when more work is produced. In socialism, the socialized and economically planned production belongs to whole community whose members can benefit equally from it, thus Gilman repeated that socialism means “public ownership of public things.” Gilman associated capitalism with patriarchy because the world is androcentric and the system is capitalism; and thus she proposed socialism for women’s emancipation. She claimed that socialism is the best system that includes all the members of the society, women as well as men; and it eradicates all kinds of oppressions and inequalities both socially and economically.

The purpose of this thesis was to analyze the economic independence of women in Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s works in the aspect of feminism and gender identity. Gilman presented distinctive strong characters in her novels to prove her assertions and to encourage women to rise up for their emancipation. She struggled to evoke “women’s humanness” and attempted to prove that women should work to gain their economic independence, and also to eradicate their oppression and subjugation to men. In this thesis, analyzing the relationships of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s strong women characters, we could see:

- how women could gain their economic independence, and
- how they could take part in the labor market as successfully as men at least , if they were given the same opportunity and freedom as men.

Gilman attempted to illustrate “how the life could be for women and all humanity if women had the same opportunity with men” with her utopian novels, articles and also poems. She wrote utopic novels which have very distinctive strong women characters to present an alternative utopian environment to justify her economic theories. Like all feminists, Gilman created alternative versions of working and living conditions in order to make a better future for women, and for everyone, indeed. She aimed to contribute to the women’s advancement, and consequently to social growth. Presenting her distinctive characters in her utopic novels, she tested and proved that if women were included into economic workplace as well as men, life would be more peaceful for women and all humanity.

According to Gilman, because of men’s desire and combat instincts the world has been suffering at the hands of men, and now it needs women to be healed. Patriarchy has oppressed all women, and also has harmed the economy. It has contributed only to poverty and warfare. Thus, it is high time women included into economic workplace and public life. With women’s participation, the world would be more peaceful, more systematic in sense of both economy and welfare.

Gilman firmly opposed that human beings arrange their economic relations considering only sex-relations instead of social relations. Gilman proposed radical changes in society and family life for a racial and social development. She emphasized that human relationships are arranged without regarding social needs. In her book Women and Economics (1898), Gilman tried to justify how men dominantly conquered the social and economic life over centuries and how they paralyzed economy by eliminating women workers claiming that women are the weaker sex and should stay home to do domestic work and rear their children. She analyzed Darwin’s evolution theory and applied them in her works. She stated that with “the survival of the fittest” and “the elimination of the unfit” theories, men dominated over women and excluded

them from economic workplace, science and politics. By natural selection theory, sexual selection developed with the dominance of human males without regarding social needs and social relations, thus human beings developed only sexuo-economic relations in families. Women had to fall behind men in time and became economically dependent to their husbands. Men became the master and the strongest force to eliminate the unfit: Women!

Gilman asserted that if women had become the servants by the social evolution in time, they could recover from being “the unfit” and could regain their independence. She proposed her solutions for women to be saved from male dominancy to reconstruct new gender roles in order to gain their social, political and economic independence. In her novels, she illustrated very strong female characters who are enthusiastically struggling for their economic independence. She tried to realize the radical social change that was essential for social evolution and racial process. Gilman’s female characters can overcome men’s superiorities and the pressures of sex relations of the androcentric world, and have the same opportunities with men in terms of profession, education and social life. They are included into market place and can demonstrate much more success than men. Women also change the family relations under male dominancy, select their mates, and they even make their own decisions for marriage. Gilman’s women characters never submit to men who oppose women’s working. They never consider marriage as the only way to financial security and they work and earn their own living. They contribute to the race development and the welfare of the humanity much more than men can do.

Gilman constructed dominant women gender roles in Herland in order to prove what would happen if women had all the opportunities of improvement without having the dominancy of men. There is no man in Herland, therefore the women have never been restricted by men. Above all, their gender roles have never been constructed by men. There is no sexuality, thus women never develop feminine charms to please men to be selected as mates. Therefore, they do not need to develop sexuo-economic relations which are really paralyzing women’s advancement as in our man-made world. Herlander women have the knowledge and power, and no gender division of labor, thus

they work equally having well-paid jobs, and get their payment in proportion to the quality and the quantity of their labor. Herland women reproduce parthenogenically and have always female babies. There is no man, thus women do not work only for their husbands but they work for all the community with a collective motherhood. They are active members of the community. With Herland, presenting a perfect lifestyle, education system, relationships, history and government, Gilman created an ideal society removing the male dominancy. She wished to illustrate that humanity would be more peaceful and there would be no oppression for women.

She presented Herland to prove that socialism is the best system that includes all the members of the society. Herland is a socialist country of dominant women and socialism eliminates all kinds of oppressions and inequalities both socially and economically. Presenting the novel With Her in Ourland, Gilman allowed the reader to compare the perfect organization of socialism in Herland and the destructive features of capitalism of this “androcentric” world.

In her works, Gilman proposed, discussed and exemplified nearly three factors in order to contribute to women’s economic advancement: Domestic liberty for economic independence, motherhood and marriage are not professions for women, and education for economic independence. Women have been kept at homes to serve their husbands and feed and rear their children, thus “home” is known as the best place, and motherhood and marriage are the best professions for women. For men, there is no need to educate women who are only responsible for serving, cleaning and rearing. Gilman tried to clarify that women can gain her economic independence only when they are freed from their herculean housework and childrearing, and of course, when they have an education in order to earn their living. Gilman analyzed these interrelated factors such as domestic liberty, marriage, motherhood and education in the aspect of economic independence and proposed her solutions to eradicate women’s oppression.

Gilman opposed to the domestic slavery at home and claimed that women also should work to gain their economic independence. While working hours alone at home, women are also devoid of being fully humans. She claimed that if women gain their domestic liberty, they can find more time and opportunities to earn money. In her novel

What Diantha Did, Gilman presented an educated collegian woman Diantha, who leaves her home and takes up housekeeping business to earn money. Besides, introducing the socialization of domestic work and cooking, Gilman claimed that women can save their energies, and they can even entertain themselves or make more social relations. Then, there will be no depression and also no oppression for women. Gilman tried to prove that working outside is not only for men, but is also for women. In her novels, Gilman tested how women who were freed from domestic housework could take part in labor market and ran a business successfully as men.

Gilman also advocated that cooking should be socialized and done by experts, and thus there should be kitchenless flats for families. She suggested a new type of home for the good of working class women to save their domestic liberty. These kitchenless homes would require less cleaning, and thus would be pure and hygienic. In addition, women would not spend much time on selecting and buying food to cook, and they could dedicate themselves to do their jobs. Gilman claimed that decorating homes is the need of “women’s expression,” thus women who are freed from housework and cooking would express themselves by their professions, outside activities and social relations.

Gilman claimed that marriage should never be a way to have a financial insurance for women, or it should not be to get home services for men, but it should be for companionship and love. In her novel The Crux, a brave young woman Vivian Lane cannot accept her family’s principles of “profession is men’s duty, but marriage is women’s.” For Vivian, women should also go to college and have a profession to support themselves. When marriage is presented as an alternative to work, Vivian chooses not to marry because she never wants marriage for its financial purposes. She leaves her small town to earn her own living. Soon she becomes free and starts to work in a kindergarten and can rent a house to live in. Gilman illustrates a young woman who is independent and feels useful. Vivian is unhappy because of not marrying to her lover, a man having syphilis, but feels more peaceful and powerful since she has a good job to earn her living and a right to choose her future husband. She is not an oppressed woman since she has her economical and social independence, so by not marrying the wrong

man, she appears to be a good sample for women who can contribute to the purpose of the marriage and parentage. In her novels, Gilman shows how a woman can change the misconceptions and prejudices, can reconstruct the women's gender identities, and above all, she can change the world getting rid of all the falsities and inequities of the patriarchal system when she behaves persistently and does not marry the wrong man.

When marriage is for financial insurance, it is based on only the sex-relations and the needs of women's care and services. Women cannot work to earn money, and they also quit their outside interests and activities in order to fulfill their duties as wives and mothers. Then women get depressed after marriage because they become a cook, housekeeper and a nursemaid of the house rather than a spouse for their husbands. All these really damage the love and the relation between couples. Women are dependent to their husbands, they have no money and social relations; therefore they become more depressed and oppressed.

The main character of the story "The Yellow Wallpaper" has a serious depression after her marriage and childbirth. She has some hallucinations about the yellow wallpaper of her bedroom. She sees a "woman" creeping on the wallpaper as if she needs to escape from her oppression. Turning into a non-working woman after marriage, she feels useless and asocial. Her depression is because of her being banned from working. Having been molded in patriarchic system, her husband and her male doctor cannot understand her real trouble, thus they want her not to work to recover her depression more rapidly. This woman remains only as a "wife" and a "mother." For Gilman, marriage should be freed from the assigns of being only "mothers" and "wives."

Gilman claimed that motherhood is not a job of every woman, but is only a "process of life." Family is not identical with "marriage" and it cannot be connected to sex-relationships, thus women are not only mothers or wives. In addition, motherhood is not an individual function, but a social function. Maternal instincts are not sufficient to be a good mother and children require more care and instruction besides their mothers' love and embrace. Therefore motherhood needs more assistance and should be supported with the child care centers. When the childcare is socialized, mothers would

find more time and also more energy to work outside to earn their living. Economically independent mothers could realize themselves and feel their humanness. Then, motherhood would not be a burden for them, thus they would feel fresh and would be more beneficial.

Education is important for women in order to have a good profession for their economic independence. With education, women can improve themselves and learn to include in public life and labor market as men. Gilman claimed that education is also essential to eradicate the androcentric prejudices which contributed to patriarchy. Patriarchy needs only the men's participation and this contributes only to men's economic development. Gilman advocated that education should not be only men's concern, but it should be also for women. By means of education, women will eradicate all falsities, inequities and diseases of the patriarchal world and they will rebuild it.

Gilman opposed to the idea that only men should be educated to perform their well-paid professions while women should be kept ignorant at homes to do their unpaid domestic work and motherhood that is based only their simple maternal instincts. For Gilman, boys are educated at schools to earn their living while girls are educated by only their untrained mothers to be the future wives and mothers. Girls' education is only "to please men" and rear their children. In her novel Herland, Gilman presented a perfect country that has no man, thus there is no misconception of that "women are improper for education." Herland women have their education freely, specialized in one field, and have satisfying professions. They gain their economic independence and can collectively build a perfect country to live, thus there is no oppression in their perfect country as in our world.

In Gilman's novel The Crux, Vivian Lane challenges her father who asserts that education is men's duty while it is a women's place to wait. She decides to go to a college to have a profession to earn her living. Education is only thing to be blamed if a woman does not want to marry. Despite her father's objections, Vivian gives up her marriage and prefers to support herself than to be dependent to a husband. In this novel, a well-educated and independent woman Dr. Bellair stands as a good example for

Vivian and the other women. As an educated woman, Dr. Bellair leads them to have their economic independence and also get rid of their oppression and become free.

For Gilman, motherhood does not mean educating and rearing children. Education should not left to the untrained and unpaid mothers. Gilman firmly supported socialization of education. She advocated that education is a path to have more civilized nations, thus it should be started at childcare services and schools. At this point, Gilman supported that women can make use of their motherhood instincts, so they can be the best teachers working at childcare services and schools. Thus, it provides non-working women new professions as teachers and childcare specialists. Women should have education to be social workers for the good of all country, and also can get their payment in proportion to the quality and quantity of their labor.

Gilman presented an educated collegian woman Diantha in her novel What Diatha Did. Diantha takes the advantages of her education and her abilities on statics and arithmetical calculations, thus she can easily overcome the herculean housework. Well-educated housekeepers spend the money wisely on shopping, thus and they can contribute to the family's economy. Gilman emphasized that the domestic work also needs training and education. In this way, she tried to prove that housework should also not be left to untrained housewives. Education is needed for many purposes: For having well-paid jobs, for childrearing and for housework. Once again, education provides more opportunities for women: It provides good jobs as female teachers, female childcare specialists, more beneficent housekeepers, and of course, more time for women to perform their jobs. Therefore socialization of education helps women's economic advancement in many ways. Women must be freed from being only the consumers, untrained housekeepers and untrained child educators.

Gilman raised very interesting arguments which are being explored today a century ago.²⁸⁷ She tried to search the “basis of gender inequality in modern industrial society.”²⁸⁸ Her questions “would become the heart of feminist social theory some 50 years later, when writers such as Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan popularized these same concerns.”²⁸⁹ Like Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Simone de Beauvoir criticized women’s being “parasite,” not working outside but imprisoned at homes doing only unpaid housework and childrearing in 1949. Both Gilman and Beauvoir claimed that men are producers while women are parasites and they both criticized women’s deprivation of economic independence because of their marriage and maternity. In 1963, Betty Friedan claimed that suburban middleclass housewives started to feel unsatisfied with their lives in her book The Feminine Mystique. Housewives felt a kind of dissatisfaction that they could not define. Then, the problem burst and were published on newspapers and mentioned on television programs, and finally could be defined as “trapped housewives.” The dissatisfaction was because of their fully spent housework and child rearing. Founding National Organization of Women (NOW) in 1966, Friedan focused on women’s legal and economical rights, integrated equal education, day-care centers, tax deductions for child care and equal opportunity in job training for poor women. In the 1980s, Friedan and the other feminists became more women-centered criticizing women’s role as caretaker and housekeeper of the family; and they claimed that both men and women’s satisfaction could come from outside home.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ Edles, Laura Desfor, Scott Appelrouth. Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Text and Readings. California: Pine Forge Press, 2008. 202

²⁸⁸ Edles, Laura Desfor, Scott Appelrouth. Sociological Theory in the Classical Era: Text and Readings. California: Pine Forge Press, 2010. 9

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Leon, David de. Leaders from the 1960s: A Biographical Sourcebook of American Activism. USA: Greenwood Press, 1994. 250-251

Gilman struggled to evoke “women’s humanness” and attempted to prove that women should work to gain their economic independence. When women are dependent to their husbands economically, they are considered as “secondary” and “complement” of men. Then, as the strongest masters, men eliminate the unfit ones who have been women so far. Women have been restricted and their gender roles have been constructed by men. Gilman believed that women can be emancipated only when they gain their economical independence. For Gilman, “work is the essential process of human life”²⁹¹ and it means growth.²⁹² When women work to gain their economic independence, they will improve and they will also overcome their oppression and subjugation to men. Then, for Gilman, women will humanize the world and change society to perform the racial progress that is needed.

²⁹¹ Gilman, Charlotte Perkins ed. “Why We Honestly Fear Socialism.” The Forerunner (Volume 1: November 1909- December 1910). Project Gutenberg. Jan.2002. 81
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext02/forer10.txt>

²⁹² Ibid.

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