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## **Presenting Beauvoir as a Feminist Neglecting her Defense and Accusations of Pedophilia**

Rosa Valls-Carol<sup>1</sup>, Lúdia Puigvert-Mallart<sup>1</sup>, Ana Vidu<sup>2</sup>, Garazi López de Aquileta<sup>3</sup>

- 1) University of Barcelona (Spain)
- 2) University of California, Berkeley (USA)
- 3) University of Wisconsin-Madison (USA)

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# Presenting Beauvoir as a Feminist Neglecting her Defense and Accusations of Pedophilia

Rosa Valls-Carol  
*University of Barcelona*

Lídia Puigvert-Mallart  
*University of Barcelona*

Ana Vidu  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Garazi López de Aguilera  
*University of Wisconsin*

## Abstract

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Recent scientific literature analyzes the increasing citizens' claim against human references that committed in history racist or sexist aggressions. Although newspapers have clarified that Simone de Beauvoir publicly defended the decriminalization of pedophilia and was condemned and removed from teaching due to her own case, few scientific studies acknowledge it. The scientific literature almost entirely situates her as a reference in feminism, portraying four pillars: 1) she was an example of the struggle for sexual freedom against harassment and abuse; 2) she was an anti-Nazi democrat; 3) she was the creator of modern feminism; 4) current feminists learned feminism from *The Second Sex*. This paper analyzes to what extent these pillars and the concealment of what she did and defended have been presented to individuals currently working on gender-related issues. The methodology includes an in-depth literature review and 15 communicative interviews with feminists from the second half of the 20th century and from the 21st century trained in different social sciences. Results show that de Beauvoir was presented as one of the main feminist references during most participants' degrees and that they learned about her anti-feminist actions and standpoints in other academic and non-academic dialogic spaces based on scientific evidence.

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**Keywords:** feminism, reference, pedophilia, Simone de Beauvoir

# Presentar a Beauvoir como una Feminista Ocultando su Defensa y las Acusaciones de Pederastia

Rosa Valls-Carol  
*Universitat de Barcelona*

Lídia Puigvert-Mallart  
*Universitat de Barcelona*

Ana Vidu  
*University of California,  
Berkeley*

Garazi López de Aguilera  
*University of Wisconsin-  
Madison*

## Resumen

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La literatura científica analiza la creciente reivindicación ciudadana contra referentes humanos que cometieron agresiones racistas o sexistas. Aunque los periódicos han aclarado que Simone de Beauvoir defendió públicamente la despenalización de la pederastia y fue condenada y apartada de la enseñanza por su propio caso, pocos estudios científicos lo reconocen. La literatura científica la sitúa casi en su totalidad como referente feminista, presentando cuatro pilares: 1) ejemplo de lucha por la libertad sexual contra el acoso y el abuso; 2) demócrata antinazi; 3) creadora del feminismo moderno; 4) las feministas actuales aprendieron el feminismo de *El Segundo Sexo*. Este artículo analiza hasta qué punto estos pilares y la ocultación de lo que hizo y defendió han sido presentados a quienes actualmente trabajan temas de género. La metodología incluye una revisión bibliográfica y 15 entrevistas comunicativas con feministas de la segunda mitad del siglo XX y del siglo XXI formadas en diferentes ciencias sociales. Los resultados muestran que de Beauvoir se presentó como uno de los principales referentes feministas durante la mayoría de las carreras de los y las participantes y que conocieron sus acciones y posturas antifeministas en otros espacios de diálogo académicos y no académicos basados en evidencias científicas.

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**Palabras clave:** feminismo, referente, pederastia, Simone de Beauvoir

Citizens are increasingly rejecting those humans presented as a reference who, throughout history, have committed racist or sexist aggressions. Movements such as #MeToo have increased citizens' awareness of sexual harassment and other forms of gender violence (Keplinger et al., 2019). It has propelled victims and their supporters to speak up and, within the wider society, a demand to hold harassers accountable and stop using them as a reference (Szekeres et al., 2020). Similarly, the BlackLivesMatter movement has promoted citizens' rejection towards prominent historical figures who have committed racist violence, such as owning slaves (Borysovych et al., 2020). These collective citizens' responses to individuals who have committed such aggressions, as well as to other individuals and institutional structures that have facilitated and sustained such violence, are contributing towards free, egalitarian, and non-violent societies.

However, there are still some sectors in society in which this rejection is not so clearly seen, thus promoting the silence and perpetuation of violence (Valls-Carol et al., 2021). Within the social sciences and humanities, some authors are still being used as great references, in spite of the public knowledge of the aggressions they have committed and/or supported, both through their actions and their work. One such example is Michel Foucault, whom many professors and researchers within different fields such as history, sociology, philosophy, and many others have continued to quote, teach, and even justify while hiding the fact that he defended the decriminalization of pedophilia. For many years, his defense of sexual violence both through his work and his actions has been published by some authors (Castells et al., 1994). More recently, Valls and colleagues (2022) have made scientific analyses of the reasons for him to be considered by many a historical reference and of the negative consequences of hiding his defense of pedophilia to students and young researchers.

Another author known for having defended the decriminalization of pedophilia and who, in spite of this, is still considered by some people and institutions one of the main references of the feminist movement is Simone de Beauvoir. In 1977 she signed, together with other authors including

Foucault, a manifest publicly defending three men who had been condemned of sexually abusing minors, claiming that they did not deserve such condemnation given that their relationships with the minors were “consented”. It is not hard to find the manifest; indeed, it was published in *Le Monde* ([Le Monde, 1977](#)) and can still be found on the internet<sup>1</sup>. Prior to that, it was also known that in 1938 she exploited her profession as a teacher to seduce female pupils ([Seymour-Jones, 2008](#)). In 1943, Beauvoir was suspended from teaching after being accused of sexually abusing her 17-year-old student in 1939 ([Rowley, 2005](#); [Wikipedia](#)).

Despite the widespread access to such information that has been known and available for decades, the scientific literature has barely acknowledged, let alone criticized, her defense of pedophilia. In turn, the body of literature on Simone de Beauvoir and her work mainly refers to four pillars that portray her as a main historical reference or figure in the feminist movement.

On the one hand, de Beauvoir is presented in many scientific articles as an example of the struggle for sexual freedom against harassment and abuse. Writings such as *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* position her as a writer defending freedom, recognizing her as an essential figure in the fight for women’s rights ([Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020](#)); similarly, some authors consider her to be a champion of freedom of sexual options ([López Pardina, 2009](#)). Much scientific literature argues that her philosophical and literary writings depict her as a feminist fighting for human beings’ freedom and the common good, concerned with the abuse and violence suffered by human beings ([Gagnon, 2008](#); [Ledwina, 2016](#)), particularly women ([Jasper, 2011](#); [Quinan, 2014](#)). Some of the more recent articles claim that her philosophical and theoretical developments denouncing such human violations offer an optimal framework through which to understand, analyze and transform issues with which feminism is concerned, such as gender violence ([Casoli, 2019](#)) or obstetric violence ([Cohen Shabot, 2021](#)), among others. However, among all the articles analyzed, her defense of pedophilia is almost non-existent. Among those few that do acknowledge it, there is only a brief mention of her signing of the manifest ([Le Monde, 1977](#)), which far from being criticized, is explained in a positive way. Mohiuddin (2008), for instance, uses it as an example of

“more progressive social views” (p. 746) of one of the co-signers of the manifest, Bernard Kouchner.

On the other hand, a few articles situate de Beauvoir as an anti-Nazi democrat who used her work to denounce extreme human horrors and wrongdoing such as the holocaust (Gagnon, 2008; Morgan, 2009). Gagnon (2008), for example, analyzes the theme of resistance to Nazism present in two of de Beauvoir’s novels, *The Blood of Others* and *The Mandarins*. Some authors even raise her to the status of contributing to the construction of democracy: “Beauvoir is a classic of the rank of Rousseau who, like her, did not create a philosophical system but was a giant of thought for having been the great theoretician of modern democracy. What Beauvoir did was to complete the construction of democracy that Rousseau had only thought of for men” (López Pardina, 2009, p. 100). Nonetheless, these writings ignore the fact that de Beauvoir worked for the Vichy government, which collaborated with the Nazis (Suleiman, 2010).

Another pillar that is emphasized across the literature is that Simone de Beauvoir is the creator of the modern feminist movement (López Pardina, 2009). In this piece, the author sustains she was the founder of modern feminism as Rousseau was the founder of modern democracy. Across the literature on her approach to feminism, de Beauvoir is described as an active feminist fighting for freedom, a pioneer author among her male colleagues (Pettersen, 2007-2008), arguing that her theories serve as fertile tools for explaining women’s oppression and the paths to their emancipation (López Pardina, 2009). In addition, de Beauvoir’s life and persona are depicted as the ideal of a liberated woman, a reference within the movement (Kruks, 2005). Yet portraying her as the founder of modern feminism makes invisible other women who, before or while de Beauvoir was defending the decriminalization of pedophilia and working with a Nazi-collaborator government, were improving women’s lives, such as the Boston Women, the women workers who died on March 8th in 1857, or contemporary to her, the Free Women (Giner et al., 2016). Moreover, those who claim her to be the founder of modern feminism often hide the fact that she recognized she did not consider herself a feminist at first - she even stated that in her book *The Second Sex*. Indeed, in a 1972 interview by Alice Schwartz for *Le Nouvel Observateur* she stated that she did not see the need for feminism and had only recently began considering herself a feminist<sup>2</sup>.

Last, the fourth pillar found across the literature highlights that her book *The Second Sex*, considered by some scholars as a historical classic in the field, is a foundational piece that has shaped the thought and work of many current feminists (Genovese, 2014; Hekman, 2015) - even though when she wrote it she did not consider herself a feminist. For instance, Genovese (2014) states that “It was Beauvoir -through her writing -that showed women like Lawson, Curthoys and many others like them all over the country that it was possible 'to forge an alternative to the narrow options then facing women, and to live according to a different conception of femininity, intellectuality, independence, sexuality and friendship” (p. 55). Nonetheless, situating her work *The Second Sex* as the foundational basis of current feminists ignores many other feminist women whose work is a reference for current feminists (Beck-Gernsheim et al., 2003; Flecha, 2021).

Across the literature, we have found no critical analysis of de Beauvoir’s acts, nor the act of questioning why she is still being presented as a main reference, particularly in feminism. Such silence and incoherence in the scientific literature has several negative consequences, especially for current feminists working and/or conducting research on gender-related issues who are being told they should have a woman who defended pedophilia as a reference. To fill this gap, this study provides a critical analysis of to what extent the four main pillars and the silence over her defense of pedophilia in the scientific literature have been presented or hidden to current feminists.

## **Methodology**

This study has been conducted under a qualitative methodology, based on communicative principles (Melgar-Alcantud et al., 2021; Gómez, 2021). The communicative methodology follows the principle of contributing to changing society, not only describing it. Thus, a particular reality is being studied in order to improve it (Pulido et al., 2021). In this sense, knowledge is co-created in interaction, considering people’s voices and needs (Aiello & Sorde-Marti, 2021). The communicative methodology has also led the incorporation of two current priorities of the European Scientific Programme of Research (Horizon Europe), which are the requirements for research

projects to co-create knowledge with individuals and communities and to state the real or potential social impact of such research.

Drawing on this, to better understand whether the image of Simone de Beauvoir as a main reference in feminism and the concealment of her defense of pedophilia in the scientific literature has been transmitted to current feminists, we have carried out a methodological design to include in the analysis the voices, interpretations, reflections and theories of people who have been told about de Beauvoir during their training and/or involvement with feminism.

On the one hand, a literature review (Snyder, 2019) was conducted in scientific databases (Web of Science, Journal Citation Reports, and Scopus) to identify authors who have mentioned and used the work of Simone de Beauvoir in their research. On the other hand, we have interviewed 15 women and men who have studied in different social sciences and humanities fields, such as Gender, History, Education, or Sociology, among others, and currently conduct research on issues related to gender. Table 1 presents the disciplines in which interviewees have been trained and their current profiles and universities. The interviews have been conducted following the postulate of “dialogic knowledge” of the communicative approach (Gómez et al., 2006). It establishes that knowledge of social reality is generated through an egalitarian dialogue between researchers, who provide existing knowledge in the scientific literature, and participants, who provide knowledge from their own experiences and lifeworld. In this dialogue, intersubjectivity and people’s capacity for reflection and self-reflection are the basis on which knowledge construction is established through interaction with all the participants in the study.

[TABLE 1]

The data analysis has been conducted through an intersubjective dialogic process among this paper’s authors. After conducting a communicative-based analysis (Torrás-Gómez, et al., 2019) with the information gathered from the scientific literature and the interviewees’ voices and experiences, the main categories found across the interviews revolve around the four main pillars presented in the introduction.

## **Results**



Once all the interviews have been carried out, our findings indicate that the people interviewed, being of different profiles, had not received the information that places Beauvoir neither as a feminist nor as a democrat during their training. On the other hand, they had been “sold” a view of her as a defender of equality and the mother of modern feminism. In this section, we present the main findings following the four categories established in the analysis.

### **It is not in some People’s Interest to talk about her Defense of Pedophilia**

Although not all interviewees had learned or heard about Simone de Beauvoir during their bachelor’s or master’s degrees, those who did stated that they had never been told about her defense of pedophilia. Some of them learned about it later in their careers, for instance while participating in a seminar in which they read and discussed seminal and scientific works from diverse disciplines in an egalitarian dialogue with people from diverse academic and non-academic backgrounds:

There [in the seminar] I learned things about her that are not said, such as that she was kicked out of a high school for having relationships with a minor student or that she signed the manifest in favor of the decriminalization of pederasty. Having a space for dialogue gives you access to documented information, which is publicly accessible. (Lorena)

Another interviewee stated that, in addition to that seminar, she learned about Simone de Beauvoir’s position in favor of pedophilia through an article published in the first daily feminist newspaper worldwide:

I learned who Simone de Beauvoir was because a long time ago we participated in the seminar, where we read *The Second Sex*. But what helped me know who she was an article we published in [feminist newspaper’s name] [current feminist researcher on gender violence and sexual harassment], where her implication in favor of legalizing sexual abuse was very clear, and obviously someone who

affirms that cannot be feminist, because what she does is to destroy sexual freedom and unprotect minors (Sonia)

In addition, many interviewees reflected upon the fact that such information about what she did and defended was publicly accessible, meaning that it was not a matter of not knowing:

I always think that it's known, but it's not explained, people don't look into it, all the issue about Nazism, and about pedophilia (Irene)

In a similar vein, Sonia explains that although there might be people who do not know about her defense of the decriminalization of pedophilia, highlighting the role of communication media to make it more visible by being based on scientific evidence of social impact, many do know and want it to remain hidden to justify abuse and harassment:

there are some people who don't know, that's why it's important for communication media to include more scientific evidence, and historical evidence, because the manifest wasn't hidden to society, it was published by a newspaper, it was vox populi. Other people probably know it and still they spread it, to then justify abuse and everything (Sonia)

Some interviewees also explained the concern that people who work and conduct research on gender-related issues should know this:

what I learned in the seminar didn't have anything to do [with what I had learned about her]. The first time I heard my PhD director talk about the manifest I remember I couldn't believe it and went to look for it on Wikipedia (...). And I didn't know whether people didn't know or don't want to talk about it. But it's so public, that it's not a matter of not knowing, because without being an expert I found it very easily, so people who work on these issues should know or find out about it (Alba)

In turn, a couple of interviewees stated that whenever they talked about this with other people who defend authors like Simone de Beauvoir, they have

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encountered different reactions, such as justifying the need to separate the author from her work:

When I comment on [issues such as pederasty in the class I teach] of these intellectuals, some students are very surprised, and also very attacked, as if they said “what does that have to do with what this author says”, as if separating the personal life and the intellectual legacy, as if it were an attack I am making on this person, and not on her work. (Ruth)

Or, as another interviewee stated about talking about it with a colleague from her university:

talking about Foucault [about the manifest], Simone de Beauvoir also came out. So let's say that the shield is always that, that there are many imperfect people and then of course, if we start looking for coherence or how these people are, we are left without people who have contributed valuable things. But of course, neither Foucault nor de Beauvoir have made relevant contributions to theory nor society, so that's really an excuse (Eva)

**“How can we Call a Woman who Collaborated with the Nazis a Feminist?”**

Another issue that came up about Simone de Beauvoir which nobody had told the interviewees during their training in their bachelor's or master's degrees was her collaboration with the Vichy government, which collaborated with Nazis. Alba, for instance, stated that although this was a known and publicly available fact, she had never heard about it until she started working in the research group that had broken the silence about sexual harassment in the Spanish university:

the issue about democracy, I also saw that when I searched for the other issue [the defense of the decriminalization of pedophilia], and people need to know her collaboration with the Nazi government, this postmodern group of people, in the end, it all makes sense. They wanted to portray a picture that did not represent what she did, because not only was she in favor of pedophilia but she

also practiced it. These are very serious issues, and they are public, and before [being in this research group] I hadn't heard about them anywhere (Alba)

Indeed, as several interviewees explained, the fact that she collaborated with such a government did not align with the leftist, feminist and progressive image that is often portrayed of her, so people who want to maintain such an image of her and themselves are not interested in talking about these things:

I think there are people who know it and defend her because it's good for them to maintain this stance, because they share it (Mónica)

Along this line, Daniel states that in the case of some authors, there is a will not to talk about their personal trajectories in order to maintain their feminist or progressive image:

about the issue of the Vichy government, I had no idea. In fact when I have learned [in class] about feminists, their professional or personal trajectory is never linked, and that's an error. For instance when someone talks about Einstein, they do explain that he had a religious angle (...), and in the case of some people it is not in the best interest to know, so it's not explained (Daniel)

Importantly, Lorena explains that while de Beauvoir was collaborating with the Vichy government, there were other women truly feminists who were working against Nazism, questioning whether we can call someone who defended the things de Beauvoir did a feminist:

Simone de Beauvoir was collaborating with the Vichy government which was a Nazi collaborationist, when the Free Women movement, after the [Spanish civil] war was lost, many of them went into exile in France and were activists in the French resistance. (...) In fact, many women were actively involved in the French resistance against the Nazis, when at that time Simone de Beauvoir was collaborating with the Nazis. So clearly how can we call a woman who defended those things and collaborated with the Nazis a feminist? (Lorena)

## **Presenting de Beauvoir as the Creator of Modern Feminism while Maintaining Feminists Invisible**

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As the previous quotes point out, far from being told about de Beauvoir's actions in favor of pedophilia and Nazism, those interviewees who had learned about her in their bachelor's or master's degrees were told she was the mother of modern feminism, the one author who changed the course of feminism:

I remember her as the mother of feminism in the 20th century. They [professors] did quote some from previous centuries, but they had her as the reference of the third wave, the one that gave the turn to feminism. (Eva)

Along this line, several interviewees state that although she was presented as one of the big names in feminist theory, giving her a main role as having made contributions that, in reality, other people before her had already made:

In the master's degree in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, we had a course on feminist theory, and of course, we dedicated part of it to Simone de Beauvoir. (...) we were explained her contribution to feminist theory, all this about gender roles, that women are not born, they are made. And one thing that always caught my attention was that Simone de Beauvoir was an essential author to understand gender or the socio-cultural dimension of gender; as if before her there were activists (...) and as in the second wave, she came to theorize about what it is to be a woman. And she said this obvious thing that the discrimination that women suffer is because they are women, as if it were a great theoretical contribution, and Simone de Beauvoir was the first one to realize it. (Alicia).

However, an important nuance highlighted across interviews is that de Beauvoir is not considered the creator of feminism by the whole feminist movement, but only by some specific groups. For example, Daniel tells us he came into contact with feminism through a specific collective, in this case a feminist of the difference follower of Simone de Beauvoir, who described her as the creator of feminism:

In a conference that I attended in 2003, about masculinities, there was a feminist "of the difference", as they were called. She was a feminist follower of Beauvoir and continuously blamed men. In her discourse she promoted the ideas of de Beauvoir and her reputation. (Daniel)

Along this line, Carolina explains that people who want to portray a progressive image of themselves are the ones who talk about her, even when they have not read anything she wrote:

I do remember one day when a friend of a friend told me about this book *The Second Sex* as if it were the most incredible book in the world. A guy from the “progressive” world, where Simone de Beauvoir had been the great revolution. (...) these environments, they defended her just like they do with Foucault. I doubt that this guy knew anything about her, but since he was from the student assembly, and moreover from the field of political science, it was nice to say that you were following a feminist. (Carolina)

A few interviewees raised the concern that, while women who have opposed values to feminism, like de Beauvoir, are promoted as great feminists, other women who have contributed to improving women’s lives both from scientific and theoretical contributions and from practice are made invisible:

it is clear that she is not the first feminist, if a woman who defends these things can be considered a feminist at all. Long before her, there have been other women who have also been made invisible. The Free Women was the first movement of working women organized independently of any political party, of any union, in 1936. It was the confluence of different women who were in different organizations of the libertarian movement. They made great contributions and transformations, because they emphasized women’s education and everything that was an organization of solidarity among women. There were more than 20,000 women who organized to overcome what they called the triple situation of slavery of the working woman: for being a worker, for being a woman, and for not having had access to education. (Lorena)

Similarly, across all interviews, many other women and collectives, as well as a few men, came up as being a real reference in feminism. When giving the names of these feminists, interviewees argued that it is because of the social transformations they have promoted throughout history that these can be called a reference in feminism:

[author who publishes scientific articles on gender violence and supports victims] for her involvement and scientific contributions to gender violence,

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egalitarian feminism, the inclusion of all voices, is my most important reference. From whom I have learned about feminism is from the women of [grassroots women's movement]; when I was 20 years old I was lucky enough to meet and collaborate with them, grassroots movements, and I knew what it really means to fight for equality. Also [another author who publishes scientific articles on gender violence and supports victims], and the free women's movement, which was also a discovery for me. They led the way in Barcelona to abolish prostitution and to create opportunities for women, social and labor inclusion, and that is 100,000 times more important than other feminists in quotation marks. (Sonia)

Yet, as many interviewees have emphasized, they have not learned about these feminists during their training years, but later on, in different dialogic spaces which are based on argumentation and scientific evidence of social impact:

Now I do know other names, by talking, by the seminar, the platforms, because I know [those who publish scientific evidence on gender violence and support victims], I didn't have those references before. (Inés)

***The Second Sex is not a Reference Book for many Current Feminists***

Interviewees, all of whom work on gender issues and/or are related to feminist movements, emphasize the fact that they have not learned about feminism from Simone de Beauvoir nor her book *The Second Sex*, but from women who have made contributions that are improving women's lives, especially for the most vulnerable:

I did not learn feminism from Simone de Beauvoir, I discovered feminism or rediscovered it with the feminism of the equality of differences, the feminism of other women. And other authors that I have read, some before de Beauvoir and others contemporary with her (Pilar)

When talking about current international feminists, some interviewees stated that they do not quote nor mention Simone de Beauvoir in their works and conferences:

in the postdoc I did in Paris, I participated in a seminar with feminist professors who work in the gender field, (...) and they never mentioned Simone de Beauvoir, they never used her as a reference. These professors worked on the issue of the veil, of Muslim women, and they didn't mention her (Petra)

When talking about whom they learned about feminism from, none of the interviewees refer to de Beauvoir, but to grassroots social movements and feminist authors working for the most vulnerable collectives, as Petra explains:

I came into contact with feminism with grassroots social movements, from women's associations, adult learner schools, and women from cultural associations, (...). In addition, I remember the women's congress in Barcelona in 1999, where very diverse people participated. (...) I learned about feminism from social movements, and then in contact with more international authors, from the project, from going to Paris. (Petra)

In addition, Lucía states that those who say they learned from her and base their work on her contributions have not really read them, but rather say that as a pose or discourse to be seen as more progressive and feminist:

I also think that since people had not read it [The Second Sex], it was more of a speech, like a learned phrase: "and Simone de Beauvoir said this, and from here on I'm going to do my thing..." (Lucía)

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

The findings from the interviews confirm that the image of Simone de Beauvoir as a main reference in feminism and the concealment of her defense of pederasty have been transmitted to current feminists during their training in bachelor's and master's degrees in different disciplines. By presenting her as a founding figure of modern feminism, on the one hand the



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violence exerted and defended by this author has been silenced and covered up and, on the other, other women and men who have contributed to feminism and equality with their coherence and their actions have been made invisible.

As was evinced across the scientific literature, Simone de Beauvoir is presented as a defender of feminism, women's rights and sexual freedom (Jasper, 2011; López Pardina, 2009; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020). The interviews have corroborated this image of her, particularly among individuals and collectives that want to pose an image as feminist and "progressive". Nonetheless, this has terrible consequences for society and especially for the most vulnerable women. Indeed, stating that being a feminist means having someone who defended and was accused of pedophilia and collaborated with a Nazi-collaborator government as a reference alienates many people and many young girls, turning them away from feminism.

As many interviewees stated, Simone de Beauvoir was presented, particularly during their bachelor's or master's degrees, as the founder of modern feminism. This image coincides with much of the scientific literature, which situates her as a prominent figure in feminism (Kruks, 2005; Genovese, 2014; Hekman, 2015; Pettersen, 2007-2008). Moreover, many of the interviewees have either read or been told about *The Second Sex*, particularly in feminism-related courses or movements, as a foundational book in feminist theory, one that all feminists must learn. This is also in line with some of the literature that states that current feminists have learned from her and in particular from this book. Nevertheless, by using Simone de Beauvoir as one of the main references in feminism and her work essential in this field, both during the training of current feminists and in the scientific literature, makes women who have made essential contributions to improving women's lives, both from theory and practice, invisible (Beck-Gernsheim et al., 2003). There are many women who, even before Simone de Beauvoir, had not only put forward clearly feminist perspectives, but had practiced them in their public and private lives. Some examples that have come up in the interviews include the Free Women's movement, who, while Simone de Beauvoir was working for a Nazi-collaborator government, were part of the French resistance to Nazism.

Nonetheless, presenting the former as a reference in feminism and the democratic fight makes the women who did fight for democracy and for all women's rights invisible.

By carrying out this study we have been able to see that there is a gap in the literature that hides Beauvoir's relationship with pederasty and presents her as a fighter against harassment and creator of modern feminism. The absence of scientific analysis on such a serious subject and with so many social implications causes professionals to be trained on the concealment of the truth. In the context of MeToo and Black Lives Matter, where there is an increasing claim by citizens to stop using people who have committed sexist and racist acts as a reference, it is unsustainable to keep having people who have exercised and committed pedophilia and have collaborated with Nazi-collaborator governments as a feminist reference. We can no longer let authors who have been the benchmark for the opposite be seen as referents of equality and democracy. Girls and adolescents deserve an education based on evidence and in line with what everyone claims to defend.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>The English translation of the manifest can be found here:

[https://www.ipce.info/ipceweb/Library/00aug29b1\\_from\\_1977.htm](https://www.ipce.info/ipceweb/Library/00aug29b1_from_1977.htm)

<sup>2</sup>The interview can be found in this link: <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Salient35061972-t1-body-d14.html>

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Annex 1. Participants' profiles

No	Pseudonym	Discipline	Profile	University
1	Petra	Sociology	Former PhD student currently teaching at the university	Autonomous University of Barcelona
2	Inés	Education & Sociology	Former High School student currently teaching at the university	University of Barcelona
3	Daniel	Sociology & Education	Former PhD student currently teaching at the university	University Rovira i Virgili
4	Lorena	Gender & Education	Active in social movements of women, currently teaching at the university	University of Barcelona
5	Alba	Sociology & Education	Former undergraduate student currently teaching at the university	University of Barcelona
6	Carolina	Political Sciences	Former undergraduate student currently teaching at the university	Autonomous University of Barcelona

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7	Irene	Education	Active in social movements of women, currently teaching at the university	University Rovira i Virgili
8	Pilar	Psychology & Neuroscience	Former PhD student currently teaching at the university	University of Barcelona
9	Ruth	Sociology	Former PhD student currently teaching at the university	University of Barcelona
10	Eva	Education	Former undergraduate student currently teaching at the university	University of Valencia
11	Lucía	Gender & Education	Former PhD student currently teaching at the university	University of Barcelona
12	Nuria	Social movements & Sociology	Active in social movements, currently working and PhD student	University of Barcelona
13	Mónica	Education & Psychology	Former undergraduate student currently teaching at the university	University of Deusto
14	Sonia	Communication & Journalism	Former PhD student currently teaching at the university	Autonomous University of Barcelona
15	Alicia	Education &	Former undergraduate	UNED

		Sociology	student currently teaching at the university	
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**Rosa Valls-Carol.** University of Barcelona, Spain.

**ORCID ID:** <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4286-2525>

**Lidia Puigvert-Mallart.** University of Barcelona, Spain.

**ORCID ID:** <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8963-615X>

**Ana Vidu.** University of California, Berkeley

**ORCID ID:** <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9844-6809>

**Garazi López de Aguilera.** University of Wisconsin-Madison

**ORCID ID:** <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7571-3556>

**Contact Address:** [ana.vidu@berkeley.edu](mailto:ana.vidu@berkeley.edu)