

# Re-reading de Beauvoir 'after race': */woman-as-slave/* revisited

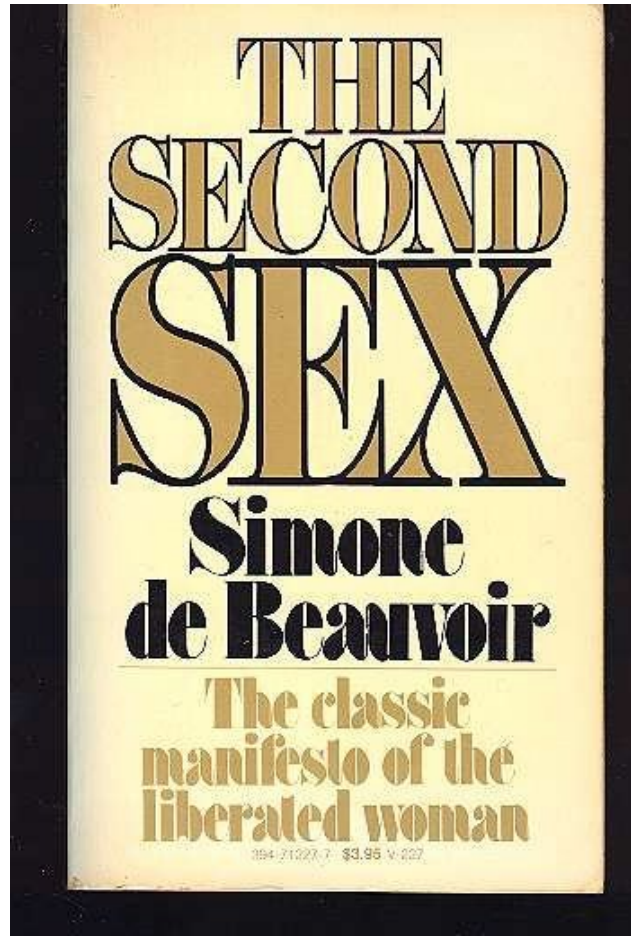
*a talk by*

Sabine Broeck,  
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**Thursday, October 13**

**4:00 pm**

**301 Herter Hall**



**\*Abstract\***

This paper reads Simone de Beauvoir's *Ethics of Ambiguity* (1948) and *The Second Sex* (1949) in light of recent decolonial critiques of (post)modernity. It situates de Beauvoir's employment of the 'woman-as-slave' analogy within the heated controversies of her political moment. Marxists, Existentialists, Jewish intellectuals and Pan-Africanists, among others, engaged around issues of anti-fascist, anti-colonialist and anti-capitalist struggle. De Beauvoir's avant-gardist project to insert early feminist articulation into these controversies laid the foundation for international second-wave feminism. Radical as it was in terms of her formulation of (white) gender difference, however, her work was based on a rhetorical distancing of white women from 'slavery' which separates Black women from the conceptualization of gender altogether, and thus has erased the history and claims of Black women from the critical purview of feminism.

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