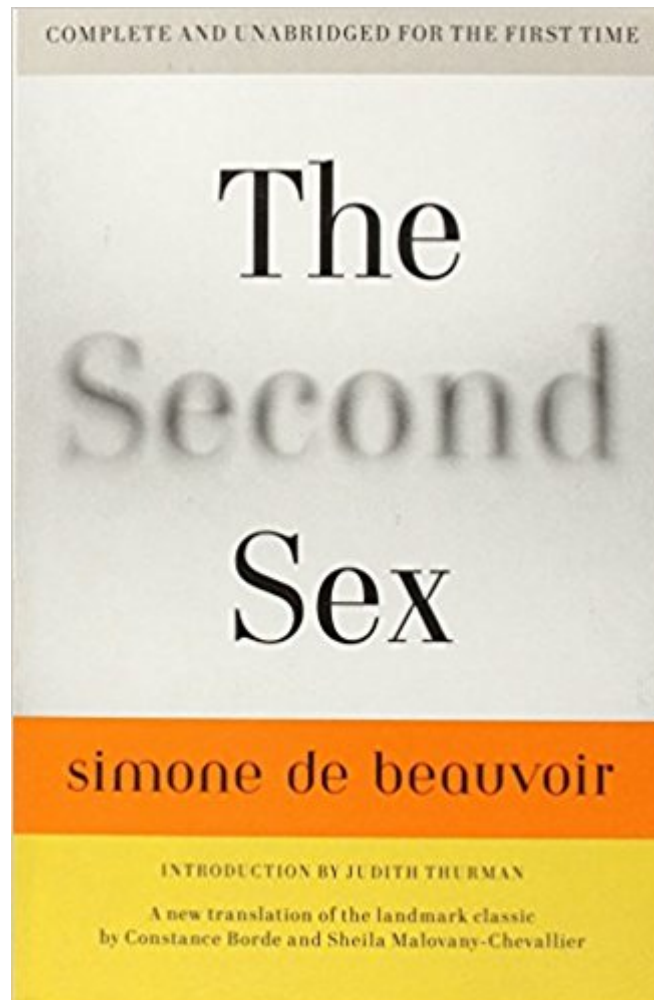




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The Second Sex



Synopsis

Newly translated and unabridged in English for the first time, Simone de Beauvoir's masterwork is a powerful analysis of the Western notion of "woman" and a groundbreaking exploration of inequality and otherness. This long-awaited new edition reinstates significant portions of the original French text that were cut in the first English translation. Vital and groundbreaking, Beauvoir's pioneering and impressive text remains as pertinent today as it was sixty years ago, and will continue to provoke and inspire generations of men and women to come.

Book Information

Paperback: 832 pages

Publisher: Vintage; 1 edition (May 3, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 030727778X

ISBN-13: 978-0307277787

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 1.4 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars See all reviews (134 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I, a young white man, read *Second Sex* last week. Although it contained almost nothing that I had not read before, it did what was necessary to my head. It somehow made the position of woman as the Other imaginable by me. Reading it, I imagined what it would be like for me to live in a society that had been dominated by women for more than three thousand years, a society where almost all the most renowned people, heroes, and religious icons were women. A society where the United States of America had had nothing but women presidents and every state was predominantly represented by women, though males account for half the population. Where the predominant forms of music for the last fifty years have all treated men as an interesting and occasionally useful, but often annoying or even maddening objects, and us men run around in skimpy calvin klein-style underwear on MTV while hip-hop women constantly call us "dogs" in their raps and the classic rock section of the local used music store overflows with female lyrics that question what is more

important in life, men, cars, or booze? and blame us men for breaking their poor girl hearts and for being warlocks, (...), or idiots (while the woman rock stars collect millions of dollars and boy groupies run around ready to have sex with any security guard to get a shot to have sex with the famous women). A society where families are dominated by mothers and their husbands live in fear of having their allowance terminated, and have to do menial chores around the house to try to feel, or at least look, useful. Where a boy child realizes before he is 10 that he is a failure and, at best, a second-rate human being (if not an object)(...

I recently finished THE SECOND SEX by Simone de Beauvoir, which I had been "reading on" for more than a year. I adopted a system of reading chapters of it between other books after starting out great guns the summer of 2004, reading 200 pages and realizing that if I didn't do something to break it up, I would never finish it. That is not to say that THE SECOND SEX is not a great book. It is. It's valuable. It's interesting. It's educational, not just about views of women in the first part of this century in Western culture, but also about the logical and writerly process that de Beauvoir uses to address such a massive topic: The topic of Woman; the topic, really of Woman as Other. But there are issues with the translation that can't be ignored. If memory serves me, Parshley had trouble getting de Beauvoir to help him with his translation. Questions he directed to her went unanswered for months, so he not only translated the book, but cut large sections (yes, this 732-page version is abridged!) that he thought were not important, or were redundant. Parshley also was not a philosopher, but was a zoologist, and as such did not understand the depth of such existential and philosophical terms as "immanence." Once the translation was finished and published, de Beauvoir was furious with the results. Though Parshley can hardly be blamed given the situation in which he was working, it does make one wonder how much what one is reading resembles de Beauvoir's original ideas and objectives. Considering her objectives, this leads me to one of my favorite quotes about THE SECOND SEX.

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