

# EXPLORING WOMEN'S LITERACY PROWESS IN THE PAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS

EDNALYN M. BAGTAS

*Researcher*

*Master of Arts in Education*

*Major in English*

## Abstract

*This study validates the existence of women text and their great literary prowess using their essays as an attempt to expose their struggles and the concealed meaning of their literary works. Twelve essays were analyzed using the rubric that adheres to the requirements of the well-known universities all over the world. The criteria for a good essay focused on the "clear presentation of ideas within the essay", "relevance of ideas in their logical order", "observance of correct sentence structure", "spelling" and "grammar"; "vivid language" and "strong author's voice" that resonated all throughout the essay. Hence, the essays exhibited the capabilities of women writers in the literary realm.*

*The expository analysis of the essays led to the emergence of significant implicatures: women texts existed before 1500's but patriarchal society held them locked up. Women experienced insurmountable deprivation and inequalities in the past one hundred years. Women, though deprived are capable of writing literary text equal to men. Women's invisibility in the literary realm and in the society heightened because of society's labeled role for women. Women literary genius in all the parts of the world existed waiting to be recognized. Empowered women mean that the literary educators adhere to Woolf's "androgynous mind." This study calls for the total liberation of women in creating great literary pieces that would change the state of women in the literary sphere.*

---

**Key terms:** women literary prowess, women empowerment, implicature, inequality, deprivation

## INTRODUCTION

*"It took me quite a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it,*

*I am not going to be silent."*

-Madeleine Albright

Women, in the past two hundred fifty years, have been in the darkest place of the room, waiting to be seen and heard. Throughout the history of man, women have struggled to fight for their rights and their intellectual prowess. They were deprived of education, right to vote and right to exercise their own free will. The possibility of becoming an epitome of literary genius has been denied and taken

away from them, kept them locked up, chained and unseen. It cannot be denied that throughout history, the crucifixion that beheld her made her disappear from the face of the society until today.

According to Martha Nussbaum in the book "Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach", women were the most vulnerable gender that experiences lack of educational support, which resulted in illiteracy. They were more prone to poor health, violence, and sexual abuse. Upon entering the workplace they face greater enigma, there are discrimination, sexual harassment and intimidation to name a few. Furthermore, they are hindered with the "double day" of work and household responsibilities, child care and lack opportunities to flourish and enhance their mental faculties. In general, instead of giving evenhanded rights to both male and female, the latter are treated as "reproducers, caregivers, sexual outlets, and agents of a family's general prosperity (1)."

In the past one hundred years, women's writings have been lost in space and women were not recognized and did not become part of historical development.

The question is, what happened in those years? Are there no women writers before who contributed to the body of writing? And if there were women writers before, why they were not recognized? These are some of the issues to be illuminated to better understand the subject at hand.

In the book of Margaret Ezell "Writing Women's Literary History", she publicized that before the time of Jane Austen and Janet Todd's *Dictionary of British and American Women Writers*, there have been one hundred good female writers who explicated about pre-1700 women texts. They are Elaine Berlin's "*Reading Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance*" and Elaine Hobby's "*Virtue of Necessity*". English Women's writings 1649-88, collections of essay such as Mary Beth Rose's "*Women in the Middle Ages*" and "*The Renaissance: Literary and Historical Perspectives*" and Margaret P. Hanna's "*Silent but for the word: Tudor Women as Patrons*", translator and writers of Religious Works have interfuse anthologies of early women writings such as Katherine Wilson's "*Women Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation Feminist scholars*." Betty Tiawitshy's "*Paradise of Women: Writings by Englishwoman of the Renaissance and Reformation*" and Elizabeth Alvilda Petroff's "*Medieval Women's Visionary Literature*" to mark visibly the emergence of a new era of women's publication during 1600-1700 (3).

In tracing and in scrutinizing the different texts of women writers, there are heavy laden issues that can be summarized into three categories. These are: the marginalization of women writers in literary sphere, a traditional way of thinking about women and patriarchal dominant society (Williamson 16).

In the history of British writers, the nascency of literary output for women began in the year 1640. This period signified female voices beginning to be heard, women taking female pseudonyms, turning discourse to their needs, and creating distinctive themes and conventions. They were identified as men and claimed property of rights and ambitions which the aristocrats questioned. In spite of massive difficulties encountered they did not give up. They clamored for parity of the sexes and make money out of writing drama, fiction, and poetry (16-18).

Margaret Cavendish, the Duchess of Newcastle, was an imperative contributor to women writings at that time. She vetoed the idea of scientific knowledge, philosophical and cosmological discourse. Instead, she indomitably advocated for her rights to intellectual life and writing. She also avowed and exemplified in her work the difficulty of a female writer within the confines of discourses (37-68).

Aphra Behn (Feir Astrea)(1640-1689), who assumed a male identity while writing, advocated strongly for the equality of men and women and her golden achievement in history was the institutionalization of her very own literary pieces that affected the lives of people at that time. She achieved this with the help of male contemporaries (e.g. Dryden, Cowley and less significant figures) (26-27).

In an essay entitled "An Essay to Revive the Ancient of Gentlewomen (1673)." Batsua Makin barbed out that she was not after the equality of men and women but rather, she averred on the education of women in order to be the aid of her husband whom she will obey.

Elizabeth Elstob (1709), an Anglo-Saxon scholar, used a preface of a homily on the birthday of St. Gregory to call for the right of learning to all women not just for herself. "For if women may be said to have souls, and that their souls are their best part, and that what is best deserves our greatest care for its improvement." She continued by saying that men would always repudiate women their right to learning because they are afraid that they will become feisty; neglect their households and their children (28).

In October 1985, a special issue of "*The Black Scholar*" was written as an editorial page of Gloria Hull and presented in a conference sponsored by Michigan State University.

African women writers experienced the same predicament as far as being ignored, forgotten and unheard. They had a male dominant society which is resolutely expressed by Lloyd Brown in his statement: "The ignoring of African women writers on the continent has become a tradition, implicit, rather than formally stated, but a tradition nonetheless—and a rather unfortunate one at that" (3).

There are few stated reasons why African women are excluded, disregarded and neglected. These are 'family custom', 'late appearance of women writers in the literary realm', 'marriage customs', and 'system of education that are pro-men rather than women'. Men was the earliest gender to be educated. They learn to read and write before women can do the same. More so, though there were restrictions and limitations during those times, still, women writers were able to publish their literary works such as Ama Ata Aidoo's play entitled "*The Dilemma of a Ghost*" published in 1965, a novel entitled "*Efuru*" written by Flora Nwapa (1966) and Therese Moukouri's "*Recontres Essentielles*" (1969). Though these works were published there were unspecified reasons why they were not patronized. During those times only the male critics patronized the works of every male writers and women were automatically eliminated from the realm of the literary world (3).

The same situation was felt in Australia, women writers experienced the same marginalization as felt in Africa. Women tend to be confused as to what role should they take in their own land and much worst they even questioned their own individual identity. These reasons mentioned above paved the way for women to write literary pieces that confront these issues. There have been Australian writers that were dominant in their community some of these include Nettie Palmer, Henrietta Drake-Brockman, Kathrine Richard Prichard, Marjorie Barnard, and Miles Franklin. The dissolvent of women writers in literary records was because of men taking charge of publishing houses and literary pages, they were also in charge of many Universities. Lastly, they preserved and transmitted to the next generation their achievements and their traditions. In the meantime, while men enjoy their glorious days, women suffer from inhumane, unstable and unjust treatment in the society (Spender 15).

In the American context, literary writing has opened up early on to female writers unlike in Asian and European countries, but a few of them emboldened their skills and continued their occupations as writers. However, only Mary Kelley's "Private Women" gained success in the public view, but this glorious achievement made the situation even worst to women. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar wrote remarkable life accounts of events entitled "The Madwoman in the Attic." Their work mirrored Emily Dickinson, who for an instant renounced to be a professional writer. There were some other women who were potential writers at that time, but chose to abandon their careers because of their family's oppositions. In addition, three issues and concerns have been deduced from those contexts. First, the enigma that women literary works were questioned with regard to their merit. To magnify the weight of the issue, there were deprivation and injustice in the way they looked at the work of a woman. They were in favor of male writings and were biased in the way they gave their opinion about a woman's work. Second is "bourgeois sentimentalism" about women writings. According to them, any text that celebrated individualism and freedom (that were not intended and meant for women) were always seen as detrimental to society's capitalism.

The novel of Virginia Woolf "A Room of One's Own" has become relevant because women at that time transformed their storeroom into their own room where they read and wrote discreetly and inclusively with the self and away from the 'public sphere' (as coined by Jürgen Habermas a philosopher). Lastly, the "female body" was always viewed as weak and impoverished rather than the male body which was always portrayed in "Victorian-America" as the strongest body of all. Women could not even fight for their rights physically, spiritually and mentally, they were always seen as the less significant sex, because of their physical built and structure" (Baym 1-28).

The backbone of Brazilian society is women. Though they took part in the development of their society there has been "inequality and illiteracy" among women during those times. These in turn made women asking for emancipation and liberation to call for their own equality and rights to name a few (Hahner 1-15).

In Philippine literary context Edna Zapanta-Manlapaz, mentioned that "The absence of women's writings from literary histories signals acts of erasures which betoken patriarchal conspiracy." This means that from 1905 to mid-1950s there has been an "absence" of a literary piece in the Philippines. More so, she elaborated that there was a "deliberate act of erasures in the part of patriarchy" (1).

It is therefore worthy to point out that in every part of the world there have been women text and women writers even before 1800's but all of them experienced the same banality of deprivation, marginalization and restrained movement coming from a patriarchal society. Women have existed the same as men even before but have always been wiped out from the face of a patriarchal society. They always fought for their rights; fray but were always neglected. It has been two hundred and fifty years, but until today the place and the glory that was meant for and rightfully hers has not yet been fully retrieved and fully realized.

Throughout the course of time there have been changes in the way men look at women. Some rights have been given back to her but there are still same old issues that surfaced and cannot be ignored.

In the context of British society today, there has been a radical shift in women's rights but in the book of Dyhouse, she expounded that although in our modern times' women have control over their bodies and their sexuality, it doesn't necessarily mean that everything is flourishing. There are still problems faced by women today. Some of these are old problems, but to name a few, there exist 'double standards' of sexual morality, women are suffering from bullying and sexual violence. They are also expected to be perfect all the time—in school, work and in the way, they are looked at in the society where they belong (1).

To strengthen the claim, in an American magazine “Newstatesman America” released last October 16, 2014. Virginia Woolf's most famous work “A Room of One's Own” is still said to be significant even in today's time. Accordingly, the feature writing written by Caroline Crampton says that women writers up to this time demand equality to men. The books written by Hilary Mantel, Zadie Smith, and Lionel Shriver are among the most prominent authors in the new generation. Yet, their work will never get the kind of a grandiose coverage given to male authors (e.g. Martin Amis or Jonathan Franzen). The biggest book review in many publications is still most often fanatical to the work of a man. And that's not counting the difficulty of even making it to publication. Eimear McBride, the award-winning author of the novel “*A Girl Is a Half-Formed Thing*”, has said that before she was able to publish her work she experienced a lot of refusals and rejections from famous publishers.

Women are compared to an abandoned room, trapped, locked up, and forgotten. They resonated far cries hoping that someday they will be recognized.

This research then aims to explore and trace the written essays of female writers in the past one hundred years. The essays will be explored in accordance with the theme and implied meaning they convey to determine the shift of the context of the essay in the past to the present time through expository inquiry.

Twelve essays were analyzed and from these essays were from the 1500's up to the present time were explored. The implicative evaluation will reveal the past and the present state of female writers and their lost contributions to literature. More so, the study also aims to open the door of awareness towards a gender-sensitive society that acknowledges the contributions of both female and male writers today.

For a more coherent understanding of the key terms, definitions and meanings are presented below.

**BFPA (Beijing Platform for Action).** This relates to the resulting document of the 1995 UN agreement-adopted by the Fourth World Conference on women in Beijing, China. It represents the commitment of the international community to the advancement of women's welfare and aims to speed up the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking strategies for the empowerment of women (PCW) (CHED Memorandum Order No. 1).

**CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women).** This refers to an “International women's Rights Bill” adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1979. It describes what constitutes discrimination against females, consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, and establishes an agenda for domestic action to stop such discrimination (CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, series 2015, 3) ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org)).

**Context.** This relates to the existing situation and the conditions surrounding the text that explain its significance. In understanding the context of the text helps to interpret the message of the text more profoundly (Rodriguez & Tiongson 22).

**Essay.** The act of writing to share an intimate conversation or an experience manifesting an imaginative and creative human experience addressing the here and now. (Biddle et. al. 1561-1737).

- It is the imitation and application of the reality in a written work as it appears to occur and rejects any unrealistic view of life (Merriam Webster).

**Descriptive essay-** A type of essay that pertains to the use of powerful words to create a mental picture of a person, situation or a thing. It aims to make the reader be imaginative through the use of colorful descriptions in the text (Croft 61).

**Expository essay-** A type of essay that present facts. It is clearly and logically structured because it answers why, what and how a certain thing is done. The main purpose is to eliminate vagueness in the process of doing things (Croft 57-58).

**Narrative essay-** A type of essay that evokes strong emotions based on the personal experience of the author. It is the narration of important events, which happened and become important part of author's life experiences. The main purpose is to appeal to the emotion of the reader (Borstein 57).

**Persuasive essay-** A type of essay that gives personal view about a certain topic. The main purpose is to convince and make your reader move into action to change or accept something (Croft 14-15).

**Feminism-** The concept of having parity between men and women in their rights and privileges. It is a structured event that promotes the rights and interest of women (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

**Implicature.** The "building" of interpretations using a lot of information than it is presented in the words on the page. Forming the interpretation of scenarios based on the expected result. This phenomenon is described as the concept of 'schema' or 'script' (Yule 131). -This refers to an extra meaning transmitted by a cooperative principle (243).

**Gender.** A biological difference also called 'natural gender' between male and female. It is a difference between groups of nouns as male, female. It is a difference between groups of nouns as male, female (or neuter), also known as grammatical gender; a distinction between men's and women's social roles (also known as 'social sex') Yule 242).

- Gender refers to the socially built traits of women and men, such as norms, roles, and social interaction between men and women in the society (Newman 2018).

**MCW-Magna Carta for Women (Republic Act NO. 9710).** “The Philippine comprehensive women’s human rights law that seeks to eliminate discrimination against women by recognizing, protecting, fulfilling and promoting the rights of women, especially those in No. 4273, was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on May 19, 2009 and May 20, 2009, respectively. It was signed into Law by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on August 14, 2009” (CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, series 2015, 5).

“The condition by which women mobilize to understand, identify and overcome gender discrimination so as to achieve equality in welfare and equal access to resources. In this context, women become agents of development and not just beneficiaries, enabling them to make decisions based on their own views and perspective” (PCW MC2011-01).

**Radical Feminism-**A 'movement' in feminism that views gender relations and sexism as the direct result of a system of patriarchy and an androcentric (male-centered) society (Urban-Dictionary).

**Thematic Analysis.** The process of determining qualitative information patterns or topics. This technique is not linked to a specific view or epistemology or theory. This makes this technique very flexible (Maguire and Delahunt, 3352).

**Theme.** The recurring subject or an idea. A literary work’s primary concept or underlying significance, which can be directly or indirectly stated (Merriam-Webster).

- A writer may express a theme through the feelings of his main character about the subject he has chosen to write about. Finally, the actions and events taking place in a narrative are consequential in determining its theme (Merriam-Webster).

**Women empowerment.** The provision, availability, and accessibility of opportunities, services and protection of human rights encouraging women to participate actively and contribute to nation’s political, economic, social and cultural development, as well as those allowing them to have equal access to and benefit from ownership, management and control of production, material and information resources (CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, series 2015, 7).

## METHOD



This study utilized the thematic evaluation process to describe the implicatures of the selected essays and derive inputs for improving practices in teaching literature and in promoting gender equality awareness in literature classes. Literature reviewed defines thematic evaluation as the process of isolating important themes within the text without following a particular principle or idea in the generated patterns of the text (Maguire and Delahunt 3352). Thematic analysis goes beyond identifying important ideas or phrases in the text, but rather decoded the implied meaning of the text using the identified codes in a piece of work. These codes are then combined and summarize to analyze the recurring patterns or themes in the whole written work (qtd. in Alhojailan 40). Furthermore, the in-depth evaluation of the selected twelve essays were explored in terms of the thematic and implied meaning they contained. The thematic evaluation is concerned with the organization of the common theme of the essays. The sequence of the concepts must be from broad to specific. Hence, the key concepts were all arranged according to their commonality and arranged from simple to complex ideas. The implied meaning taken from the text which illustrated the theme were analyzed and interpreted to reveal the meaning behind the symbol and words used in the text. Lastly, at the end of each text all the important ideas were summarized accordingly (Sally 2). Table 1 presents the profile of the essays selected for evaluation. One of the essays inclusive in this research was translated in English and not in their original text. All the essays were analyzed and discussed accordingly. These works reflected the literary prowess of women in their different themes and conventions; and in the context of the situations they had experienced in the past years of their lives. These experiences contributed meaningfully in the creation of their masterpiece.

**Table 1**  
**Women authors' essays evaluated**

Continent	Title/ year written	Author	Year of Publication	Publication house/company
Africa	A Writer's Freedom (part of "English in Africa") (1948?)	Nadine Gordimer	1975	Rhodes University
	We Should All be Feminists (2012)	Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	2012	Vintage books
Asia	Blue Moon (no written record of year written)	Hiroimi Kawakami	2015	Kustannusosakeyhtiö Otava
	Casa Blanca (Part of "The Thing with Feathers: My Book of Memories") (2015?)	Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo	2017	UST Publishing House
Australia	The Right to Orioles (part of "Nettie Palmer: Her private journal Fourteen Years, poems, reviews and literary essays") (1900-1923)	Nettie Palmer (Janet Gertrude)	1989	University of Queensland

	In Colombo(Part of "Small Acts of Disappearance: Essays on Hunger") (2015)	Fiona Wrights	2015	Kindle Edition (Giramond Publishing)
<b>Europe</b>	A Vindication of the Rights of a Woman (1791)	Mary Wollstonecraft	1792	Vintage Books
	A Room of One's Own (1928)	Virginia Woolf	1929	University of Adelaide
<b>North America</b>	The Death of a Soldier (1863)	Louisa May Alcott	1863	James Redpath, Publisher
	The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution (1970)	Shulamith Firestone	1970	Bantam Books
<b>South America</b>	The Dream of Nunca Mas: Healing the Wounds (Part of "Women Writing Resistance: Essays on Latin America and the Carribean") (1999)	Emma Sepulveda	2005	South End Press
	Language as an Instrument of Domination(Part of "Women Writing Resistance: Essays on Latin America and the Carribean") (1972)	Rosario Castellanos	2005	South End Press

The thematic analysis of the twelve essays adopted the following steps: (1) "become familiar with the data/text"; (2) "generate initial codes;" (3) "search for themes;" (4) "review themes;" (5) "define themes;" and (6) "write-up" (Braun & Clarke's six-phase framework for doing a thematic analysis (Maguire & Delahunt 138-139).

The first stage, "become familiar with the data/text." This stage is the process of reading and re-reading of the whole text until the material is understood enough to draw codes. The second stage, "generate initial codes." In this stage, the text was subjected to further scanning and re-reading to draw initial codes. Codes are words or phrases that highlights important ideas in the text in order to get the meaning of the whole sonnet. They are context clues that direct the reader to the main theme of the sonnet. In this case, Table 2 illustrates codes taken from the text.

**Table 2**  
**Getting the initial codes**

Lines	Codes
When in disgrace with Fortune and Men's eyes	disgrace, men's eyes
I all alone beweepe my outcast state	alone, beweepe, outcast
And trouble deaf Heaven with my bootless cries	deaf Heaven, bootless cries
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,	curse my fate
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,	wishing, rich in hope
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possessed,	friends possessed
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope	desiring, man's art and scope
With what I most enjoy contented least;	contented least
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising	myself, despising
Haply I think on thee, and then my state	Haply I think on thee...
Like to the lark at break of day arising	Lark at break...
From sullen earth sings hymns at heaven's gate;	Sings, heaven's gate
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings	sweet love, wealth
That then I scorn to change my state with Kings.	change my state with Kings..

The stage 3 is "search for theme." In this stage, the theme was drawn based on the initial codes generated in stage 2. Table 3 shows the theme created based on the codes decoded within the text.

Lines	Codes	Themes
When in disgrace with Fortune and Men's eyes	disgrace, men's eyes	Shakespeare experienced depression, bad luck and self-pity.
I all alone beweepe my outcast state	alone, beweepe, outcast	He feels an outsider.
And trouble deaf Heaven with my bootless cries	deaf, Heaven, bootless cries	No one hears and understood his loneliness, not even God.
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,	curse my fate	He felt sorry for himself.
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,	wishing, rich in hope	He wish to be rich like other people he sees.
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possessed,	friends possessed	He envied the person who is popular and with many friends
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope	desiring, man's art and scope	or a man with skills, talents and possessions.
With what I most enjoy contented least;	contented least	He feels sad.
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising	myself, despising	
Haply I think on thee, and then my state	Haply I think on thee...	A sudden change
Like to the lark at break of day arising	Lark at break...	Of perspective from his situation because he remembered his beloved.
From sullen earth sings hymns at heaven's gate;	Sings, heaven's gate	
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings	sweet love, wealth	
That then I scorn to change my state with Kings.	change my state with Kings..	Shakespeare decided to change his perspective from negative to positive outlook and realized in thinking of his beloved he feels contented and will never trade his place with that of a king.

The stage 4 is "review themes." The themes encoded were subjected for further analysis and compared to the initial codes to ensure the validity of the themes created. Hence, the re-checking of the codes and themes ensued in this stage. In stage 5 "define the themes." After ensuring that the themes generated were valid, it is now the stage of writing the whole theme of the text. In the sample sonnet of Shakespeare, the theme is about Shakespeare's feeling of discontent, depression and self-pity with the things he does not possess. Soon, he realized that it is enough to have his beloved than be a king. The last stage "write-up." This stage is about writing the most important theme of the text based on the process undergone and moves beyond the conveyed meaning of the text. This means that it is not limited on writing the themes generated within the text but rather combining

the codes and the literary meaning of the text beyond the symbolism and implicature within it. Table 4 shows the final theme of Sonnet 29.

**Table 4**  
**The final thematic analysis of sonnet 29**

*Shakespeare feels unfortunate in his situation. He looks at men in his surroundings and envied them with the talents, skills, popularity, number of friends they have and fortune they possessed. He feels that God does not hear his cry of pain nor the people around him. In the end, in thinking of his beloved he change his perspective in life, as long as he feels loved he will not trade his place with that of a king. The text when go beyond the conventional meaning it contained tackled not just limited to Shakespeare's beloved but rather a situation in the bible were Job experienced lack of faith and realized in the end that he is in communion with God and nothing else matter. He feels wealthier when God is in his life. Therefore, this sonnet talks about God's love.*

In order to ensure the integrity of the paper, this research consulted the online libraries of the well-known universities (University of Oxford, University of Harvard, National University of Singapore, University of Cape Town, Australian National University, Universidad National Autonoma de Mexico and The University of Auckland) all over the world to establish good criteria for an essay, one model essay and the selection of the twelve writers.

One model essay was selected based on the criteria set of the well-known universities in the six continents. The criteria of the seven universities (University of Oxford, University of Harvard, National University of Singapore, University of Cape Town, Australian National University, Universidad National Autonoma de Mexico and The University of Auckland) were compared and combined in order to set the needed requirement for a good essay and eventually the selection of the model essay that was used to set the guidelines in the selection and inclusion of the quality essays used in the study.

The guidelines (rubric) for a good essay focused on the (1) clear presentation of ideas within the essay as well as; (2) the relevance of ideas in their logical order. In addition, (3) the strong voice of the author must be clearly revealed in the essay. The (4) choice of words must create vivid language that resounded all throughout the entire paper and lastly, (5) the observance of correct sentence structure, correct spelling and grammar were all considered to check the requirement needed for a good essay.

The well-known Universities were selected according to their academic achievements, research achievements and citations in terms of Language and Literature subject.

The research manuscript is written using the expository writing style. Expository writing, as Mervin James Curl stated is the "hands of Literature"; it intends to explicate clearly in order to unveil the truth and eliminate all apprehensive thoughts and mysteries. This style of writing requires expository thinking, a kind of thinking that uses higher mental faculty because it tries to answer all the innumerable questions of man (1-3).

Good expository writing employs power and satisfies the quench for knowledge. It satisfies hunger, arouses the reader to be emotionally involved and stimulate intellectual debate between the writer and the reader (4-5).

This study employed expository writing since it traced the history and development of women writers in the past up to the present. It exposed the truth about the lost space and glory intended for women.

A total of 12 female writers from the past to present were selected representing each continent of the world. The three female writers were from the 1700-1800 era and another nine female writers came from 1900 to the 21<sup>st</sup> century were selected. These writers were selected based on their merit, their great contribution to society and their accomplishment as an established writer. These accomplishments included their received awards and recognition through their writings, their impact and influence.

## THEMATIC EVALUATION OF ESSAYS

### Essay 1

**Continent:** Africa

**Title:** A Writer's Freedom (from *Telling Times*)

**Author:** Nadine Gordimer

**Year written:** 1948?

**Year Published:** 1975

**Publication company/house:** Rhodes University

**Brief description:** This essay is part of the collection of Nadine Gordimer's nonfiction writings since 1954 until 2008. This book is a reflection of her true self as moral, political activist and literary icon all throughout her writing career (Gordimer 53).

A Writer's Freedom is a paper delivered at the conference on 'Writing from Africa: Concern and Evocation' held in South African Indian Teacher's Association last September 1975 (53).

**Theme:** A writer's freedom to write the truth.

**Implied meaning:** A true writer is not afraid to speak the truth; coupled with her unflinching commitment to writing and her freedom of expression.

**Summary:**

Gordimer started her essay by defining the true essence of a writer's freedom. A writer's freedom was writing events that happened in the society as they are. For her, a writer must be equipped to take the plunge, to dig deeper and be ready to reveal the truth of the matter. In order to achieve this, a writer must be granted freedom of expression to be able to deliver the truth to the public. However, for common people they viewed 'writer's freedom' as linked with "piled, burnt and banned books" not allowed to be read in public, because of the truth they contained in all the pages of the books. In that case, a writer's freedom for Gordimer is the privilege of documenting the truth without hesitation (53; par.1-2).

The only thing that a writer should do is write the truth as she sees it, no matter how personal or how revolutionary the events were. She must opt to tell the public the truth even to the point of narrating her own personal life (if necessary). She even quoted a few lines from Bertholt Brecht poem just to illustrate her ideas clearly (53; par. 3-4).

*When the Regime ordered that books with dangerous  
teachings  
Should be publicly burnt and everywhere  
Oxen were forced to draw carts full of books  
To the funeral pyre,  
An exiled poet,  
One of the best,  
Discovered with fury when he studied the list  
Of burned, that his books  
Had been forgotten. He rushed to his writing table  
On wings of anger and wrote a letter to those in power,  
Burn me, he wrote with hurrying pen, burn me!  
Do not treat me in this fashion. Don't leave me out.  
Have I not  
Always spoken the truth in my books? And now  
You treat me like a liar! I order you:*

*Burn me! (qtd. in Gordimer 53)*

Gordimer espoused through the lines of this poem the emotions she felt when they wiped out the books that contained the truth. The obliteration of their work served as grounds to accused writers as liars. This event triggered sentimentalism among them. The desired to fight for their rights as writers. Their sentimentalism and insistence on the idea of 'book preservation' instead of destroying these work of arts were deliberate, to the point of reaching a heightened yearning to stop the government officials in doing so (53 par. 5).

Freedom of expression was not always given to writers yet, creativity still flourished out of these works. 'Bannings' and 'Banishment' were the two catastrophes that a writer must face in order to preserve their works. In the end, their works were preserved up to these days, because of their resiliency as writers (53; par. 6).

A writer worth her salt remains as loyal to her creed no matter how many circumstances she must face. She must stay firm to her credo and continue to write the truth as she sees it in spite of horrendous things she must conquer. No amount of threat or persuasion should change her mind in writing the truth. Her integrity as a writer remains intact whether the book was burned or preserved, she must adhere to the truth and fight for what is right. She must also stay faithful to the essence of her freedom as a writer (53; par.7-8).

Another threat to freedom was the political consideration expected from a writer. A writer was expected to conform to the political traditions during rough times, where most people followed without question. A true writer must be non-conformist, she must be someone who will stand her ground and never be afraid to tell the truth despite of difficult situations she faced. Some may regard a writer as their mouthpiece. She is imbued with the ideals and embodies human beings. She is their strength and their inspiration to fight for what is right. Though at times, she is confronted with a dilemma between ceasing to write, remain loyal to her creed and continue to write with conformity in order to be published (during 1900's). Her integrity begins the moment when she decides to write. The kind of conflict explicated above holds true for most of the black writers in South Africa. They were in predicament in order to express. No words or vocabulary nor any platform can suffice their expressions of sentiments. The road for writing was narrow for them. It was never wide enough to express themselves fully. The reality strikes them. They need their freedom to uphold and interpret the ideas of Chatsworth, and Soweto



("Indian and African ghettos" taken from Nadine Gordimer's note), Dimbaza ("notorious resettlement area for Africans which is the subject of the film Last Grave at Dimbaza" taken from Nadine Gordimer's notes) or in the emotional expression of Watts or Harlem. Therefore, a writer's creed is to inform the people the substance of these literary pieces (54; par. 10-13).

The creativity of writing must be employed, but it must also consider the common language of people to be understood, and not only to reach the elite. It must be for all. Writing must be "a language of the people." (54; par. 11-13).

Gordimer mentioned in her writings the famous written phrase of Philip Toynbee, which pertains to 'the writer's gifts to the reader'. She exemplified in her work the idea of Tonybee, a writer's gifts should not be love for her country, or improvement of her morality nor social entertainment (for enjoyment purposes only), but to make her reader think, comprehend, and not to take everything on face value. In that way, the readers will be able to think for themselves (54; par. 14-15).

Gordimer mentioned Jean-Paul Satre, when he illustrated freely in his work the responsibility of a true writer to his nation. He was an example given to exemplify the exercise of true freedom. Satre presented his ideas well despite of objections he received. Gordimer acknowledged this situation as common to all writers. For her, a true writer is not true to her creed without facing these kinds of objections and oppositions. This is relevant in writing her ideas as part of the 'public sphere' (as originally coined by Jürgen Habermas). A writer will always face these situations, but if she is a true writer, she must be willing to accept these realities as part of her career. These predicaments were no longer become hindrance for her to express her views through writings; they become part of her daily routine. One of the best writers that expressed himself freely was the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian writer Ivan Turgenev, he was 'attacked' and 'lambasted' after writing his two novels entitled "Fathers and Sons" (1862) and "Smoke." For his critics, Ivan was a traitor to Russia after writing about the human condition and works towards the emancipation of the slaves. The attack was made by the elite, the nihilist, and the younger generation, when he spoke of the truth presented in his own words. Gordimer continued to narrate that Turgenev even wrote to his critics volumes of essays that explicated his views on "the art of writing, the place of the writer in society and the writer's attitude to controversial problems" (55). This was to make a clear path for the intention of his writings. All of his essays mirrored sincerity and truthfulness without holding back. This is what Gordimer wanted to point out. A writer must go beyond the façade of things and write the truth without hesitation. In explicating her idea,

she used herself as a concrete example. Despite the fact that she was a Westerner, she did not fail to write the vulgar customs of the Westerners. A writer must not be biased in looking at things. She must use her freedom to tell the truth in all situations (54-55; par. 16-26).

Literary trend must be considered, but not to the point of being bothered, because of the demand coming from the publishers, readers or the society in general. A writer must be conscious of it, but must write freely to express her views without being influenced with the circumstances of the situation (54; par. 24-25).

At the end of her essay, Gordimer once again mentioned that a writer must be given total freedom in the way she chose to write, in the language she chose to use, in any form she pleased to write or in the way she perceived the truth. She must be respected and be given the freedom of expression. She ended her essay by quoting Turgenev words (55 par. 26-27).

*Without freedom in the widest sense of the word—in relation to oneself...indeed, to one's people and one's history, a true artist is unthinkable; without that air, it is impossible to breathe. (55)*

This means that a true writer is not afraid to speak the truth; coupled with her unflinching commitment to writing and her freedom of expression. This what makes her a true writer (55; par. 27).

## Essay 2

**Continent:** Africa

**Title:** *We Should All Be Feminists*

**Author:** Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

**Year written:** 2012

**Year Published:** 2012

**Publication company/house:** Vintage Books

**Brief description:** The locus of Adichie's personal experience as a woman has been the main core of her essay and the question "Why should we all be feminist?" is what she hopes to answer at the end of her essay.

**Theme:** "We should all be feminists."

**Implied meaning:** Men and women must work together to change the 'gender expectation' in the society.

**Summary:**

During the ancient times when men led the tribe, they were ahead of women in terms of their physical strength, women on the other hand relied fully to them, making them appear weak (at that time brute strength was much needed for survival) (Adichie 10).

Today, the superior is the one who possess the best qualities among all. The most creative, innovative and intelligent is declared as the Alpha. Regardless of the gender, a woman or a man may take the lead. However, though there has been an evolution in terms of power now, the compelling problem mentioned above remains. One thing that did not change over the course of time is the idea of "gender expectation." Women and men are still evaluated according to their gender role. Men are always held as the most favored gender, because of the patriarchal society prevailing in our culture (10).

Adichie shared her keen observation of situations in which inequality of the sexes was predominant. She said that:

*When you are a woman and you walk in a hotel alone, they would think that you are a sex worker. In a restaurant, when you are accompanied by a man the waiter will greet the man but ignores the woman. It is as if a woman is invisible and not even worthy of any acknowledgement. (11)*

Admittedly, she theorized that there is 'stereotyping' and 'genderizing' in society. Though she is sad with the current situation of women, she is still hopeful that someday our society will uphold the changes that ought to be done in the equality of the sexes. For her, the most beautiful society is the thought of a different world, where men and women are both happy regardless of their gender (12).

In order to make changes with all these 'stereotyping' and 'genderizing' Adichie compelled everyone to raise their sons and daughters differently. Boys must be raised not to prove their masculinity. They must not be afraid to show their weakness and mask their true selves just because, they are male. Society dictates

that a man must remain masculine no matter how challenging is the situation. Towards the end, parents end up producing boys that have fragile egos. On the part of the girls they were raised to be feminine. They wore feminine clothes all the time, they were expected to act with gracefulness. They cannot be too successful, nor too intelligent in order not to intimidate men. They must be obedient and submissive to men at all times (12-14).

Parents taught a woman to aspire to be married in order to gain respect. It is a failure on the part of a woman, if she is still single and unmarried upon reaching her old age. Women were taught to be submissive to their husbands. They grew up being told to keep their opinion to themselves. In the end, these women mastered the art of pretending to conform even though they were not happy anymore. More so, they were expected to be a good wife material. Although it is not what they truly wants. A good wife material is a woman who is 'homely.' That is to say, she is supposed to love doing the chores even though she hated doing it (13-14).

According to Adichie "The problem with gender is the prescription given on how we should be, rather than recognizing who we really are." She even added, that the only way that we can free ourselves in this situation is through the erasure of 'gender expectation.' There must be a paradigm shift with the way we look at men and women (14).

In the case of men, they do not think of this 'gender expectation' as a problem at all. They do not even notice that there exists a 'double jeopardy' with the condition given to women. They were not fully aware of these problems (15).

'Double jeopardy' happens when women were expected to be good wife material and act according to the prescribed gender role of society. Men must involve themselves fully in the elimination of gender expectation. This is to change society's traditions. They must change society's expectation from both sexes (16-17).

Gender and class are two different things. Men and women experience the world differently. Women have 'power button' (this was using sexual power in order to get favor on men). Without realizing it, power button makes them look even weaker—they become submissive to men. While men, need not to do this to reach their goals, they are already men (16).

She also challenged the definition of culture. "What is the whole point of a culture?" According to her "culture does not make people, but rather, people make a culture." If we are capable of making this kind of culture? Why do we allow this barbaric tradition to continue?" (17).

At the end of the essay, Adichie defined her own definition of 'feminism' and gave several reasons why we all should be feminist?

*A feminist is a man or a woman who says "yes, there is a problem with gender and we must fix it". (17)*

We must all be feminist because all of us were obliged to fix our 'gender expectation' and the tradition in our society to where we belong. Therefore, both men and women must work together to erase the 'gender expectation' we have in the society (17).

### Essay 3

**Continent:** Asia

**Title:** Blue Moon

**Author:** Hiromi Kawakami

**Year written:** No written record of year written

**Year published:** 2015

**Publication company/house:** Kustannusosakeyhtiö Otava

**Brief description:** The essay was translated in English by Lucy North. This essay connects the failure of translation and the fragility of human body.

**Theme:** Death can happen any time and communication can be mistranslation.

**Implied meaning:** Appreciate life itself and its simplicity.

**Summary:**

The narrative essay started with the author pondering about the previous events happening in her life. This event led her to reflect on the perplexities of life. The day she went to the doctor for her annual check-up made the day different from her usual routine. Kawakami realized for the first time that she was too tied up with her writing career that she forgot to live (Kawakami 1; par. 1-3).

The news about her health condition reached her unfathomably. The doctor informed her that she had the possibility of malignant tumor in her pancreas. A series of tests must be done to validate the first result. She was advised to attend to a university hospital for further validation of test results. Few hours had passed and several tests were conducted. Finally, the doctor informed her that the possibility of her tumor to be malignant was greater than the possibility of it to be normal (1; par. 4-5).

The following week she made another appointment to the doctor, she was hospitalized and obliged to undergo more tests. The probability of the tumor to be malignant was ninety percent certain and only ten percent chance was left.

Though she was dumbfounded with the bad news of her poor health condition, she cannot help but to sympathize with the difficult task of a doctor. The difficulty of announcing to his every patient the news about their health condition. She understood that the task and the job of a doctor was difficult for her to carry on (if her profession is a doctor) (1; par. 6-7).

Kawakami went to Moscow for another week to work. She forgot to bring her notebook. Usually, when she was travelling abroad she made sure to drop by in a shop to buy a stationery. She used it to jot down every small detail of her trip. But today, she finds it unnecessary and impractical to do so (2; par. 8-9).

She waved at the lady from Japan Foundation. They chatted for a while inside the car until they decided to go inside the conference room. Occupied with her own thoughts of her own death and additional anxiety attack, she felt a nerve-wrecking feeling of tension and uneasiness that started to disturb her. She was not sure if it was about her health condition or because it was her first time to visit the city? (2; par. 10).

The hours passed by and soon, Kawakami forgot about her health condition and her anxiety. She presented her own haiku in the book fair, discussed haiku with some of the Russian writers who created them and enjoyed

the rest of the session. After the book fair, she enjoyed and watched the concert of Petrushevskaya. It was Professor Mitsuyoma Numano who invited her to be tagged along in the concert. This trip made her happy though it was her first time to visit the City (2; par.10).

In St. Petersburg, Kawakami spent thousand hours of profound thinking about death. Even the moment of silence during late at night was used to think about the same subject or when she waits for the taxi to continue its route; during a long hour of traffic she was occupied with her thoughts about death. In her reflection of death, she realized that she was just thinking of her own death in an abstract way and not realistically doing something about it (2; par. 11-12).

Kawakami walked in a snowy street to reach the book cafe. Soon, people arrived in the café for another book conference. Motoyuki Shibata (translator and scholar of American Literature) translated a haiku to Kawakami as a kind of joke, but Kawakami was aware of the truthfulness it contained (2-3; par. 13-15). She reads:

*Powdery snow is falling. I  
received a coat from my dead  
brother.  
Powdery snow—receiving  
my dead brother's coat.  
(Kawakami 4)*

The haiku reminded her of her own death. Death can visit her anytime, but one thing is certain. Death cannot be avoided (3; par. 16).

Several more haikus were presented. Kawakami became very sentimental in her way of thinking. She traced the beginning of things and asked “where does this called life started?” In the beginning of things we are just cells with no traits and characteristics until we evolved became humans with their own distinct characteristics. Humans, sometimes forgot the fragility of the body. Unfortunately, we live as if we will not die, until we realized we have not lived at all (3; par. 16-17).

Kawakami went back to Japan. In her return, she realized that all communications are ‘mistranslation’ there exist misunderstanding in all types of communication, whether it is in Japanese to Japanese translation or Japanese to Russian language. All mistranslation and misunderstanding took place everywhere.

It is up to the person how to make it clear and understandable to all types of people she is interacting with (3; par. 19-20).

She recalled a memorable experience she enjoyed the most. They visited Ted Goossen, a Scholar of Japanese Literature, together with Motoyuki Shibata. That day, they build a bonfire under a full moon. They gazed at it long enough until Ted explained to them the significance of two full moons in a single month. He call it "blue moon," a rare event which only happens every four years. Kawakami then asked herself if she can still get a chance to see the next blue moon acknowledging that anytime she can die (3-4; par. 21-24).

The essay ended with Kawakami's important realizations about life. She became appreciative of the things surrounding her. She appreciated life itself in its full simplicity and with the simplicity of the idea, that she is alive and there is nothing more to ask for (4; par. 25).

#### Essay 4

**Continent:** Asia

**Title:** Casa Blanca

**Author:** Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo

**Year written:** 2015

**Year published:** 2017

**Publication company/house:** UST Publishing House

**Brief description:** This narrative essay recounted the personal experience of Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo in Baguio City, most especially recalling their family reunion in Casa Blanca. This Casa Blanca was the place where they lived during her childhood days. It was her father who made the tradition of going to Baguio twice a year for vacation and Casa Blanca (the beautiful hotel) became significant part of her childhood days (1; par. 2-6).

**Theme:** The unforgettable childhood memories in Casa Blanca.

**Implied meaning:** The happy memories of childhood days will never be forgotten.

**Summary:**

Remembering her old days in Baguio, the leaves of the pine trees, the smell of pine trees, the taste of strawberries and white cream; her vivid memory of Casa



Blanca tied up with the unforgettable days of her childhood. All of these she recalled whenever she went to Baguio for the UP Creative Writing Workshop or just for family vacation (their traditional vacation which she continues until today) (1; par. 7-12).

It was evident in her essay that she missed the old Casa Blanca, the hotel that was part of her childhood days. One time while she was researching on the internet to find the old Casa Blanca of her childhood days. She found a hotel in Morocco named Casa Blanca, but to her dismay it was not the hotel that she was looking for. Though it's difficult to trace the old hotel, still she did not give up (4; par. 21).

She tried to search it for the second time and found a link with a blog from Kathleen Burkhalter. She then realized that Kathleen was her Facebook friend. She composed a message explaining everything about her life and her intention about finding the old hotel (22; par. 4-5).

According to Kathleen, she used to live in that hotel when she was 4 years old. When her grandparent died in 1966 and 1969 the house was taken over by the SSS (Social Security System). During the 1990 earthquake in Baguio, the house was totally wrecked and went down. Today, the 'basement of the house became the first discotheque in Baguio' it is called 'D Basement' (5-9; par. 23-42).

Truly, the author missed the old days of her childhood, especially Casa Blanca the hotel, that elegant hotel. For business reasons or for vacation purposes, Cristina would still visit the City even after her retirement (8-9; par. 43-54).

The essay invokes old and fresh memories of Baguio. It is the heartfelt sentiments of the author that makes it classic. It is a realization that through the years that past, nothing will be forgotten, especially the happy thoughts of her childhood days in Casa Blanca. It will forever be part of her heart and soul (9; par. 54).

## Essay 5

**Continent:** Australia

**Title:** *The Right to Orioles* (from "Talking it Over" a collection of 28 essays)

**Author:** Janet Gertrude (Nettie Palmer)

**Year written:** (between 1900-1923)

**Year Published:** 1989

**Publication company/house:** University of Queensland

**Brief description:** In this literary essay Palmer started to recount a remarkable question of a writer which she read in an English magazine about "bird-watching". She was intrigued with the author's keen observation about Latinas being not fond of birds.

**Theme:** Always be observant even in the simplest things.

**Implied meaning:** Be keen in the examination of things from the smallest details up to the important facts.

**Summary:**

The author wonders in impeccable manner how it is possible that they do not like birds, when birds are beauty to see; mere listening to them relieves stress and anxiety. She even mentioned that British when compared to the Latinas were more nature lover and more fond of "bird-watching" than the latter. The golden Orioles and Icterine were the companions of British Officers in giving them comfort when they were in abroad or in an unfamiliar territory (425-427; par. 1-7).

Furthermore, she wonders if people just need companion of a certain class (like the British officers) or is it the knowledge about bird or it is just part of their hobby to become sensitive to notice these birds? One cannot be sure. Or is it Francis Ledwidge conviction, that people who are born brainless have no senses to see and hear the golden Orioles. In the end she wondered and asked the truth of the matter (425; par. 3-5).

*But what is the truth of the matter? Who are the people among us that use their minds and senses to surprise the half-hidden secrets of Nature? Who can say: Hearkeneth the bussful briddes how they singe, Ful is myn herte of revel and solas. (Palmer 426)*

Palmer added that certainly, in order to notice the bird, one should not be coming from the leisure class (or the class with education) because education closes the mind to see and feel the things one must see. Not all people see birds as the source of delight but see them as vague object and treat them with animosity

(except in Australia they always see them as the source of 'delight and interest'). In addition, she emboldened that there was no standard way to see the natural beauty of the world. People were born with different characteristics, intelligence and capabilities, but class cuts it all. Just like a man who was born in a class with education and just happened to have a chance to have full access to all types of education he desires. With his upbringing and a little knowledge about music, and arts. The way he talks and display himself in public is as if, it personally means something to him (but the truth he does not have the aesthetic interest and inclination of the matter at all). It is just the habit of arrogance. In the end, he sounds too insincere and unwise.

Palmer reminisced a meaningful situation when she received a letter coming from a farmer. The farmer retold his own experience of listening to the song of a golden Orioles (this was after she published her articles about birds in a magazine). The farmer stop for half an hour just to listen to their songs.

Indeed, this proved that no certain class of distinction nor amount of education can teach someone to feel and see with her eyes and with such keen observation of things that nature brought about. There were only few people who see beyond it (426-428; par. 6-11).

*They have at least seen a few things with their own eyes and thought about them. Their minds were not so likely to be cluttered with ready-made phrases about the beauties of Nature, nor with other people's scientific opinions, did half they understand. Some of them, indeed, through their close contact with the world they see, and their imaginative interest in it, have attained a rare culture that is as valid as any other. A culture not dependent on measurable information, but rich with delicate observation and fine feeling. (427)*

At the end of the essay, Palmer mentioned a poem of Emily Dickinson, to point out that when we listen to the song of birds all our distinctions and status fade away. We become equal to all, regardless of our status in life. She even left interesting questions for the readers to ponder (428; par. 10-11). She inquired:

*Was it different, then, with those Orioles in France?  
Were they, unlike any other birds on earth,  
determined to bring the solace of their songs only to*

*those who had the signs of rank on their shoulders?  
Or was the writer of that charming article merely  
betraying his bondage to a rather vulgar illusion?  
(428; par. 11)*

## Essay 6

**Continent:** Australia

**Title:** In Colombo (from *Small Acts of Disappearance*)

**Author:** Fiona Wrights

**Year written:** 2015

**Year Published:** 2015

**Publishing company/house:** Giramondo Publishing

**Brief description:** *Small Acts of Disappearance* is a collection of essays that talk about hunger and the extreme feeling of hunger. Hunger and writing were linked together since Emily Brontë's "Wuthering Heights" and Lady Kit in "Maria Edgeworth's Castle Rackrent." These literary classics were both associated with their author's unsteady position as a woman in a patriarchal society. On the other hand, Fiona linked her actual physical condition of hunger (being anorexic) with the reflection of starvation in her literary work.

**Theme:** The extreme hunger associated with poverty in the society.

**Implied meaning:** Look for the vista more than the suffering.

### Summary:

Fiona's first essay entitled "In Colombo" started with the admission of hunger. It was a vivid description of the physical state of the author as the actual starvation occurs (sec 1, par. 1-4).

In her third day of work in Colombo as a writer Fiona and her team went to an old train station that remained untouched since the British era. Going through the place, they found a heart-breaking scene which she cannot forget. Fiona found a girl named "Anesha" beside a woman with a child in her lap. The child wore 'faded polo shirt without her pants, while sucking her finger' as they approached them. The child kept on gesturing to her mouth (the child is hungry), her mother added that she will not allow any photograph of her daughter since her child is five. The

mother never wanted her daughter's classmates and teacher to know that they were homeless. Soon they went to the tarpaulin houses to interview more people with the same situation as the first (sec 1; par. 6-8).

They went to De Soysa Circus, a boulevard near the center of the city. They spoke to a girl who was playing Cricket with her brother. They were pretending to play bowling at the same time the child admitted that she loves to watch people going to Odel (the largest department store in Colombo) because she imagined herself that she was shopping in that department store just like the rest of the people there (sec. 1; par. 9-10).

Fiona realized some important lessons in life. If she was suffering from anorexia and throwing food (she even have difficulty choosing what to eat), these children were suffering from too much hunger, because they do not have food to eat. Her situation, her hunger, her condition was a crisis in her country (Sydney) while these children were just part of a small portion of a newspaper. She then realized that it was a waste of time complaining. She was morally offensive. These children need more sympathy and love than her own condition (sec. 1, par. 11-28).

## Essay 7

**Continent:** Europe

**Title:** *A Vindication of the Rights of a Woman*

**Author:** Mary Wollstonecraft

**Year written:** 1791

**Year Published:** 1792

**Publishing company/house:** *Vintage Books*

**Brief description:** There are other seminal works that talk about the rights of women, but this was the first comprehensive text that divulged radical ideas and revelations about the real problem of the society, especially on women. It created a deplorable effect of noise that shaken's society's practices and traditions.

**Theme:** Education to women is the sublime requirement in order to sustain themselves.

**Implied meaning:** Women and men must be given equal opportunities to enhance their mental faculty.

**Summary:**

This essay primarily addressed and highlighted the ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau's in his work (Emilius and Sophia: Or A New System of Education (1762-1763) better known as Emile: Or Education (1911). Wollstonecraft stated that women should be educated not just to be men's companions or their source of amusements and entertainments, but women must be educated because they are equal to men (6).

The sole argument of her essay revolves in the education of women. In fact, she firmly advocated in the concept of educating the mind to sharpen the reason in order to separate man from animals. The quality that separates human from animals was virtue. Therefore, "the main purpose of life was to perfect one's nature through the use of reason" (6-10).

*Consequently, the perfection of our nature and capability of happiness, must be estimated by the degree of reason, virtue, and knowledge, which distinguishes the individual, and directs the laws which bind society: and that from the exercise of reason, knowledge and virtue naturally flow, is equally undeniable, if mankind be viewed collectively. (11; ch. 1)*

The beginning of her essay was dedicated to M. Talleyrand-Perigord the Late Bishop of Autun. She argued that she was pleading not for herself but for her gender. She wrote what was written in her essay for the most virtuous task of making humanity in her purest improvement. The new constitution established was far from the morals that should uplift humanity. Women must not to be excluded. She must be given the freedom, the rights and privileges the same as men (2-5).

In her introduction, Wollstonecraft posited that in her readings of the different history books she concluded that the real cause of the problem was the lack of education for women. Men were much more interested in making women an attractive mate rather than making them a good wife. At the same time, women at this reason were ignorant and in total intoxication for love rather than pursuing their goals in life (6).

There were books written by men to manage the rights and conducts of women. But the main purpose of these works were not towards the improvement of their faculty but to be the subordinate gender. Women were inferior to men. They were not part of human species. They were mere shadows of men (7).

The law of nature dictates that male were always viewed as superior in terms of physical strength. This cannot be denied, but men even made women sink to the bottom because of their physical superiority, which was used to their advantage in making women their object of fascination instead of their life long companions (8-9).

Wollstonecraft aims to illustrate in her writings the true meaning of happiness and self-worth. She added that in illustrating these matters she will not conceal any emotions from the subject at hand, nor the use of flowery words to conceal its meaning instead, she will directly point out the real cause of the problem without holding back. Women's education have been given to her, yet in the past years of their lives was in full dedication of the enhancement of their beauty and merely sacrificing the chance of strengthening their mind and the body .These situation make women appeared weak and dependent to men. Their only consolation was to marry a man of high honors (8-10).

In her chapter 1 she discussed fully the rights and duties of mankind as a creation of God. The main distinction of man from other primates was the ability to think. The core of human happiness and capability was grounded in the pursuance of virtue, the use of reason and knowledge. That all of these must naturally be honed by all humanity (11).

Men were blinded and used their reason to defend the deprivation they created for women (11). Virtue must be pursued as the highest ambition of mankind regardless of the sexes. Women had been mistaken that the pursuance of beauty and grace was the highest goal for them. Men steal the ability of women to reason and held them captives for the long time (12-13).

In chapter 2 she discussed the "prevailing opinion of a sexual character." She discussed the division of men and women in their life pursuit. Women were in the tread of ignorance. Men must be educated to achieve virtue while woman from the teaching of her mother must stay innocent, obedient, graceful and beautiful. If all these were achieved nothing really matters because she will obtain the attention and fortification of a man (19).

Wollstonecraft challenge the idea of Milton when he said that “women are formed for softness and attractive grace.” For her, women were not born just to please men with their grace and beauty it was an insult on the part of a woman! Women in Milton’s description was a “form of offense and a sign of weakness to women.” They were not just born to be beautiful, or as they were describe, they have the ability to rise from that state of being just beautiful (20-21). She further elaborated that the guiding principles of education for women was just to please and be obedient to men, which makes the action immoral. It leave and “lag women behind in their ignorance and in the prejudices of the society” (6-7; 19-38; ch. 2).

Gender roles and wealth were the two pre-eminent reasons for sizable problems in the society. These created imbalanced relationships and slavery among others. Too much power caused deterioration of the human character. Monarchy created treachery and crime. Wealth produced abuses of power and disabled the human character. The monarchy, aristocracy, and military including the priest and women’s husbands relied on blind obedience without proper examination (17-18; ch. 1).

The reliance on men (particularly the reliance of a woman to her father or husband) created even further deceitfulness and slavery on the part of a woman. A typical woman’s education of being “modest, soft temper and obedient” is pointless! This type of education will never produce a good wife or mother (39-54; ch. 3).

*Women are told from their infancy, and taught by the example of their mothers, that a little knowledge of human weakness, justly termed cunning, softness of temper, outward obedience, and scrupulous attention to a perile kind of propriety, will obtain them the protection of man; and should they be beautiful, everything else is needless, for, at least, twenty years of their lives. (19; ch. 2)*

Men were superior in their physical strength to women. In that case, men should not exercise their superiority over women and never make them feel weak (43; ch. 3).

In addition, she disapproved of ‘feminine garments’ just to attract men. They must wear garments that was comfortable to them and that expressive of their own personality (199; ch. 8, sec. 3).She said:



*Men, indeed, appear to me to act in a very unphilosophical manner when they try to secure the good conduct of women by attempting to keep them always in a state of childhood. (19-20; ch. 2)*

She even argued cleverly on Rousseau, Milton, other philosophers and poet's ideas about feminism. Women must be raised to be rational and not just 'pure feminine'; girls must be allowed to play and not too much emphasis on being feminine which gives threat to man and in the society (19-38; ch. 2; 39-54; ch.3;66-68;ch. 4; 82-97; ch. 5, sec. 1;97-101;ch. 5, sec. 2;101-105; ch. 5, sec. 3).

At the end of the essay, she concluded by giving solutions to all the problems she presented. First, education to women was the sublime requirement in order to sustain themselves. That was to lessen 'prostitution' and other 'social problems', they must be given the right to have their own 'profession'. In line to this, they must have the 'right to own property', 'have custody to their children' and 'participate in government affairs' (190-207; ch. 8, sec. 1-6).

## Essay 8

**Continent:** Europe

**Title:** *A Room of One's Own*

**Author:** Virginia Woolf

**Year written:** 1928

**Year Published:** 1929

**Publishing company/house:** University of Adelaide

**Brief description:** *A Room of One's Own* is an essay about Woolf discussing women and fiction. It is divided into six chapters (Woolf 4; ch. 1, par. 1).

**Theme:** "A woman must have money and a room of her own in order to write the greatest literary piece of all time."

**Implied meaning:** "Women must write as women and not as a masculine side of men. They must write 'androgynously'."

**Summary:**

The first chapter started with Woolf defining the true nature of women, fiction and writings about women. Specifically, her works pointed out that, if a woman should write fiction “she must have money, and a room of her own in order to write the greatest literary piece of all time” (Woolf 4; ch. 1, par. 1).

*All I could do was to offer you an opinion upon one minor point—a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction; and that, as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of woman and the true nature of fiction unsolved. (4; ch. 1; par. 1)*

She then, explicated that in the course of giving her opinion there will be ideas and prejudices (especially when it comes to controversial questions about gender), but the only way to address all these and to understand her opinion for this matter was to illustrate her opinion through an example. She encourages everyone to seek out the truth from all the statement she would tell (5; ch. 1, par. 2).

In a fine October, while strolling in Oxbridge Woolf, in a sudden wave of her thoughts, came up with a conclusion, although she thought that the idea looked insignificant in her mind, still she decided to share the idea to everyone. While there were flashes of ideas and the coming together of her thoughts, she have observed in that fine morning that a beadle was looking directly at her. He looked irate when he saw her in the area of men. That's her wake-up call, Woolf realized she does not belong in the area where she was sitting, simply because she was a woman. She must not dwell on the 'turf' but on the 'gravel'. The Fellows and Scholars were the only groups allowed in that place (6; ch. 1, par. 4).

Woolf even recalled the luncheon parties before the war and compared the pre-war and the post-war luncheons. She recollected the lines of a song from Tennyson and Rossetti that celebrated the feeling of excitement and the desires of the heart that women and men had. In this recollection, she narrated how a luncheon party has been celebrated including how the luncheon menus were served starting from the soup to the main course. After the war, this celebration has

changed the way a man and a woman should be like. There was disparity (10; ch.1, par. 8-13).

Woolf moved in a doorway leading to the library itself. But a kind gentleman waved at her. It reminded her that “the ladies can only be admitted in the library if accompanied by a Fellow of the college or furnished with a letter of introduction.” She swore to herself not to ask for a permit to a lad just to get inside the library. (7; ch. 1; par. 5)

Another deprivation of women was their inability to have their normal luncheon just like men, this was during meetings/special occasion, which only men were allowed. They wanted to have normal luncheon meeting similar to men, but Woolf was certain that they cannot have that, simply because of their gender (13-17; ch. 1; par. 13-18).

She wondered if Mrs. Seton and the mother of her had enough money they may able to “lay a great foundation of a college or library”, but this was not the case. Women have no right to ‘own their property’, ‘money’ and a ‘space of their own’. Woolf realized the pointlessness of these inquiries (14-15; ch.1, par.14-15). She said:

*But it is useless to ask these questions, because you would never have come into existence at all. Moreover, it is equally useless to ask what might have happened if Mrs. Seton and her mother and her mother before her had amassed great wealth and laid it under the foundations of college and library, because, in the first place, to earn money was impossible for them, and in second, had it been possible, the law denied them the right to possess what money they earned. (16; ch.1, par. 15)*

Women not only experienced poverty as a state of human beings but the poverty of the mind as well.

*I thought how unpleasant it is to be locked out; and I thought how it is worse perhaps to be locked in; and thinking of the safety and prosperity of the one sex*

*and of the poverty and insecurity of the other and of the effect of tradition and of the lack of tradition upon the mind of a writer, I thought at last that it was time to roll up the crumpled skin of the day, with its arguments and its impressions and its anger and its laughter, and cast it into the hedge. (17; ch. 1, par. 18)*

Seeking for the truth, Woolf moved to London and sought all the answers in the British Museum. She was stunned, astonished and bewildered with all what she found out. Women were the favorite subject of study of men and no single book about men have been written by women (18-19; ch. 2, par. 2). Woolf wondered why men give so much interest and attention to women, given the fact that women has less importance in the society (19; ch. 2, par. 3). She goes on saying:

*It was flattering to be the object of such attention provided that it was entirely bestowed by the crippled and infirm. (19; ch. 2, par. 3)*

She has looked at the volumes of books and to her astonishment she found herself browsing essays, journals, and books of different kinds. She remembered Samuel Butler when he said that "Wise men never say what they think of women." It is odd that men do not say many things about women with all the massive volumes of books to whom women were the subject of the study. She then came across pope saying: "Most women have no character at all (30; ch. 3)." The list goes on with the contradictions of opinion from men.

Woolf realized that in all the books she had browsed and read no amount of questions has been answered and no amount of truth has been revealed.

She comprehended that men think highly of themselves, and they think of their superiority to women (29; ch.3, par. 1). It was in the line of Rebecca West that Woolf explicated this idea. Here is the line:

*The arrant feminist! She says that men are snobs! ...It was a protest against some infringement of his power to believe in himself. Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing*

*the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size. Without that power probably the earth would still be swamp and jungle. (24; ch. 1)*

Mary Beton, (Woolf's aunt) died and left her with five hundred pounds a year all throughout her life. With this amount, Woolf had the ability and the opportunity to live the life of a simple man. It was even odd that because of this event, she realized that it was absurd to hate men, their class and their race. It was worthless to put the blame on men with all the hatred and bitterness associated with it. Men were also trapped within the confines of their role and their privileges as men, hopeful that with the passing of time women become free to have their own profession (25; ch. 2, par. 9-11).

The most significant question Woolf asked was "Why was there no woman word of that extraordinary literature when every other man, it seemed, was capable of song or sonnet?" She then realized that women had no place in the literary realm and she must do something about it (29; ch. 3, par. 2).

Woolf went on scrutinizing things, she browsed Professor's Traveyan's History of England. She encountered pages indicated as "wife beating." This has been described as practiced without embarrassment. A woman should marry the man of her parent's choice. If the woman refused, "She was locked up, beaten and flung about the room, without any shock being inflicted on public opinion" (29; ch. 3, par. 3).

During that time, marriage was never about love but "betrothal" because of family's insatiable desires for wealth. After two hundred years, (in the time of the Stuarts) women cannot still choose their husband. The situation was still the same.

Another critical question of Woolf was the way women were portrayed in literary works of men. It seems to her that women have "no character" at all. They lack personality that embodies their feminine side and no existence at all. Woolf examined the whole history book of Professor Trevelyan's from cover to cover. She found out that woman was completely absent from history. She cannot even read, spell or read on her own. A woman was not just absent from history she was also illiterate (29-30; ch. 3, par. 3-4).

After checking the important events and fiction in history, she moved to the female embodiment in the court, in Monasteries, renaissance scholars and religious sect (31; ch.3, par. 6). These were her observation about women:

*She never writes her own life and scarcely keeps diary; there are only a handful of letters in existence. She left no plays or poems by which can judge her. (31; ch. 3, par. 6)*

Woolf called for the re-writing of history in all the famous colleges because women deserve to be known and be part of history, since they were treated licentiously in the past years. Only during the 18<sup>th</sup> century when they began to know things about women (44; ch 4; par. 11).

In the Elizabethan age, Woolf was still puzzled with a lot of things and asked "How come women do not write poetry? Why were they not educated? How did they master writing?" the answers were found in the statement of Professor Trevelyan. He said that they did not have money and that a woman was married whether she liked it or not (that was at the age of fifteen or sixteen) (40; ch. 4, par. 1). Woolf mentioned dispassionately a remarked coming from a bishop when he said:

*It was impossible for any woman, past, present, or to come, to have the genius of Shakespeare. He wrote to the papers about it. He also told a lady who applied to him for information that cats do not as a matter of fact go to heaven, though they have, he added, souls of a sort. How much thinking those old gentlemen used to save one! How borders of ignorance shrank back at their approach! Cats do not go to heaven. Women cannot write the plays of Shakespeare. (32; ch. 3, par. 6-7)*

The lines mentioned above showed the animosity and unfair treatment of women. They were mocked and belittled for the little knowledge they knew. Woolf disclosed concrete scenario to prove her point. She mentioned the story of Judith Shakespeare, sister of the well-known English writer, William Shakespeare. She explicated that Judith's sex orientation prevented her to write literary piece and has been deprived of showing her prowess although she was also a brilliant writer just like her brother. She was tormented because of gender expectations given to her

by her parents and the society where she lived. In the long run, she was forced to marriage but ran away. She tried hard to work. Unfortunately, she was used by men in her field, got pregnant and committed suicide (32-33; ch. 3). Woolf stated:

*A woman was liable, as she was in the fifteenth century, to be beaten and flung about the room if she did not marry the man of her parents' choice. (29-30; ch.3) To have lived a free life . . . would have meant for a woman . . . nervous stress and dilemma which might well have killed her. Had she survived, whatever she had written would have been twisted and deformed... That woman... was an unhappy woman, a woman at strife against herself. All the conditions of her life... were hostile to the state of mind which is needed to set free whatever is in the brain. (34; ch. 3)*

Currer Bell, George Eliot, and George Sand, were writers who needed to conceal their true identity and be a man in order to write freely. Those women in the sixteen century with a gift of poetry were women who were unhappy and full of bitterness and indifference towards life itself. There may be men like Keats, Flaubert and Carlyle who suffered in their creative years of youth—distractions and discouragement; and agony of curse in their formidable works and confession but these difficulties do not outweigh that of women. Woolf, looking at the empty shelves saying to herself that although some of these men experienced difficulties still, women experienced the most deplorable and infinite deprivation. Women do not have their own place to write (a sound proof room to have their own privacy) just enough money to keep them clothed and the worst among them was the 'hostility' they experienced in the formative years of their life, including how the rest of the world confined women in making them think and feel that they were no good at all such as in writing. They were not allowed to write and express themselves freely in the language they chose. They were held captives in the past centuries and in the centuries to come with this kind of culture and tradition that we have (44-53; ch 4, par.14-23).

Woolf had a high regard for Shakespeare and Jane Austen's work. Both of them exhibited no impediments (no hatred, indifference in their works while the two gender were equally represented) in their writings (46, ch. 4, par.13).

In writing freely, there were other female writers that made crucial sacrifices in order to uphold this right. Aphra Behn, concealed her true identity to write and make more money through her writings. She proved that a woman was capable of making more money out of her writing career. She was the first female writer at that time to earn five hundred pounds per year. After those difficult years of Aphra, the middle class women began to write books for the sake of writing, these were entitled as "Pride and Prejudice", "Middlemarch" and "Villette"; and "Wuthering heights". These women were not able to produce good works without the influence of Aphra Ben. They were inspired to produce good books despite of difficult circumstances they experienced while writing. These women suffered from the circumstances of no room of their own and no privacy to write their innermost thoughts (44-46; ch.4, par.10-13).

Miss Nightingale even complained that:

*Women never have half an hour ...that they can call their own when she was interrupted. Jane Austen wrote like that till the end of her days. Her nephew was even amaze by her genius and wondered how did she do it?*

*She does not have a separate study of her own, and most of her work was done in the sitting room where there were interruptions. Jane Austen covered her manuscripts in a blotting paper. Despite of those interruptions and difficulties Jane experienced, for Woolf, Pride and Prejudices was a good book equal to the brilliant work of Shakespeare. (45)*

Woolf evaluated the work of Jane Austen. She wanted to find even a slightest hint of problem with her work, but she could not find even the slightest sign of hatred or bitterness in it. George Eliot on the other hand, experienced the same suffering as Austen, but was able to escape in a villa, in spite of the disapproval of the world because of her gender. She lived where social conventions were important rather than her wit (because she was a woman, they disregarded her ability to write). In the end, she was victorious in establishing her freedom to write but as an identified male author not a woman writer (46; ch. 4, par. 13).



Woolf moved to another topic about the meaning of "integrity" in written works. Integrity for Woolf was about the revelation of the truth in every page of her work of fiction. She questioned the meaning of integrity in the works of writers. If integrity was about telling the truth she inquired:

*What then, was the effect of gender in becoming a novelist or a female writer? Will Jane Eyre's sex orientation become a hindrance to the integrity of her work? It clearly showed that if a novel was written by a woman all questions were raised. Questioning the capability and integrity of a woman novelist. If a man wrote a novel no question will be raised, simply because he was a man. (46-47; ch 4, par. 14)*

Woolf scrutinized every single novel written by women. For her only Emily Brontë and Jane Austen have written successfully as women and not the way men write. They were able to produce excellent work despite of the difficult situations they encountered. Their books were the only ones with refined and excellent work (46; ch. 4, par. 13).

She then added that:

*Female novelist should only aspire to excellence by courageously acknowledging the limitations of their sex. (51)*

In the end Woolf advised women writers to make their books shorter, to be more focused on their subjects and to have their outline in order to organize their work well. Then, their work will be at their best (52; ch 4, par.23).

The essay ended with Woolf talking about Coleridge idea that 'a great mind is androgynous'. It was the integration of masculine and feminine side in a literary work. Woolf explained freely what Coleridge meant by a great mind that is 'androgynous'. It is not about a mind with special treatment to women, but it is a mind that does not separate both men and women in a work of fiction. Shakespeare

for that matter attained and developed that kind of thinking in his works (66-68;ch. 6, par. 4-5).

While there is a big shift in history with regard to women's role in the society and their rights to be recognized as women and not mere shadows of men, in our modern times it is still prevalent and imprinted in women's hearts that they are incapable of writing great literary pieces. There may be women writers of today who are being recognized and heard, but Woolf echoed a different voice from women writers. She sets requirement that women must "write as women and not as a masculine side of men." They must "write without anger, frustration or mockery toward men writers." They must write 'androgynously.' Thus, women remain ineligible to be good writers. Woolf calls everyone to pay close attention to women's role in the society and their biggest potential as great writers of fiction (66-68;ch. 6).

### Essay 9

**Continent:** North America

**Title:** *The Death of a Soldier*

**Author:** Louisa May Alcott

**Year written:** 1863

**Year Published:** 1863

**Publishing company/house:** James Redpath, Publisher

**Brief description:** This classic narrative essay was an excerpt from "The Hospital Sketches." The essay begins with a vivid description of Louisa May Alcott to John, a Virginian Blacksmith soldier who fought in the war. It was a call of duty, when they called her saying that John was about to die (Alcott 1).

**Theme:** Death was summoned by love.

**Implied meaning:** Love and serve people at all times.

#### **Summary:**

The last scene of John's death. The death of a young man in his thirties without a wife, without his own children but with huge responsibilities to his mother and sisters. He fulfilled all his responsibilities both in his family and in his country without hesitation.

John, a soldier full of dignity, vigor, and courage was lying in his bed, dauntless. Despite of a dreadful blow he received in battle. His left lung received a terrible blow, his rib broken, which created an incurable damage. He was in an awful pain without a moment of 'peace and consolation' (1). It was without wax. He was a genuine man, accepting his faith as if it was just yesterday when he was strong and dauntless. Now, he was incapable of just moving and breathing. A simple breathing was a hard labor for him. He knows well that his time has come (2).

The welling of tears from his eyes came, not as a sign of his suffering but as a sign of gratitude to Alcott, who assisted him in his condition. Alcott served as a substitute (as a mother, wife or a sister or even as a friend to John who was alone) (2). It was the duty of the nurse to write letter for her patient, which be sent to the patient wife or family. Alcott, write the letter for john sending it to his mother. John was hopeful that his mother will see the letter and come to the hospital immediately (4).

His remaining time was spent in his delight, so Alcott inquired if the letter must be addressed to his wife or his mother. John answered that he has no wife and his mother was expecting him to return. The mother gave him a ring as a sign of protection. Making him feel at peace in the battle field. He dedicated his life to his sisters Lizzie and Laurie, took all the responsibilities, because they were not rich. He need to make certain of their futures. His mother though a bit worried allowed him to take part in the battle field, because she knows well that it was John's call of duty. In the end, he gave his best to the battle field and now that the damage has been done he has no regret. He served his country well (2-3).

Time flies, the lad was about to die waiting for the reply letter from his mother. Unfortunately, no letter from his mother arrived. Though his mother was nowhere to be seen, the patient in the hospital when they heard the news about John all of them went to his room to visit him to pay respect to him. These people whose lives he touched with insurmountable kindness will never forget him. John will forever be in their memory. The long hours of hard labor had stopped. John died without the reply letter from his mother. The reply letter was an hour late depriving John with a smile even just for a brief moment. The essay ends with Louisa May Alcott realizations that although John died, she was happy with the thoughts of knowing that the lad was loved by all the patient in the hospital.

He served his country well. He was after all, a good man. She then realized that death was summoned by love (11-12).

*I kissed this good son for her sake, and laid the letter in his hand, still folded as when I drew my own away, feeling that its place was there, and making myself happy with the thought, even in his solitary place in the Government Lot, he would not be without some token of the love which makes life beautiful and outlives death. Then I left him, glad to have known so genuine a man, and carrying with me an enduring memory of the brave Virginia blacksmith, as he lay serenely waiting for the dawn of that long day which knows no night. (12)*

### Essay 10

**Continent:** North America

**Title:** *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution*

**Author:** Shulamith Firestone

**Year written:** 1970

**Year Published:** 1970

**Publishing company/house:** Bantam Books

**Brief description:** The essay is a text of 'radical feminism' that construed and examined the role of women and men in society more profoundly than any other text.

**Theme:** The use of "artificial womb technology" to produce a child and free women from their typical social roles.

**Implied meaning:** Equality can only achieve through the use of "artificial womb technology" that would relieved women in their reproductive pressure.

#### **Summary:**

Firestone began by defining 'sex class' which was usually taken as unmoved issues and cannot be changed due to the roots that have been deeply planted into society's culture for fifty years. She even encouraged the feminist to examine not just the western culture but the organization of culture itself (sec. 1; par. 1-3).

She even explicated the idea of Marx and Engels about 'dialectical materialism.' She applauded them because they were able to trace the conflict using a more

scientific approach in history rather than Fourier, Owen, and Bebel. These three were not aware of the inequalities and exploitations that existed for years. Their ideas were more of a utopian economic society rather than realistic. For them, there was no existence of class privilege and exploitation, only a progressive one. On the other hand, Marx and Bebel traced class conflict using the 'real economic origins' giving economic solutions to these issues more objectively. Their solution was to have a 'classless' society that matches the interests of individuals to that of a larger society in order to sustain the materialism of society. Though these two postulated the idea well, she affirmed that this idea was just a half-truth of the real cause of the problem, which echoed only of the 'partial reality' of things. Firestone's apprehension on the limited explanations of Engels on the problem of women's role using only economic formula makes it invalid. She pointed out that the original 'labor' was the culprit of this problem. The 'labor' was divided into two partitions between a man and a woman. "The man was the owner, the woman was the means of production and the children the labor. This production was an important aspect of the economic system of the society. Briefly, Engels, Marx, Freud and other men of culture made it much worst on women oppression by transforming their ideas into dogmas" (sec. 1; par. 4-15).

Firestone commended the work of Simone de Beauvoir (in her work entitled "The Second Sex"). For her, she was the only feminist writer (so far), who was able to trace the history core of feminism and comprehensively tackled the subject at hand more closely, on the real basis of our culture. However, she argued that Simone has failed in one thing. She failed to see that it was not 'dualism' or the 'otherness' that really constituted the problem, but it is simply the 'division of labor'. For her, she was too "sophisticated and too knowledgeable that it becomes her weakness" (sec. 1; par.19-22).

She even pointed out the fundamental characteristic of a biological family. First, she explicated that women from the beginning were controlled by their biological nature ("that was their menstruation, menopause 'female ills' constant pain during childbirth, care and nursing of an infant"), which causes them to be dependent on men (be it a husband, brother, father or a lover). Second, infants were helpless and took a longer time before they can survive—that made them dependent on adults. Third, the mother/infant interdependency existed long before until today and has been embedded firmly on the mindset of every infant and every mother. Lastly, the 'natural reproductive' difference between a man and a woman can be traced back on the division of labor (origins of the class) including the paradigm of caste. This biological nature of the family cannot be undermined nor controlled because of its nature no matter what time of lineage it could be. Still, the idea of women and infant

dependency on men existed. She even added that given the chance that this 'biological family' can be eliminated, still for Firestone, it will not guarantee that women will be freed. Therefore, in order for a woman to be truly free and eliminate the social classes, the following condition must be given to her. First, women must protest against it including the removal of the means of the production ("not just the full restoration of her female body but the removal of the human fertility, 'new population biology', social institutions of child-bearing and rearing"). Second, removal of the class privilege (male privilege to be exact) and class distinction (or sex distinction that was the difference between man and a woman will no longer matter in our culture). Third, artificial reproduction as a replacement to the natural means of production (to ensure equality among the sexes and the total eradication of the 'biological family'). Lastly, the better solution was the whole idea that subsumed on the 'sexual revolution' in order to remove the class system successfully (sec. 1; par. 20-30).

Furthermore, Firestone discussed the division of "The Women's Movement". This can be summarized into conservative feminist, and Politicos (which further divided into Ladies Auxiliaries to the left and middle of the road politics). The conservative feminists were concern with legal imbalances, employment discrimination and economic concern. The NOW (National Organization of Women begun in 1965) after the publication of Betty Friedan's "The Feminine Mystique." This movement resembles the suffragist movement, but the members of this group were all career women. The politics were concerned with the issues of women as factional rather than as universal. They were loyal to the left ("The Movement") rather than to the Women's Liberation Movement per se. This groups where further divided into three kinds. First, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the left. The main aim of this group was to reform the state of women and alleviate their difficult situations. They "radicalized" their invitation to women in order to join their movement and shows that they must work together for a greater cause (e.g Black Panthers). Second, the Middle-of-the road Politics were still under the umbrella of male though they were confused into what role to take. Still, they imitate the male (left) and their strategies, tactics, and movements. They do not blame men for the inequalities but rather the system in the society. There reform was ambiguous and not solid. Lastly, the Feminist Politics, combination of 'leftist and feminist overtones.' Their main goal is to address women issues and act on it. Overall, though the Politics have different end goals their commonality would be that women in terms of Politics were always secondary and that a revolution was needed in order to achieve their goals. The third type is the Radical Feminism. This movement rejected the earlier analysis of the leftist not because it was too 'radical' but in the proposition that it is never enough, it was

shallow, obsolete and inappropriate (society's sexual and economic class system). The revolution must be bigger enough to address the issues of women. Therefore, it was in this book that Firestone poured out all her radical ideas for the third type of feminism (33-40).

In the chapter 6 of her book, she illustrated her own explanation of romantic love which explained how men and women experienced and understood love differently. Accordingly, she pointed out the weak points of culture and its failure to analyzed love itself than in the shallow idea of people experiencing it. Childbearing and love were the two main culprits of women's oppressions in the past years or even today. While men were busy thinking and creating their master pieces, women were consumed with love and her romanticize idea of being in love. Her own understanding of love is 'scathing.' Thus, her ideas were as follows. 'Women live for love and men for work.' Women from the beginning seek undying approval and temperament though they were the reasons to men successes in the past. The cliché's "behind every man there is a woman" and voltage's "women are the power behind the throne" were all relevant as point of reference to discuss the ideas of women's oppression. The culture that we have according to her was biased, it was constructed in favor of men alone). Women sustain the need for love of men in order to be championed in all their undertakings. Women's days were consumed in giving emotional support to men. Men on the other hand, spend their days in proving their masculinity and denied in giving love to women as a support though they understood that women too need it. The result, "a female emotional half" (126-127; cha. 6). Firestone said that:

*(Male) culture was (and is) parasitical, feeding on the emotional strength of women without reciprocity (127).*

She added that the phenomenon of love is not "altruistic." Love must not be the case of being locked up and chained between two individuals as one only, but rather the give and take of two souls to enhance themselves to be at their best selves. She define love in these lines:

*Love is the final opening up to (or, surrender to the domination of the) other. It is a situation of total emotional vulnerability. Therefore, it must be not only the incorporation of the other, but an exchange of selves. Anything short of a mutual exchange will hurt one or the other party...A little healthy selfishness would be a refreshing*

*change. Love between two equals would be an enrichment, each enlarging himself through the other: instead of being one, locked in the cell of himself with only his own experience and view, he could participate in the existence of another—an extra window on the world.... Lovers are temporarily freed from the burden of isolation that every individual bears ( 128; ch.6).*

If Firestone has a good definition of love, she has destructive idea of love too. Love in its destructive way was the possessive love. The idea of “envy, hostility and possessive love” in line with a man or a woman pursuing his or her dream. Love must be ‘mutual emotional vulnerability’ or it is destructive. There should be balance of power. That is, the sex class system was based on the imbalance of power. Thus, a woman was slave of love, she had been under the spell of the idea of romanticized love. She was too much consumed with love and even raised herself for the approval of men. She needs the approval and love of a man in order to live. A woman must love but never to be consumed with love and forget her dreams. She must be a woman who pursue her dreams and passions with or without a man.

Furthermore, through the lines of Lauren Berlant's, Firestone criticizes the idea of “cruel optimism”. She further expounded the way women live in romantic society. Berlant writes:

*‘What is cruel about these attachments, and not merely inconvenient or tragic, is that the subjects who have x in their lives might not well endure the loss of their object or scene of desire, even though its presence threatens their well-being, because whatever the content of the attachment, the continuity of the form of it provides something of the continuity of the subject's sense of what it means to keep on living on and to look forward to being in the world.’ (21)*

This shows that women were depending their meaning and life on romantic love alone. Though these lines from Berlant's shows no particular man, her idea construed to negative remarks of being in love (21).

Firestone advocated for the banning's of the ‘beauty ideal’ and the ‘eroticism’ in the imprinted core of society. She illustrated the ‘beauty ideal’ that women must



stay sexy and put on make-up just to be the ideal woman of every man. They were expected to have a Coca-Cola body (no matter what age), wear a glass shoes even though it hurts their feet, put on make-up just to be Marilyn Monroe (the sex symbol). They seek attention of men and do all things, but forgot who they really are? They do not know who they really are and forgot their true worth. The media even “exaggerated” this beauty ideal. They advocated for all these using propaganda systems (e.g false eyelashes, tummy control and floor waxes). The problem of romanticism extended up to the media. In Firestone’s words the media without being aware that they committed it, they already degraded the “femininity” of women (146-154; cha.7). She writes:

*...the media have unconsciously exposed the degradation of femininity (155; cha. 7).*

In chapter 8 Male Culture, she once again recalled that women supported the emotional needs of men. They consumed more time and energy in supporting their emotional needs, without regard to themselves. They must spend their time to enhance themselves and not too consumed in supporting men. This kind of tradition was embedded deeply in the male culture and in the whole society. A woman was expected to uphold the standard traditions of men at all times. There was “exclusivity” of the dominant gender without regard for women’s need. This “exclusivity” robbed women to see themselves as women, because the culture that we have does not permit women the chance to understand their role as women without being too consumed with the male culture and tradition. For Firestone, the only way to stop this kind of tradition was to have “feministic revolution” (156-169; ch. 8).

In the end, Firestone insisted and encouraged women to use “artificial womb technology” in order to produce a child. This will result in sexual equality in society. She wanted to free women from reproductive pressure and once this was achieved, free expression of women’s sexuality will take place.

## Essay 11

**Continent:** South America

**Title:** *The Dream of Nunca Más: Healing the Wounds*

**Author:** Emma Sepulveda

**Year written:** 1999

**Year Published:** 2005

**Publishing company/house:** South End Press

**Brief description:** Emma Sepulveda in her personal essay remembered two important events happened in her country--Chile. The Vietnam War in East Asia and September 11 tragedy (Sepulveda 61).

**Theme:** The painful memory of war in Vietnam and Chile will forever remain in the hearts of its people.

**Implied meaning:** To begin is to set oneself free from the pain of the past without forgetting the lessons learned from it.

**Summary:**

The beginning of the essay is Sepulveda's vivid description of Vietnam War that she happened to view on television. It was in 1960 when she became aware of Vietnam's worst situation and the enigmatic wound and bleeding of the Vietnamese that screams mercy out loud in her mind. The dramatic scene created an engraved in her memory (61-62).

Thereafter, she soon participated in street demonstrations together with her peers in the university to where they study. They were young and innocent. They did not really understand the definition of war, but they knew in their hearts the definition of peace. They sought peace (61).

The Vietnam War continued for a long time. During those times chaotic days in Vietnam was the same situation they felt in their place. The United States found its way to Chile. The US suddenly, snatched the democracy that they have. The Chileans were surprised on September 11 (Tuesday) with all the bombs that were dropped in the sky. The planes flew high attacking and destroying every part of the metropolis. People started to be astonished, they were not able to speak—they were shocked. The only noise heard were guns fired and the sound of sirens. Every morning of that seventeen years of agony and pain in the invasion of America has been imprinted in her memory (61-64).

The War in Vietnam and in Chile will forever be in the memory of its people. Sepulveda recalled in her visit to Vietnam the painful events happened in her land. The memory of the past remain alive in the minds of the people both in Vietnam

and Chile. Those rough times made Sepulveda realize that the past taught them an important lesson. The lesson: that of hope and a new beginning. To begin is to set oneself free from the pain of the past without forgetting the lessons learned from it (64-68).

It is in this line that she showed her message:

*Life and time have traveled along the roads, down the rivers, across rice paddies, and through the spirit of the people of Vietnam. The memory of the past survives in every niche of that land. The fruit of memory has planted the seeds of hope and has taught the lesson of beginning to forgive without forgetting. (Sepulveda 62-63)*

At the end of her essay, Sepulveda stated that the real challenge is the total healing of their wounds despite of the devastating memories of wars (both in Vietnam and in Chile). She said:

*But because of Vietnam and because of Chile, many deaths, disappearances, exiles, departures, and impossible returns are permanent images in our collective memory. And we are all left with the task of healing the wounds that cut deep into our memories, with nothing more than our writings and the dream of Never Again (Nunca Más). (68)*

## Essay 12

**Continent:** South America

**Title:** Language as a

**Author:** Rosario Castellanos

**Year written:** 1972

**Year Published:** 2005

**Publishing company/house:** South End Press

**Brief description:** Castellanos narrated the old times when Spain attempted to defend the conquest of America in their lands. Accordingly, its positive effect was

the establishment of Spanish language in the pre-Columbian tribes and the diminishing of the variety of dialects in their place (73).

**Theme:** Language can be a vessel of domination or freedom of expression.

**Implied meaning:** Language and communication when used correctly will be powerful tools to liberate the mind and the entire society.

**Summary:**

Language was compared to religion and race that when the element of unity was present, it tends to be more effective as a vessel of communication and as a means of domination (73).

In the invasion of the Spaniards in the country and in the "apostolic impetus" that the missionary fathers instigated in all areas of their lands paved the way to influence the masses, even resulted to the submission of Indians to them, while the mestizo's struggled in their confusion of beliefs and practices. This event made the Spaniards in full control over the whole land (74).

The Spaniards took over their lands and were completely in full control. These became possible because of their insertion of faith and the teaching of Spanish language in schools and in the church. At first, the Spanish language, was used to express ideas freely (it was for the purpose of communication), but soon enough, it was for the sole purpose of implementing strict orders and blind obedience. The Spaniards wanted to call it as a way of "linguistic correction", but it was the language of domination.

In the use of this language it was a sign of power for the Spanish invaders. They spoke this language not just for domination, but as an opportunity for people with great riches or high ranking Spanish officials to showcase elegance and luxury. They even established competitions and envy towards each other (73-74).

In a manner of speaking to people, the main purpose of the Spanish colonizer was for strict order and blind obedience that they preach a dogma or a law. This was not for the understanding of it, but to the full submission to the one who beheld them. Although this may not be fully grasped, they must still obey the order without questions asked (74).

The people with high status or a general who talked with their companions spend their time for leisure, usually a Criollo (“a person of pure Spanish descent born in Spanish America” taken from the notes of Castellanos), who used it as an opportunity to adorn himself with all the luxurious things that wealth can offer. Intelligence can be a dangerous tool too, especially when used to invent beautiful words to conceal the truth of domination (75).

Castellanos further exemplified in her writing that the word “silence” means “oppression, dependence, injustice and poverty.” People must speak to express their own disappointments and never imprison themselves into a lingering silence again (75).

*Speak, keep on talking, don't keep quiet, no matter what, because silence frightens; I'm afraid, it seems to me that a long hand in the shadows is going to grab us by the neck and strangle us! (75)*

On the contrary, language can be used as a possibility of liberation. According to Castellanos, they need to find a new language that is free from domination and oppression of the past years (not the language that beheld them). Words, when used effectively, can be a tool for the manifestation of truth. But sometimes, though words are powerful tools to clearly convey ideas, words may lose their meaning. They eventually wore out, especially if they were tangled with a lot of misinterpretations and misunderstandings. These means that words maybe complex in structure they may contain meaning that reverberated in its entirety, but sometimes may failed to serve their purpose. Words must be free from all these tangled and useless meaning to retain its original glistened form. The people using it must be responsible enough to use them meticulously, but effectively. They must create powerful strings of words that will never lose their worth (75-76).

The people who understand the power of words will use them to convey the meaning they intend to communicate. Effective communication between people in order to take place, must acknowledged that all of them are free to speak their minds without restrictions or dominance from one party. In addition, they must also consider each other as equal; then communication become productive. Productivity in communication means that the main aim of communication is to liberate and free the individual from all forms of oppression. Language and communication when used correctly will be powerful tools to liberate the mind and the entire society (76-77).

## CONCLUSION

In the evaluation of the model essay "Three Days to See." The author Helen Keller wondered in her blindness and deafness how it felt to be able to see even for only three days. On the first day she would look at the eyes of her friends to see and feel all kinds of emotions and into their souls. She would read books that revealed human life and explore the beauty of nature in the woods. In the afternoon, she would walk in the woods to appreciate the colorful sunset. That same day, she would not be able to sleep because she was astonished with all the beautiful things she saw that day and would still be hopeful for another glorious sunset on the next day (Keller 1; para. 5-7).

On the second day, she would go to museum to see the 'progress of man' through arts. She would then spend the evening in the theatre or at the movies. The last day, would be greeted with the beauty of the morning and spend the day observing men in their busy life (1-2; par.8-10).

At the end of her essay, she reminded everyone to use their eyes and appreciate everything they see.

*Use your eyes as if tomorrow you would be stricken blind. And the same method can be applied to the other senses. Hear the music of voices, the song of a bird, the mighty strains of an orchestra, as if you would be stricken deaf tomorrow. Touch each object as if tomorrow your tactile sense would fail. Smell the perfume of flowers, taste with relish each morsel, as if tomorrow you could never smell and taste again. Make the most of every sense; glory in all the facets of pleasure and beauty, which the world reveals to you through the several means of contact which nature provides. But all the senses, I am sure that sight must be the most delightful. (2; par.12)*

In the evaluation of the model essay above using the rubric attached in the appendices section of this paper, the rubric has a four point scales four (4) being the highest and one (1) being the lowest. The essay got 4 points in terms of the

development of author's voice within the essay. There is a clear presentation of author's purpose that mirrors her own personal experience. It is therefore evident that the strong feelings and desire to see and appreciate one's sense of sight are well established in the essay. Furthermore, the organization and structure of sentences are well developed in the essay. First, the author used vivid language to describe her innermost feelings and thoughts. Second, these words were naturally and accurately employed in the essay in order to create a beautiful masterpiece. Third, the choice of words and phrases in the essay created a strong convincing power that inspire the readers to use their sense of sight wisely. Over all, the main idea of the essay was well supported with the detailed statements that keep the whole body of the essay intact and well-structured.

After the evaluation of the model essay of Helen Keller, the following were the evaluation of the twelve essays included in this study based on the rubric for evaluating essays. The first essay "A Writers Freedom" got four points both in the use of vivid language and in the organization of strong ideas to clarify the subject at hand. This is in lieu of how a writer should write. Apart from these, Gordimer illustrated in her essay the essence of writing. She was good in clarifying the role of a writer, which was not limited to writing but as an embodiment of the truth per se. Chimamanda Adichie's "We Should All Be Feminist" has strong points on giving focused and detailed outline on the subject discussed within the essay. She clearly stated all the evidence and presented her arguments well with good supporting details to prove her claim of why we should all be feminist? Furthermore, in giving her arguments, she was successful in convincing the readers to take actions in changing the society for women. Kawakami's "Blue Moon," on the other hand, was excellent in terms of imbedding emotional experience in her work. The author's personal realization on the importance of life itself evoked a strong voice within the essay. She was successful in making the emotions felt by the readers without using compound-complex sentences. Similarly, though the work was simple, it showed elegance and class with the simplicity of the presentation. "Casa Blanca", just like the work of Kawakami, recounted an important personal history of the author. The essay was good in making mental imagery and successful in evoking childhood experiences of the readers. In doing so, the author took part in presenting a little of herself to the reader. Palmer's essay "The Right to Orioles" got four points in the use of vivid language and word choice. It was evident throughout the essay that she was keen in the examination of things from the smallest details up to the important facts that people may not be aware of or were reluctant to see.

She used and maximized words to create a powerful essay. Wright's essay "In Colombo" was a personal essay that appeal to the emotions of the readers. It has four points in the establishment of a clear voice to penetrate into the souls of the readers and in reminding them about the importance of good health. The structure and organization of ideas were relevant and were presented in a logical manner. Beyond the structure of the sentences, the author was good in considering her personal suffering as not a suffering anymore, but to see bigger problems in Colombo. She encouraged the readers of her essay to see the vista more than seeing their own suffering. Wollstonecraft's "A Vindication of the Rights of a Woman" was effective in creating noise in the society at that time. It went beyond conventional topics, and it was the first essay that divulged the real state of women during the author's time. The radical voice of Wollstonecraft that echoed change in the whole essay was felt. She wanted to change the state of a woman through the presentation of linear structure of ideas. Her approach was more of clarifying the smallest issues down to the biggest issues faced by women. She created a thread. Although her essay was tied with a lot of controversy, still Wollstonecraft was successful in stirring and awakening women from their stagnation. Her essay became the basis of other feminist writers (e.g Woolf). Woolf's "A Room of One's Own" was an extensive analysis of women's condition. The strong point of the essay was the ability of Woolf to jump from one topic to another but still create a whole structured work. They called it "non-linear approach" to writing which she was famous for. She was the one to develop this strategy and was excellent in establishing her ideas in a non-linear form without confusing the readers. She was genius in pulling different strings apart but created one beautiful tone for the essay. Therefore, she has four points in developing a clear voice in the essay, well-structured sentences, and well supported main ideas to prove her claim. She was excellent in the use of vivid language and word choice. Lastly, the author observed correct grammar, mechanics and spelling. Alcott's "The Death of a Soldier" appealed to the emotion of the readers. She created a glaring disparity between John's dying situation and the exulting feeling that through it all love won despite death and suffering. She established a good voice and a well-structured essay. Firestone's "The Dialectic of Sex: The Case of Feminist Revolution" is an essay of radical feminism. Her essay was good in creating a strong organization of sentences and the use of strong words to create a radical text. The text mirrored the vicissitudes she wanted to build in the society. She was fierce yet simple in her presentation of her arguments. She synthesizes all her ideas in a simple manner yet effective and elegant. Sepulveda's "The Dream of Nunca Mas: Healing the Wounds" was just a short essay but the writer was excellent to get four points in



all the areas of the essay. It was worthy to point out that the author was good in establishing brilliant paragraphs and sentences to get the past recurring as if it was still happening now. The last essay "Language as an Instrument of Domination" was good in using powerful words that informed the readers of the effective use of language. Language, according to Castellanos, can be used either to dominate or to liberate. In addition to this, she was effective and well verse in the used of figurative language to create an excellent essay.

In the series of comprehensive analysis on the twelve women texts presented revealed five significant themes and implications: Women texts existed before 1500's but patriarchal society held them locked up. Women experienced insurmountable deprivation and inequalities in the past one hundred years. Women, though deprived are capable of writing literary text equal to men. Women's invisibility in the literary realm and in the society heightened because of society's labeled role for women. Women literary genius in all the parts of the world existed waiting to be recognized.

The first significant implication is the existence of women text before 1500's, stems from the two essential premises. The first is the allocation of power given only to men. Patriarchal society held important powers before 1500's. Men were in control of major publications. They were in good position to publish all the literary text of men, while women were not given opportunity to write or publish their work. In the series of investigation on the diaries of important women, it was found that women were also writing their own literary pieces, but these works were just kept in their diaries or in their rooms. The problem rooted in male egoistic nature. They were afraid that women might realize their own genius in writing and in the long run, might lose their interest in them. They might treat them differently.

The second power of men are their political positions. Since men were allowed to be politically involved, they were the only gender to influence society's practices and political will. Women on the other hand, were in no position to give their political opinions as well as, to have their political positions in government institutions. The political positions were only meant for men alone, since women were expected to be housewife material and were tasked to do all the household chores, but never their political aspirations.

The second premise is society's unequal distribution of rights to men and women. Men have all the opportunities and privileges of being part of Politics,

being an educated person and pursue their chosen field of expertise, while women were not given those opportunities. One of the major rights of men was the right to full access on his education. They were free to study all the things that interest them and take their chosen professional path. Women on the other hand, were taught things meant for home and child care alone (though they have interests other than these things). In addition, men have their own professions, which gave them the opportunity to earn their own money. They could buy things on their own, even took up courses applicable to them. Women have no real education, therefore, they have no chance of having their own profession and money of their own.

The second significant implication is women's insurmountable deprivations in all aspects. Limited rights were the particular culprit of women's inability to flourish. They were not entitled to own their real properties, to decide on their own, to have full access to education, and to have political positions (to name few of these deprivations).

Today, women were given these rights (not in all types of society), but the problem lies not on the privileges held but on the mind conditioned. Our minds were conditioned that men will always be the dominant gender. Women were well accustomed to men successes and not their own. They ended up questioning themselves about their abilities to reach the same success. They were doubtful of themselves and were haunted with the past roles given to them.

The third implication is women were capable of writing literary work on par with men. Women were deprived (no full access to education, no room and money of their own) but they were able to write equally well. There were women who championed fiction and non-fiction prowess like Aphra Behn: "Orinooko", (1668), Mary Pix, Catherine Trotter and Delariviere Manley: "The Female Wits" (1696), Mary Wortley Montagu: "Letters and poems" (c1720), Mary Scott: "The Female Advocate" (1774), Fanny Burney: "Evalina" (1778), Hannah More: "Sacred Dramas" (1782), Dorothy Wordsworth: "Grasmere Journal" (c. 1790), Mary Wollstonecraft: "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" (1792), Maria Edgeworth: "Castle Rackrent" (1800), Mary Hays: "Female Biography" (1803), Jane Austen: "Emma" (1815), Mary Shelley: "Frankenstein" (1818), Fanny Trollope: "The Domestic Manners of the Americans" (1832), Emily, Anne and Charlotte Brontë: "Jane Eyre"; "Wuthering Heights"; "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall" (1847-48), Elizabeth Gaskell: "North and South" (1854), Mrs Beeton: "Book of Household Management" (1861), Charlotte M Yonge: "Biographies of Good

Women" (1862), Louisa May Alcott: "Little Women" (1868), Emily Dickinson: Poems (c1870), George Eliot: "Middlemarch" (1871), Beatrix Potter: "The Tale of Peter Rabbit" (1902), Baroness Orczy: "The Scarlet Pimpernel"(1903), E Nesbit: "The Railway Children" (1906), Katherine Mansfield: "In A German Pension" (1911), Rebecca West: "The Return of The Soldier" (1918), Dorothy Parker (c1920-1935), Agatha Christie: "The Mysterious Affair At Styles" (1920), Ivy Compton Burnett: "Pastors and Masters" (1925), Virginia Woolf: "A Room of One's Own" (1929), Antonia White:" Frost in May" (1933), Daphne du Maurier: "Rebecca" (1938), Christina Stead: "The Man Who Loved Children" (1940), Dodie Smith: "I Capture The Castle" (1949), Josephine Tey: "Daughter of Time" (1951), Elizabeth David: "French Country Cooking" (1951), Patricia Highsmith: "The Talented Mr Ripley" (1955), Sylvia Plath: "The Colossus and Other Poems" (1960), Muriel Spark: "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" (1961), Mary McCarthy: "The Group" (1962), Doris Lessing: "The Golden Notebook" (1962), Jean Rhys: "The Wide Sargasso Sea" (1966), Germaine Greer: "The Female Eunuch" (1970), Elizabeth Taylor: "Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont" (1971), PD James: "An Unsuitable Job for a Woman" (1972), Iris Murdoch: "The Black Prince" (1973), Beryl Bainbridge: "The Bottle Factory Outing" (1974), Angela Carter: "The Bloody Chamber" (1979, Marilynne Robinson: "Housekeeping" (1980), Carol Ann Duffy: "Whoever She Was" (1983), Julia Donaldson: "The Gruffalo" (1999), Helen DeWitt: "The Last Samurai" (2000), Kazuo Ishiguro: "Never Let Me Go" (2005), Sheila Heiti: "How Should a Person Be?" (2010), Maggie Nelson: "The Argonauts" (2015), and Lisa Halliday: "Asymmetry" (2018) (from The Guardian entitled "Are these the Fifty Most Influential Books by Women?." posted by Robert McCrum last February 11, 2013).

These are some women's writings that prove their capabilities as writers of fiction, non-fiction or even poems. These texts evidently showed women's writing prowess and independence.

The fourth significant implication is the labeled role of women. There are two premises to explain the phenomenon. The first premise is the society's gender role. Susana Eisenclas combined the idea of W. Wood and Eagly on gender role; and Dunning and Sherman's definition of stereotyping in her work entitled "Gender Role Expectation: Any Changes Online?." This is to illustrate the labeled role of women. Gender role is the socially prescribed beliefs on the basis of their sexual identity (that is being a man and a woman) (W. Wood and Eagly 645).

*Stereotyping is one of the symptoms of gender role. It is the labeled theme that depict the attribute ascribes to a certain group of people (Dunning and Sherman 459). Men were always perceived as strong, competent and achievers, while women were always inferior to men. These roles that penetrated the innermost core of every men and women were imprinted in the souls long ago. The problem is how to escape in the labeled role given to each sexes. Women were expected to be inferior, weak and underachievers. These roles not only stripped her naked in public, but dehumanized, degraded and robbed her of her ability to achieve greater heights. Dunning and Sherman pointed it as "inferential prison." That is, "stereotyping labeled women of the labeled presupposition without testing the ability of women." This means, the subject was given a verdict without trial. The imprisonment of labeled role were hard to escape, unless the society reforms its beliefs on women and women's role. Women were caged in this stereotype and in the role they need to perform in the society.*

The second premise is the social behavior. In line with gender role is its effect on socialization. The effect is the social behavior that men and women project in the society. Since men were perceived to be superior and women as inferior, the behavior that tends to dominate is the idea of men more capable of achieving greater heights than women. We were socially conditioned with that belief to the point of projecting it in the behavior we showed in the society. We are behaving based on the expected role prescribed in the society.

The fifth implication is women writing prowess in all the parts of the world waiting to be recognized. There are three premises to support the fifth implication. First is the premise that all over the world, women have writing prowess that makes them stand out as a woman. This was clearly shown in the essays presented and analyzed in this research.

The 1500-1800 women writers implied in their work a signification of a woman who struggled a lot in the face of writing to express their innermost thoughts. Their works implied restrictions, tumultuous times and lack of strong support system. They echoed an apprehension, though they have mind with magnificent ideas. Furthermore, they used heavy glaze of figurative language (perhaps due to the cultural condition at that time) to indirectly state their ideas in the public and to conceal their true intentions. The writers today opened the gate of possibilities to their full potentials as writers. Their words became blunt (without holding back their words) because these women writers were somehow accepted in the new generation (although they are still being stereotyped). They can express their ideas more freely and without hesitations. Their work uses lesser figurative language than the writers before. Instead, they use a more direct approach.

Mary Wollstonecraft, Virginia Woolf, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Shulamith Firestone encapsulated in their works a woman who can carry herself. A woman that has a place in the society, not as a subordinate of men. Women must be seen as capable of achieving literary prowess as men do. They deserve to belong in the society equal to men. Nadine Gordimer emboldened in her writing the true essence of a writer's freedom. The main role of writing is not for entertainment alone, but to move people to think for themselves. Truth must be anchored in the reflection of the society in general without regard for political or society's expectation. A true writer must be a non-conformist. On the other hand, Rosario Castellanos stated in her essay that language can be a powerful tool to enslave or to liberate. Its proper use can revolutionize the course of history. Lastly, words must be used to make communication meaningful. Nettie Palmer, Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo and Hiromi Kawakami reminded us that a pair of an observant eye is as important as kind words. In the simplicity of their writings they pay close attention to the things surrounding us. Live at the moment, savor the moment and live life to the fullest. Fiona Wrights equated her own writings with her condition (anorexia) and in the paradox of things, she finds her way to empathize with the hunger of other people without agonizing on her own situation. Louisa May Alcott reflected in her writing the idea of love that has the ability to summon death. Lastly, Emma Sepulveda entrenched healing in the wounds of the past. Finally, these writers are embodiment of women with great minds.

After a series of analysis among the women texts all over the world and in accordance with their intended theme and implied meaning, the researcher adheres to the significance of Virginia Woolf's insights that "Women, must write as women, not as a masculine side of men. They must write without anger, frustration

or mockery toward men writers. She must write 'androgynously.' Thus, women remain ineligible to be good writers. Woolf calls everyone to pay close attention to women's role in the society and their biggest potential as great writers of fiction. This insight is still relevant in our present society today. (73-76)

In analyzing the twelve texts of women writers from 1500 era towards the present, it became evident that women and men were equal in their worth as established literary writers of the society and their rights must be both recognized.

In this regard the University of the Assumption adheres to the gender equality aligned with CHED's Gender Development policy. "CHED Memorandum Order number 1, series of 2015 stipulated the establishing of the policies and guidelines on gender and development in the Commission on Higher Education and Higher Education Institutions (HEI's). This states the strict compliance with the CEDAW and BFPA, which it adopted in 1995, holds much significance in the drive towards gender awareness and sensitivity, and more important in the institutionalization of gender policies, standards and guidelines as a way of life for the Philippines."

"This principle of equality between men and women is enshrined in the Philippine Constitution, to wit: The state recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men (1987 Philippine Constitution, Article II, section 14) The Women and Nation Building Act or Republic Act No. 7192, enacted in 1992, reiterates this principle of gender equality and directs all government departments and agencies to review and revise all their regulations to remove gender bias therein (Section2). Pursuant to its mandate as a Responsible Agency to implement the MCW, CHED shall direct the institutionalization of the required policies, standards and guidelines to build its internal capacities and those of its external clientele and stakeholders in mainstreaming Gender and Development (GAD) within CHED and in the various functions of higher education, in accordance with the function of the state exercise reasonable supervision and regulation of all educational institutions." (1987 Philippine Constitution, Article XIV, Section 4).

The policy mentioned above strictly adheres to the gender equality of the sexes in all government departments and agencies. The policy of CHED aligned with the 1987 Philippine Constitution simply aims to have equal treatment, equal opportunities and equal rights (for both men and women).

However, though we have gender equality policy at present, women were not yet fully liberated. Some of the rights of women were restored (including their rights to education, right to vote, right to own property, and right to own their body) but in Japan they still think low of women. The full restoration of equality is beyond the border line. There is 'patriarchal prestige' that highly favors the traditional way of life in Japan. The privileges of husbands such as their status and birth order positions were favored and created unequal family roles even today (North 23-44). In the Philippine setting, though men and women have equal opportunities to work, women are still perceived as weak. In the article "History of Filipino Women's Writings" it was said that during the Spanish era there were 'silencing' of women writers at that time (though they were good writers). Today, women are still liberating themselves in order to be heard and to be visible in the literary realm. Women were writing for magazines alone (for pure 'commercialism') but not as favored authors (qtd. in Vartti par. 51-52).

In a Filipino website [filipinoknow.net](http://filipinoknow.net) (a website that promotes nationalism and written by renowned historian and journalist e.g. Toneth Orejas, Ambeth Ocampo and Xiao Chua) posted last October 07, 2018 an article about Filipina women in the past. There were Filipinas who were forgotten despite their great achievements in the literary sphere. Leona Florentino, who was a distant relative of Jose Rizal (Our national hero) and also known as the 'Mother of Philippine Women's Literature', was the first internationally recognized Filipina poet in the Patriarchal society at that time. She was a prolific writer of satires, playwrights and poems. Despite of her numerous achievements and recognitions in writing (both local and abroad), it came with a great prize. She was abandoned by her husband and son because she was good in writing at the same time, vocal in her feministic views. She remained unaccompanied until her death in 1884 at the age of 35. Another Filipina writer named Encarnacion Alzona, was also vocal in her feministic view. In 1919, the American government during that time has a program called "*pensionado*." The aim of the program was to let Filipinas who were in the middle-upper class to study in the U.S to earn their master's degree or Ph. D degree. True enough, her unprecedented faith in herself and in the idea that "education is the key to gender equality" paved its way for her to achieve greater heights. She participated in "*pensionado*", earned her master's degree from Radcliffe College and her Ph. D from Columbia University in 1923. She was the first Filipina to achieve the highest education at that time. Her credentials earned her to be the chairperson of the Department of History in U.P. Diliman. Alzona must be busy in her career, but she never neglected her role to fight for the equality among men and women, this in turned became fruitful. In September 1937, the election bill for

equality became a law granting all citizens regardless of their gender to have the right to vote as long as they are 21 years of age and can read and write. Her other achievements include her writing of her works "The Filipino Woman: Her Social and Political Status" (1565-1933) and "A History of Education in the Philippines" (1565-1930) these works were all dedicated to her campaign in the rights of a woman. In 1946 UNESCO meeting in Paris, she was once again elected as a chairperson of the Sub-committee on Social Science, Philosophy and Humanities. Lastly, her greatest achievement was in 1985, when she was regarded as a National Scientist by the National Academy of Science and Technology. In this sense, Filipino women were great writers even before. In the book of Cecelia L. Ridgeway entitled "Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World." She wrote that gender inequality was still predominant in the United States until in the present time. Women's participation in the labor force were not in great progression. The Statistics that derived from U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2009 illustrated that in 1990, only 74% of women were part of the labor force (women ages 25-54) and the figure projected still the same percentage even in the year 2000. This was significantly consistent in the past ten years compared with men's participation rate of 86% in their same age (qtd. in Ridgeway 1: 5-6). This means, in the past ten years women were not high spirited to achieve success. In addition to this, women are less authoritarian than men because the usual managerial or supervisory positions were being carried out by men (qtd. in Ridgeway 1: 6).

The worst situation was describe in the writings of Leta Hong Fincher in her book "Leftover Women: The Resurgence of Gender Inequality in China" she said that the 'leftover woman' or 'shengnü' is a description to a woman who is still unmarried in her late twenties. This tradition puts so much pressure on women to marry the man who come their way. Furthermore, though the state feminist agency Women's Federation aims to protect "women's rights and interest" they themselves eternalize the term 'leftover' to stop women from becoming too ambitious in thinking that they can achieve greater heights far from men. For this organization, women must marry and forget their ambitions in life. In the Women's Federation Website posted last March 2011 after the celebration of International Women's Day, it posted in their website the following statement:

*Pretty girls don't need a lot of education to marry into a rich and powerful family, but girls with an average or ugly appearance will find it difficult. These kind of girls hope to further their*



*education in order to increase their competitiveness. The tragedy is, they don't realized that as women age they are worth less and less, so by the time they get their M. A. or Ph. D, they are already old, like yellowed pearls.*

This means that inequality resurfaced in China, even after the communist revolution of 1949, which was spearheaded by Mao Zedong. During that time Mao Zedong's statement "women hold up half the sky" was not anymore significant in the new era, even though the aim of Mao Zedong was to harness women's capability at that time. This means that the past glorious accomplishment in women's history were already forgotten in modern day China (Hong Fincher 1-2).

It was a dismaying fact but worst case scenario was not in China. It is in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. In an investigation of true to life scenario, Erika Piquero charted the situation of women in that place. In her simultaneous interview and investigation, she found out that women's situation during the 1960's until 1990's civil war in Guatemala haunted them until today. Piquero revealed in her research entitled "Gendered Violence, Inequality and Silence: Women in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala" (this work was part of the book entitled "Journal of Politics and International Affairs" published in spring 2015) women's domestic violence, racism, and deprivation of good education were prevalent in the atmosphere of Guatemala. In modern Mayan civilization the only weapon employed in this situation was pure silence as a way out for their survival (112-123).

*'Silence' is pervasive but not fatal. La violencia comes up sooner or later in many conversations, not only in private but also in more oblique ways in public. Many things are said, despite reticence and repression, even about so called subversives, although there is a great reluctance to discuss la violencia in any great depth. Explicit discussion is avoided in all contexts for fear of army spies (Zur 162).*

The horror and psychological trauma is still alive in the hearts of the people especially on women. The deprivation and stagnation is much worst even in modern day Guatemala. It is a remorseful situation for women in Guatemala. The reinforcement of violence, silence as a means of control, racism coupled with

emotional turmoil, and economic difficulties indignantly lacerated the hope of women in Guatemala (121-123). It added to the weight of their burden far from a liberating Mayan society. In tracing back the history, Mayan community had an efficient society. Their contribution were mainly in farming system (“the first to grow corn”), revolutionized knowledge in Math and Scientific discoveries (113-114). The Mayan civilization contributed in the society at large for progression but failed to give back the dignity of women, much worst it becomes degrading. In

Laura A. Thompson's Master's in teaching program at the Northwest University she proved in her study that there was already gender inequality even from the start of the elementary education. In her investigation, there was unconscious stigma of gender inequality that unconsciously divides the class into two gender division. The heightened feeling of girls that they were insignificant even from the start of their primary education was alarming. This simple truth resulted from underrated performance among the girls in the class participation, which lower their self-worth and confidence especially in performing in their Math subject. Teachers must be very careful in their treatment with both gender to avoid being biased (2-4).

In an International Research Journal entitled “Gender inequality-A Global Issue” written by Zulfqar Ashraf wani and Prof. Ruchi Ghosh Dastidar (Department of Sociology and social work Barkatullah University, Bhopal) published August 2018, we need 118 years to equalize the gender distance between men and women. This was explained by the Global Gender Gap Report in 2015. This problem is an alarming situation around the globe because it would take a century before making amends with the discriminations to women. The statistics projected that, only 4% was so far accomplished in giving solution to this problem. This problem infect the whole world up to this day (383-384). In the journal article of Ayong Quinta Njabi entitled “Gender Inequality and Its Representation in two African Novels,” the novels of African writers Chinua Achebe's “Things Fall Apart” and Buchi Emecheta's “The Joys of Motherhood” were analyzed and compared. The author emphasized that the two works mirrored the deprivation of women in their different angles. It was concluded at the end of the comparative study of the two literature that, to achieve the parity of the sexes there must be literary texts that must celebrate freedom of the two gender. These kinds of texts were the gateways to the total liberation of women in the coming centuries.

The underlying question is this: If these women texts were here for one hundred years now and women were fighting for their rights since the beginning of

time, how come the place and the glory that was meant for them was not yet fully retrieved?

The total changes in the society cannot emerge no matter how women fight for their rights. For as long as women think of themselves as incapable, incompetent and inefficient it is impossible for them to redeem their place and their glory. Women must foremost know their place in the society before retrieving their glory.

In Simon De Beauvoir's "The Second Sex." She said "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (De Beauvoir 17-18, 31). It is still relevant today and is worth mentioning in the study. She wrote in her book that the problem is not how many deprivations and struggles women had been through in the past years, but how they build the self again. This is without blaming others or the circumstances happened in the past. A woman must change how she feels inside. No one can take the glory and the position that was meant for her, if she does not feel inadequate. No one can dictate her, because she will make her own destiny (845-846; ch. 14).

The flicker of light is burning unceasingly in the heart of every woman. They just have to find the nagging feeling of being swept away with it, listen to its voice and take their action as they feel it. A woman must therefore know her worth before fighting for the inevitable. Without this essential element, any action taken will be futile. No matter how brilliant her ideas are, but cannot feel inside her the truthfulness and the essence of those ideas she is articulating. It is worth nothing (858-862).

Women must first feel secure and confident about themselves before retrieving their rightful place in the society. The truth, they must not prove anything at all. They were complete from the day that they were born. But the problem is that they focus on nonessential thoughts about themselves instead of using their energy vis-à-vis in the upliftment of humanities and in the pursuance of their undertakings (Firestone 126-127, 151-152).

The society is not meant to define a woman, but rather a woman must define her meaning. "A woman must realize her own strength and capabilities to fully own herself" (De Beauvoir 857-860). The real cause of the problem is rooted within herself (De Beauvoir ch. 14; 834). Jane Austen and Emily Brontë knew their place in the society. They were excellent writers (Woolf 45-46). De Beauvoir stated that

a woman is a woman equal to men (De Beauvoir 862-863). Woolf on the other hand, applauded their works in her essay entitled "A Room of One's Own." Despite of the innumerable deprivations they experienced, they were able to create masterpieces. Therefore, they are model of excellence (Woolf 46). The only time that one redeems her place is when one stands on her own, with or without society's approval (De Beauvoir 848-862).

Towards the end, all it takes is to hand the future generation and the children of today a different upbringing. Make them feel (both men and women, especially women) that they are capable of anything. All human beings are born equal. No one is superior (Lorber 10-11). The book of Genesis in the bible reminds us of a beautiful text. It says:

*God created man in his image: in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. (Gen. 1: 27)*

In a simple sense, God sees us as complete and capable human beings because he created us. Man in this context refers to all human beings regardless of the gender.

In mapping the place of women in the development of their literary writing prowess, it was evident that women in the past years showed progress in this matter. Elaine Showalter in her book "A Literature of their Own" discussed these developments.

Accordingly, there were three stages in women's literature. The first stage was the feminine stage. This stage talks about female writers taking male pseudonyms in order to write and publish (this was in the year 1840's until 1880). The next chapter in women literary development, which was in 1960, is called "new stage of self-awareness". Some of the well-known writers in this era were George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë, Florence Nightingale, Dinah Mulock and Elizabeth Lynn Linton to name a few. They tried to integrate themselves in the social sphere of men but still they were left "metaphorically paralyzed" (Lee par. 1-3).

The second stage was the minority or the subordinate. In this era, the writers such as Mary Braddon, Rhoda Broughton and Florence Marryat wrote radical ideas that showed protest against female deprivation and marriage conventions. In addition, Elizabeth Robins, George Egerton, Mona Caird and Olive Scheiner wrote

dramatic piece as a vehicle to demonstrate female mockery such as the changes in political affairs for both male and female. According to Elaine Showalter these literary works were not embodiment of good literature, even though these works were published (par. 4-5).

The third period was about freedom and self-discovery. Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf wrote toward "female aesthetic" that upholds female sexuality and femininity in an abstract way. These works according to Showalter, were "androgynistic in nature" and not illustrating the actual body experience (par. 6).

In the twentieth century, female authors change the traditional way of writing through the application of Freudian and Marxist analysis. They were Muriel Spark, Doris Lessing, Margaret Drabble, A.S Byatt and Beryl Bainbridge who illustrated and expressed that "anger and sexuality" were accepted as a means of "female creative powers" (par. 7).

There were developments in women's literature but these were insufficient. A woman was not yet triumphant in writing a masterpiece of the world. The development in literary realm were not enough to claim that there exist parity of the sexes. To ensure that there will be parity of the sexes in the years to come, changes must first take place in every literature classes, since schools are the foundations of learning.

The following are implications for teaching literature in the five macro skills. Table 5 shows the different macro skills in literature classes and their implications.

**Table 5**  
**The Five Macro skills in the observance of gender-sensitive policy in literature classes**

Macro skills	Implications
Reading	The representation of male and female in the reading materials used portray parity in all aspects (social class, physical and mental abilities).
Writing	Literary educator encourages the students to uphold gender-sensitive words in their writings and avoid derogative words that dehumanize both sexes.

<b>Speaking</b>	Literary educator upholds gender-sensitive language and students used language respectful to both gender.
<b>Listening</b>	The audio materials used observe equal representation of the two sexes at the same time, free from lewd language.
<b>Viewing</b>	Films used in class adhere to the gender policy at the same time, free from the depiction of women as weak or as sexual objects.

The following are the suggested ways to effectively promote gender sensitivity in literature classes: (1) design course curriculum that includes both male and female writers; (2) establish written rules and regulations that shuns biased language and behavior in the classroom; (3) the literary teacher opts to use materials that represent both male and female authors in the classroom; (4) the literary teacher communicates to male and female using gender-sensitive language; and (5) provide equal learning opportunities for both male and female.

Below are the guidelines in teaching students writing techniques to produce quality literary pieces in the observance of gender equality: (1) Pre-writing stage: the students think of general topics that both represents the sexes (e. g. beautiful beach, favorite hobby, effect of civil war etc.) and produce an outline of the main ideas based on the topic selected; (2) The topic must be developed according to the outline set and free from biased language; (3) effective writing employs vivid words, authentic characters and relevant ideas describing real life scenarios without the use of 'stereotype' language on male and female characters; (4) Use a different plot twist that is new and will contribute to the literary realm; (5) Lastly, check and re-check the whole literary piece to ensure biased free language and quality output.

In exploring women's literary prowess in the past century, here are the suggested ways in order for a woman to effectively uphold her literary prowess: (1) a woman must feel complete and confident of herself without asking for anyone's approval. She must be an independent woman who can stand firm on her own without being dictated and influenced by the norms of the society just like De Beauvoir's suggested (813-846; ch. 14); (2) Woolf's writing guidelines in 'androgynous' manner and 'a room of her own' must be employed. A woman must

both represent the two gender in her writings without employing negative remarks on men. A room of her own must be given to her to achieve greater concentration in her writings without interruptions (4; ch.1; 65-76; ch. 6);(3) A liberal mind that upholds gender equality must be integrated in the education system so that, everyone will respect all human capabilities and uniqueness. (4) CHED must sustain the gender equality policy and be more firm in implementing their rules and regulations towards the total liberation of women; (5) A woman must employ in her writings the vividness of words, the authenticity of the characters, and relevance of ideas that will contribute in the body of knowledge. These techniques will ensure quality outputs for women.

This study seeks to inflame the hearts and awaken people into taking appropriate action in making gender-sensitive society that caters to both men and women in their progress towards higher learning. The study is ambitious enough to create massive realization of this modification in the beliefs and trend of the world that would bring equality among the sexes while at the same time creating harmonious society that will erase the inequality among the sexes. Furthermore, it hopes to help society in understanding and appreciating women's contribution in the past three hundred years. Through this work, women may also be informed that they are capable of creating great literary works. Society on the other hand, may modify the environmental trend from patriarchal to egalitarian.

### WORKS CITED

- Abbenyi-Nfah, Juliana Makuchi. *Gender in African Women's Writing: Identity, Sexuality and Difference?*. Bloomington; Indiana Polis: Indiana University Press, 1997.
- Alcott, Louisa May. "The Death of John." *Free Classic Book*. 8 March 2019 <<http://freeclassicebook.com.html>>.
- Addichie, Chimamanda. "We should all be Feminist." New York: Vintage Book, 2014.
- Ashraf wani, Zulqar and Ruchi Ghosh Dastidar. "Gender Inequality—A Global Issue." *International Journal of Research* August 2018: 383-384. Abstract . <<http://edupediapublications.org/journals/index.php/IJR/>>.

- Alhojailan, Mohammed Ibrahim. "Thematic Analysis: A Critical Review of Its Process and Evaluation." *West East Journal of Social Sciences* December 2012 <<http://westinstitute.com>>.
- Australian National University. "Criteria of a Good Essay." 10 Nov. 2018 <<http://anu.edu.au/html>>.
- Baym, Nina. "Women's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America." Urbana; Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993.pp.1- 34.
- Biddle, Arthur et. al. *Angles of Vision: Reading, Writing, and The Study of Literature*. U.S.A: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1992.1561-1737.
- Borstein, Elena. *Prentice Hall—Literature Cooper—Paramount Edition*. New Jersey:Prentice Hall Englewood Cliffs, 1994.
- CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, Series of 2015.
- Crampton, Caroline. "Women Writers after Woolf: Still Fighting for a Room of One's Own." *Newstatemen America*. 16October 2018<<http://newstateman.com/politics/feminism/2014/10/women-writers-after-woolf-still-fighting-room-one-s-own>>.
- Croft, Steven. *Revise GCSE: Complete Study and Revision Guide in English and Literature*. China: Letts and Lonsdale, 2007.
- Curl, Mervin James. *Expository Writing*. Boston; New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919.
- De Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. Trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier. New York: Vintage Book Edition, 2011.
- Dunning, David and David A. Sherman. "Stereotypes and Tacit Inference". *American Psychological Association*, 1997. Vol. 73, No. 3 of *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 0022-3514/97/53.00:459-471.
- Dyhouse, Carol. "Girl Trouble: Panic and Progress in the History of Young Women." London: Zed Books, Ltd, 2013.



- Eisenclas, Susana A. "Gender Roles and Expectations: Any Changes Online?" Sage publication, 2013, doi:10.1177/12158244013506446.11-9-18.
- Elstob, Elizabeth. Preface. *Raising their Voices: British Women Writers*. by Marilyn L. Williamson. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990.
- Ezell, Margaret J.M. *Writing Women's Literary History*. United States of America: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Filipiknow.net. ed. Luisito E. Batongbakal Jr. 07 October 2018. "Nine Kickass Women in Philippine History You've Never Heard of." <<http://filipinoknow.net>>.
- Fincher, Leta Hong. *Leftover Women: The Resurgence of Gender Inequality in China*. London: Zed Books Ltd. 2014.
- Firestone, Shulamith. "The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution." London; United Kingdom: Verso Books, 1970.
- Gordimer, Nadine. "A Writer's Freedom." 02 February 2019, pp. 53-55. <<https://journals.sagepub.com.03064227608532>>.
- Hahner, June Edith. *Emancipating the Female Sex: The struggle for women's Rights*. Brazil: Duke University Press, 1990.
- Hidalgo-Cristina, Pantoja. "Casa Blanca." <<https://crestaola.wordpress.com>>. Hull, Gloria. "Black Women's Studies: The Interface of Women's Studies and Black Studies." Beverly Guy-Sheftall. Ed. Spec. issue of *The Black Scholar*. 49.1 (1992):33-41.
- International Reading Association. *Essay Rubric*. NTCE, 2013.
- Kawakami, Hiromi. "Blue Moon." Trans. Lucy North. 09 November 2018 <<https://granta.com/blue-moon/>>.
- Keller, Helen. "Three Days to See." Contributed by Arvind Gupta. 6 June 2019 <<http://thuh.edu.tw/ccj>>.

- Lee, Elizabeth. "Women in Literature—A Literary Overview." Brown University, 1997 <<http://victorianweb.org/gender/womeninliterature-aliteraryoverview>>.
- Lorber, Judith. *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010: 1-17.
- Maguire, Moira and Brid Delahunt. "Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars." Dundalk Institute of Technology Autumn 2017 <<http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/viewFile/335/553>>.
- Manlapaz, Edna Z. "The Canon of Early Filipino Poetry in English: A Feminist Challenge". Ateneo de Manila University, 1991.
- Martinez, Elizabeth. Preface. "The Dream of Nunca Mäs: Healing the Wounds," by Emma Sepulveda. *Women Writing Resistance: Essays on Latin America and the Caribbean*. Ed. Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez, 2005. Ed. Jennifer Browdy. "Language as an Instrument of Domination," by Rosario Castellanos.
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary. 2nd ed. Springfield: Merriam-Webster Inc, 2019.
- McCrum, Robert. "Are these the Fifty Most Influential Books by Women?." *The Guardian* 11 Feb. 2013.
- National University of Singapore. "Criteria of an Essay." <<http://nus.edu.sg/html>>.
- Newman, Tim. "Sex and Gender: What is the Difference." 07 February 2018. Rev. Karen Cross. *Medical News Today*. <<http://medicalnewstoday.com>>.
- Njabi, Ayong Quinta. "Gender Inequality and Its Representation in two African Novels". 24 August 2019. <[Pro-gradu-tutkielmat-ja-diplomityot](http://Pro-gradu-tutkielmat-ja-diplomityot) [6765]>.
- North, Scott. "Negotiating What's 'Natural': Persistent Domestic Gender Role Inequality in Japan". 05 May 2009. University of Tokyo: Oxford University Press, 2009. Vol. 12, No. 1 of *Social Science Japan Journal* <<http://academic.oup.com/ssjj/articleabstract/12/123/1681845>.doi.10.1093/ssjj/jyp009> pp. 23-44.

Nussbaum, Martha C. "Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach." United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Palmer, Nettie [Janet Gertrude]. "The Right to Orioles." Nettie Palmer: Her Private Journal Fourteen Years, poems, reviews and literary essays. Ed. Vivian Smith. Australia: University of Queensland Press, 1988.

Philippine Constitution, Art. 2. Sec. 14, 1987. Art. 14. Sec. 4, 1987. Republic Act no. 7192, 1992.

Piquero, Erika. Gendered Violence, Inequality and Silence: Women in

Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. Ed. Kenzi Abou-Sabe et. al. New York: New York University, 2015. Vol. 16 of Journal of Politics and International Affairs. Alex Hasipidis, gen. ed.

Ridgeway, Cecelia. Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Vol. 26, No. 4 of Gender and Society <doi: 10. 1177/0891-243212439344> pp. 665-668.

Rodriguez III, Francisco and Gil Ramos. Introduction to the Philippine Government and Politics with Basic Constitutional Principles. Routledge, 2005; Sage Publications, 1999: 44-86.

Rodriguez, Maxine Rafaella and Marella Therese A. Tiongson. Reading and Writing Skills. 1st ed. Philippines: Rex Book Store, 2016.

Sally\_\_\_\_. "The Structure of your Literature Review." 09 September 2013 Academic Coaching and Writing <<http://academiccoachingandwriting.org>>.

Spender, Dale. Writing a New World: Two Centuries of Australian Women Writers. London; New York: Pandora, 1988. 143-144.

Showalter, Elaine. "A Lifetime of their Own: British Women Novelist from Bronte to Lessing." New Jersey: Princeton University, 1977.

The New American Bible. Myles M. Bourke et. al., ed. Philippines: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1987.

Thompson, Laura. "Detecting Gender Inequality in Elementary Education." Diss. Northwest U, 2014.

The University of Auckland. "Criteria of an Essay." 10 Nov. 2018 <<http://auckland.ac.nz.html>>.

University of Cape Town. "Criteria of an Essay." 10 Nov. 2018 <<http://uct.ac.za.html>>.

University of Harvard. "Criteria of an Essay." 10 Nov. 2018 <<http://Harvard.edu.html>>.

Universidad National Autonoma de Mexico. "Criteria of an Essay." 10 Nov. 2018 <<http://Harvard.edu/Universidad-nacional-autonoma-de-mexico.html>>.

University of Oxford. "Criteria of an Essay." 10 Nov. 2018 <<http://ox.ac.ut.html>>.

The Urban Dictionary. 10 Nov. 2018 <<http://urbandictionary.com>>.

Varti, Riitta. "The History of Filipino Women's Writings". 01 February 2007 <<http://filippiinit.seura.fi/firefly.html>>.

Wollstonecraft, Mary "A Vindication of the Right of Woman." South Australia: The University of Adelaida, 1792.

Wood, Wendy and Alice H. Eagly. "Two Traditions of Research on Gender Identity".06 November 2018. New York: Springer Science and BusinessMedia,2015<[http://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/545/docs/wood.eagly.two\\_traditions.pdf.doi.10.1007/s11199-015-0480-2.p.1-13](http://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/545/docs/wood.eagly.two_traditions.pdf.doi.10.1007/s11199-015-0480-2.p.1-13)>.

Woolf, Virginia. "A Room of One's Own." 02 October 2018.South:ebooks @Adelaida <<http://www.ebooks.adelaida.edu.au/w/woolf/>>.

Wrights, Fiona. "Small Acts of Disappearance: Essays on Hunger." Australia: Giramondo Publishing, 2015.

Yule, George. The Study of Language. 3rd edn. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Zur, Judith. *Violent Memories: Mayan War Widows in Guatemala*. Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1998.