

# Women's Dilemmatic Constraints in Emerging Second-Wave Feminism, Heideggerian Ambivalence and Oscillation between Authenticity and Inauthenticity

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## ABSTRACT

This paper adopts Heidegger's philosophy, its authenticity and inauthenticity in particular, to analyze ambivalent or even conflictual representations of women in emerging second-wave feminism. During the consciousness-raising stage of second-wave, women's consciousness-raising enabled their struggles for feminist ways of living, while patriarchal society's struggles against feminism were commonly witnessed to impose enormous constraints on women with consciousness raised, who were thirsty for employment but cringed from leaving homes to enjoy rights in the public sphere. This problem of "getting out" and "getting back" is explained by Heidegger's existential (in)authenticity, especially the oscillation, with reference to humans' existential structures. Authentically, to strive for economic independence, women as Dasein with feminist consciousness raised were encouraged to speak up for themselves to reclaim the long-lost authentic "Self of one's own" by confronting the patriarchal oppression of "The They". However, due to social constraints which exacerbated women's fear of confrontation, women chose to live by the inauthentic status quo in average everydayness with full absorption where women largely gave up on reflecting on assigned domestic roles and on taking responsibility for feminist life-planning. This paper argues that volatile and oscillatory transitions between authenticity and inauthenticity among women constituted the ambivalent representations of struggling women, existentially due to first the temporariness of authenticity and strong pulling power of inauthenticity in the less influential emerging second-wave to render authenticity ineffective, and second the unavoidable existence of the powerful influence of "The They" – as ontologically Being-with – as patriarchal those on women to draw them back to homes.

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## **1. Introduction**

Second-wave feminism, generally speaking, was a social-political movement with great emphasis placed on greater intellectual and financial independence, workplace equality and opportunities and sexual revolution for women (Beasley, 1999, pp. 3-11; Hawkesworth, 2006, pp. 25-27; Lengermann & Niebrugge, 2010; Mendus, 2005, pp. 291-294). In the 1960s, two mainstream feminisms, with liberal feminism being the first one and radical feminism later, stood to call into question the received assumptions of women's domestic and inferior roles in public and private spheres and to challenge patriarchy and its far-reaching and long-lasting influences and constraints on women (Mohapatra, 2009, pp. 80-92). However, despite the rise of second-wave, there were still constraints on women instead of having everything "return to normal", while the degree, extent and characteristics of constraints on women differed at different stages of second-wave. One general impression to be taken here is that the earlier society was than the rise of second-wave, the more intense constraints were on women, due to less widening influence and dissemination of second-wave on society; therefore, it is not discreet to generalize overall constraints characteristic for women throughout stages of second-wave which had lasted from the 1960s to the 1970s. This paper would like to specifically take the consciousness-raising stage of second-wave, mainly that of the U.S. which was the first country where second-wave feminism developed (De Lange, 2007, p. 317), – before the rise of the first official mass-membership organisation – as the context for the current study. One of the constraints women faced at the stage to be investigated is the ambivalence about women's attitudes towards lives, which displayed a dilemma between "being pushed out of home" for gainful work and "being pulled back into it" (Evans, 1994, p. 393). To address this constraint, this paper would like to adopt Heidegger's philosophy, its authenticity and inauthenticity in particular, and analyze the frequent interaction and oscillation between the two, to illustrate how women's existential structures and modes, as well as those of the general patriarchal society, resulted in the ambivalent and dilemmatic representations of women. The idea of this paper corresponds to Leland (2001, pp. 109-127)'s "Conflictual Culture and Authenticity" where she argues that Heidegger ignores the internal conflictual cultural diversity within any social groups which incorporates some subversive values such as feminism, because of which authentic Dasein can pick its own moral choices.

## **2. Constraints on Women at the Consciousness-Raising Stage of Second-Wave Feminism**

### **2.1. Consciousness-Raising Stage of Second-wave**

The reason for looking into the consciousness-raising stage of second-wave instead of its clear official start of second-wave in a clear-off timeline is that the starting time of the feminism was highly controversial and unreliable. Some suggest the early 1960s without an exact point in time (Agnew, 2017; Paglia, 2017, p. xv), 1963 with Friedan's publication, *The Feminine Mystique*, which served as the main catalyst for the liberal feminism as the mainstream, or the federal governments' reluctance to enforce the laws on sex discrimination as the catalyst for that (Davis, 1991, p. 45). As a matter of fact, trying to justify whether it was Friedan's publication or the federal governments' reluctance to first incite second-wave displays a disregard for second-wave feminism's "ancestors" and incubators without which second-wave could not have been triggered off. Incubators effective for second-wave can be traced far back to industrialization (Wylie, 1958) and to first-wave feminism with its limited existing women's rights movement (Davis, 1991, pp. 26-27), through the later expansion of social services and white collar bureaucratic occupations available for women since the second world war (Evans, 1994, p. 390). In the 1950s and the early 1960s, incubators included firstly the civil rights movement of the 1950s which stimulated related social movements to mutually influence one

another, secondly John F. Kennedy as elected President and the creation of the liberal social atmosphere with his establishment of 1961 President's Commission on the Status of Women, and thirdly the passage of Title VII regarding women's broader workplace equality at all levels in 1964 (Davis, 1991, p. 55). The effectiveness and efficacy of these incubators cannot be disregarded for the development of second-wave.

Nevertheless, it may be argued that with all the incubators included and taken into consideration, it is difficult to display a borderline between incubators and the official beginning of second-wave. I argue that there is no need to treat both of them as separate since both were interconnected and accumulated. In this sense, I reckon that second-wave was not the sole game of liberalist and radical feminists, but a collective one joined country-wide by various related incubators and contemporaneous factors in both countries (Bruley, 2017, p. 69; Lewis, 1992, pp. 65-87). For instance, passing the Equal Pay Act by the Congress in 1963 was not the act of liberal feminism but was regarded as effective for second-wave. Despite the challenge of figuring out the starting point of second-wave, I suggest that the effort of doing this would be in vain, and this can be dissolved by turning to the distinction between the consciousness-raising stage by 1966<sup>i</sup> and the solidified stage with the first new mass-membership organisation, the National Organisation for Women (NOW), which was formed by liberal feminists in 1966 (Davis, 1991; Ferree & Hess, 1994). Davis (1991, p. 49) added that with the NOW formed, second-wave was officially "lift-off". This distinction can be reflected by Bibby's (2017, p. 139) work that "women's Liberation's consciousness was generated before its organized beginnings [as solidified], in restless literature with a sharpened sense of the interior, subjective experiences of living within patriarchy". There are two reasons for adopting this distinction. Firstly, the borderline between the two stages is relatively clear. Secondly, with the consciousness-raising stage investigated and taken into consideration, all the relevant incubators can be taken into consideration as well for their contribution to consciousness-raising; this means that the influences of incubators are to be regarded as part of second-wave rather than separated from it. With the distinction between the consciousness-raising stage and the solidified one settled, the following part would like to illustrate the constraints on women at the consciousness-raising stage since the dilemmatic constraints on women were more conspicuous at the stage than those at the later stage.

## **2.2. Constraints on Women —Ambivalent and Dilemmatic Phenomenon**

At the consciousness-raising stage, there were some constraints characteristic for women's lives before and near the point of the emerging feminism — constraints as dilemmas between "pushed out of the home" for gainful work and "pulled back into it" for domestic work among women (Evans, 1994, p. 393). On the one hand, "production within the home, social production, was defined as 'women's work'" such as (1) preparation for daily domestic necessities, (2) socialization of children and (3) the creation of a private haven from the "outside" world (Evans, 1994, p.390); however, an increasing proportion of American women had found the traditional domestic role less fulfilling and enduring, and isolation and tedium of the role contributed to increasing disaffection with domesticity (Rhode, 1989, p. 53). On the other hand, "shifting gender bound-aries, and more women's participating in social activities and work" resulted because "many of the jobs created in fields such as health care, education, child care, clerical work ..... constituted extensions of the traditional role of housewife" (Davis, 1991: 55; Evans, 1994, p. 392) among a majority of women of colour and working-class white women, and an increasing part of white-middle class women (Davis, 1991, p. 55); by 1960, over 38% of women were at work, which justified the awareness against the traditional notion of domesticity that not every woman's life was the same (Heale & Heale, 2001, p. 149). Such a contradictory situation was witnessed in the U.K.'s "return to normality" as well (Bruley, 2017,

p. 68) in its 1950s and early 1960s when “women succumbed to the prevailing ideology of domesticity” as wives and mothers with “anxious conformity” (Bruley, 2017, p. 68; Segal, 1994, p. 341), while at the same time, the U.K., similar to the U.S., witnessed the increasing number of married working women in pursuit of economic independence with the aid of (1) the British Federation of Business and Professional Women (Beaumont, 2013, pp. 189-200) and (2) voluntary women’s organizations<sup>ii</sup> desiring to replace the image of “frilly little women” with a positive representation of women as valued, intelligent, responsible and active citizens, while keeping domesticity (Beaumont, 2013, p. 190).

Women faced various constraints putting them in the dilemma — the resurgence of “domestic ideology” in both countries, such as the U.K.’s “return to normality” (Beaumont, 2013; Bruley, 2017, p. 68; Evans, 1994, p. 392). There are several reasons centered on the coexistence of dual roles — domesticity and working outside homes. Firstly, homes with previously married women and children born earlier required the presence of wives and mothers (Evans, 1994, p. 392); the U.K. women’s organizations reckoned that women with young children should not work; otherwise, families would suffer (Beaumont, 2013, pp. 195-196). Secondly, increasingly moving to suburbs isolated women from the public and community life (Keniston & Keniston, 1964). Thirdly, facing workplace inequality with “repetitious and boring” low-level jobs — with less official support from the governments and local authorities for mothers’ employment in the U.K. (Beaumont, 2013, p. 197) — and shouldering exhausting public and private roles (Beaumont, 2013, p. 197; Davis, 1991, p. 52; Evans, 1994, p. 393), women escaped to homes as an enclave of support and nurture (Keniston & Keniston, 1964; Klein & Myrdal, 1956; Riesman, Denny & Glazer, 1950). Fourthly, household technological developments enhanced the standards and the amount of housework under the reinforcing influence of consumption-oriented, psychologically manipulative advertising (Evans, 1994, p. 392). Fifthly, women’s work interpreted as deviant and threatening to (incompetent) husbands made women guilty, and sixthly (some) women worked “for my family, not for myself” (Evans, 1994, p. 393), reflected by nearly every reply to the survey by the Public Health and Child Welfare Sectional Committee (1956) in the U.K. (Beaumont, 2013, p. 196). Behind the above reasons, the ultimate constraint on women was the oppression that revolved around their primarily defined “housewives” inside out (Evans, 1994, p. 393). At the same time, the clash between the rise of women and the society’s resilience against it was witnessed — between “the intrusion and growing dominance of women in the workplace and other spaces in the city” and society’s resistance by anchoring the masculine representations in popular American culture in the city space and media which featured male models as “well-dressed, womanizing, successful professionals”, white middle class, and male values against femininity (Heale & Heale, 2001, p. 153; Patton, 2020, p. 97; Wylie, 1958, p. 52). This reflected society’s ongoing pro-patriarchal attitudes and anxiety against the rise of women and the decline in masculinity (Fraterrigo, 2009).

Such ambivalent and dilemmatic constraints on women can be seen in other life aspects as well, reflecting some females’ anxiety regarding the struggles between on the one hand individualism and independence, and on the other hand traditional norms and dependence. Take dancing such as go-go dance and twist as examples. Before the Second World War, partner dancing was the social norm which involved close physical contact initiated by men rather than women, as a part of traditional courtship ritual, while in the 1960s, there emerged a dance, go-go dance in a solo form, that allowed women to dance alone, separated from men (Gregory, 2018). Gregory (2018) suggested that this reflects social changes during the 1960s, a decade that lost the faith in traditions and that witnessed the rise of individualism which involved growing emancipation and self-direction among women. Another dance is The Twist, whose dancing movements gradually became the go-go style (Mann, 1992). The Twist, like

the go-go dance, permitted “little group interaction or individual variation” to suspend the leader-follower interaction (Denisoff & Romanowski, 1991, p. 11; Ehrenreich, 2007, p. 122). Gregory (2018) added that *The Twist* was among the first dances to reject the traditional formal steps and partner holds which involved highly limited physical contact. However, women in the 1960s characterized as “at home, everywhere and nowhere, capable of rapid, if sometimes superficial intimacy with and response to everyone” (Riesman, 2001, p. 25) had anxiety about their future. It is because though individualism and freedom were important, they would make women “lack the stability and security of knowing where they were going” when being disconnected from the world and from having marriage and families (Gregory, 2018). Another aspect is voice. With reference to Marianne Faithfull’s voice in the U.K, it is suggested that she was in the dilemma between being a part of the Swinging London/ Britain characterised as permissive and being “pulled back” by patriarchal traditions (Apolloni, 2021, p. 198). Self-expression of sexual freedom and agency was “compulsory for those [.....] to be part of the Swinging London scene”, whereas “discourses of class, sex, and self-expression framed the way” she/ one could sing and express because of the consideration of the prospect of her singing career (Apolloni, 2021, pp. 198-199). As for sex, along with the rise of the new modern Britain in the 1960s, “media depictions of young women who eschewed respectability in favor of sexual freedom became emblematic of a new modern Britain” due in part to British law which had become more liberal in terms of sex and interpersonal relationships, such as legalization of abortion and decriminalization of homosexuality (Apolloni, 2021, p. 197). However, the constraints are that for one, the arrival of birth control pills and the diaphragm was late to come (around 1967) and was exclusively reserved for married women (Apolloni, 2021, p. 15). At the nationalistic level, an increasing number of non-white immigrants arrived in Britain so there was a racist fear that the non-white immigrant population would outpace the native white one, and thus sexual freedoms were not actually “free” and were largely contained (Apolloni, 2021, p. 15).

### **3. Heideggerian Interpretation — Oscillation between Authenticity and Inauthenticity**

Patriarchy and feminism are in opposition to each other. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the two opposing camps do not share a relationship. Even women’s dilemmatic situations at the consciousness-raising stage — between gainful work and domesticity — can be explained by the relationship between patriarchy and feminism — which Heidegger neglects (Chanter, 2001) — which I argue can be characterized as confluence and oscillation between Heideggerian inauthenticity and authenticity featuring how women tried to confront the patriarchal world and were overwhelmed by it at the same time.

Second-wave feminism was derived from the primordial patriarchal context since without the latter, the former would not have come into being. This can help justify the presence of ambivalent constraints on women in various life aspects especially in the context of emerging feminism as consciousness-raising. To justify this, I leverage Heideggerian existential philosophy of authenticity and inauthenticity to discuss women’s existence (Being) in the patriarchal world as the primordial on one side and the feminist world as the derived on the other side with women as *Dasein*<sup>iii</sup>. Since Heidegger was not primarily a political thinker and was not explicitly concerned with social ontology and gender issues, but was a philosopher dealing with the nature of gender-neutral human conditions<sup>iv</sup>, as a solid base on which to develop social theories (Huntington, 2001, pp. 1-15), it is feasible to analyse fundamental and neutral human existence to existentially explain social ambivalent representations of genders in a context without primarily relying on particular cultural and political characteristics of any sexes. For one, since *Dasein* as a finitude Being is the gender-neutral site of disclosure to show itself to itself in itself by becoming, realising and bringing into view a possibility from a limited

set of possibilities at a time, Dasein transcends gender difference, be it a male or a female, which still equally implies humans' embodiment, embedment and situatedness in the world, which take on multiple possible meanings (Huntington, 2001, p. 28). For the other, human existence's concerned engagement with others entails an affective and emotional attunement to the world (Huntington, 2001, p. 28), be it patriarchal or feminist, which witnesses different possibilities of interaction between men and women. For instance, women's existence as Dasein as Being-in-the-world existentially implies its inextricable link to the co-existence with other Dasein such as patriarchal those, mostly men, as attested in:

*"The world of Dasein is a with-world. Being-in is Being-with others. The inner-worldly being-in-itself of others is ..... [with-Dasein]"* (Heidegger, 1996: 118).

The understanding of the relationship between the two can be that when a side is derived from its primordial side while the derived side is invariably susceptible to the pulling power from the primordial side. Applying the Heideggerian philosophy reveals that women's living patriarchally is living inauthentically characterised as the feminine They-self in average everyday life of women as human beings, while living in feminist fashion is living authentically derived from inauthenticity (Holland, 2001, pp. 128-148).

In a primordial inauthentic state, women were into their own full average everydayness<sup>v</sup> and were fully absorbed in the patriarchal living without much critical examination, scientific reflections and rational judgement proximally and for the most part of lives. This means that in the first instance, women as Dasein have always fallen away from their own authentic side and are into the patriarchal world (though with mental struggles) (Heidegger, 1962, p. 220/175). In such inauthentic living, women were invariably influenced, consciously or subconsciously, by the "The They" (men and masculinity as superior and dominant) (Heidegger, 1966, p. 129) whose patriarchal opinions, norms, values, attitudes, expectations and behaviours were constantly overwhelming women as minors; this echoes with Abergel (2020)'s suggestion on women' "absorption in its world of concern and the "They" [patriarchal those], the shared, public interpretations that govern the intelligibility of its world" (Abergel, 2020). Women in such an existential state lost the grip of their own mine-ness<sup>vi</sup> when being the "the Self of the Other" — the Self of patriarchy (Heidegger, 1962: 166/128) and fell away from the authentic potentiality (Heidegger, 1962: 220/175). In such a state, women as Dasein's incessant (self-)understanding<sup>vii</sup> of its own current cultural and situational circumstances and of world matters at every moment (Schmidt, 2006, pp. 56-63) not only affected women's mood as mooded beings (Elpidorou & Freeman, 2015, p. 661) but also constitutes openness to women's mood but also to the world full of patriarchal those as "The They" and such openness made women susceptible, impressionable and vulnerable to the overwhelming power of patriarchal ideologies one way or another (Elpidorou & Freeman, 2015, p. 664). Women as Dasein in its full average everydayness carried out male-assigned domestic duties in the background in support of men's work in the foreground (Johnson, 1997, p. 166), while the supporting roles of women as simple as changing diapers for babies were seen as trivial matters at home which men were not good at due to men's sense of superiority and confidence in themselves (Johnson, 1997, p. 165). Listening to men as "The They" brings a benefit; that is, in the patriarchal setting, women listened to men as "The They" whose status, power and control have been dominant for a long period of time and thus were difficult to be overthrown. Women' listening, following and obedience allowed themselves to escape from the pressure of taking the responsibility for challenging patriarchy and escape from such a "mission impossible" of "being themselves" and of realizing the possibilities in their own actions and decisions at the expenses of social exclusion (Schmidt, 2006, p. 68; Wrathall, 2013, pp. 12-18).

Authentic living in feminist fashion, where women reflected on themselves at the consciousness-stage, looking into their long-lasting male-assigned domestic roles and planning on what ought to be done in the future, is possible only when women had been living inauthentically proximally and for the most part of lives; that is, inauthenticity is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition of authenticity where women turned away from, to some extent and in different degrees, the overwhelming power of “The They” and claimed back their long-lost authentic “the Self of one’s own” to establish their life planning (Heidegger, 1962: 166/128), taking responsibility for their own way of Being and for the community in which women had lived collectively (Holland, 2001) instead of totally separating themselves from “The They”. It is because the realization of Dasein’s authentic way of living is made upon the foundation of Dasein’s Being-in-the-world manner which is the most fundamental existential constitution of Being-there in the world as a communal pool where Dasein achieves its authentic Self (Stroh, 2015, p. 249; O’ Brien, 2014, p. 534). In the patriarchal setting, women tried to turn away from “The They” (Collins & Selina, 1998, pp. 81-89), questioning the unfairness and inequality that put women in disadvantageous positions (Mohapatra, 2009), claiming back the rights and welfare women deserved and establishing authentic life planning. As what Stroh (2015, p. 243) argued, when living authentically, the authentic human existence is “cognizant of the way our identities are always formed within a pre-existing community”. As what Zimmerman (1981) suggested, Heidegger viewed authenticity as readiness to embrace openness, rejection of specific possibilities which are not considered as unique to ones’ own (women’s own), as well as devotion to ones’ own possibilities. In fact, speaking of the feminist context, authenticity is not merely about actions which one takes, but about how one relates to the actions to achieve congruency between thoughts and actions (Ehman, 1994; Guignon, 1984). In this way, women, cognizant of origination of their previous male-identified and male-defined inferior identities from their pre-existing patriarchal society, became aware of the current re-construction of a new identity against society, and returned to community for intersubjectivity<sup>viii</sup> as womanhood or sisterhood of the universal linked fates as what radical feminism in the late 1960s emphasized (Heale & Heale, 2001, p. 151; Rhode, 1989, p. 59; Tong, 2009, pp. 24-48) – Personal is political (Rogan & Budgeon, 2018). Authentic women had to face “something that the unauthentic individual is afraid to face” (Greene, 1952, p.267). In relation to this existential point of view, it is not difficult to witness how the outcome of authentic womanhood sharing the universal fate to have the personal translated into the political was in the late 1960s when the consciousness-raising stage went towards the action-based stage of the decade. For instance, the outburst of explosion and national support for feminism in the late 1960s was “built upon the underground organizing and hard-won legislative successes of the 1950s and early 1960s” (Gosse, 2005), and the witness of the co-existence and interaction of liberal feminism and radical feminism in the action-based period, which diversified and strengthened second-wave (de Lange, 2007, p. 321). Various feminist camps with different experiences and expectations gradually fought for their common goals together (Davis, 1991, p. 70; Ferree & Hess, 1994) with “a newly awakened, intense awareness of the personal consequence of male domination” and “the power of sisterhood” (Goose, 2005, p. 155).

The following points would like to explain the occurrence of ambivalent and dilemmatic constraints on women at the consciousness-raising stage of second-wave feminism by illustrating how Heideggerian authenticity and inauthenticity oscillate and switch into each other frequently. This can be prefaced by bring into view an important essence of Dasein that Dasein is not “a static entity that is physically present but a dynamic ‘way of being,’ and ongoing, finite movement” (Aho, 2009, p. 54); that is, Dasein itself already implies a possibility of the movement and oscillation between authenticity and inauthenticity in a fluid and ongoing manner. In addition, Dasein’s existential structures can help illustrate how authenticity and

inauthenticity oscillate and switch into each other frequently to constitute the ambivalent representations of genders.

### **3.1. Temporariness of Authenticity and Pulling of Inauthenticity in the Context**

The reach to authenticity does not guarantee the ever-lasting state of authenticity because the pull of inauthenticity into human beings' average everydayness and fallenness as Dasein's existential inertia is so strong as to render authenticity temporary and mild. I still need to admit that the degree of the struggle of authenticity against inauthenticity and the degree of the pulling power of inauthenticity depend on concrete situations and settings. Especially in the emerging context of second-wave feminism in the 1960s, the pulling strength of patriarchy as inauthenticity was so strong that feminism as authenticity could not immediately initial a total shift in the complete social setting because time was needed for the adaptation to emerging second-wave. Therefore, women's struggles were well witnessed, while such struggles should be associated with the light of authenticity of Dasein being effective (Leland, 2001).

### **3.2. Inevitability of the Essential Influence of "The They" in Dasein as Being-With**

Besides, patriarchy is a necessary condition of feminism; that is, without patriarchy, feminism was impossible. Therefore, patriarchy is a pool of "The They" out of which and from which feminism became possible — "an existentiell modification of the "They" — of the "They" as an essential existentielle" (Heidegger, 1996: 130). Patriarchal those as "The They" were a "primordial phenomenon" (Heidegger, 1962: 167/129) and "Dasein's positive constitution" — authenticity constitution (Heidegger, 1966: 129) as the "enabling condition that first opens us onto a world and gives us the resources we need for being human" (Guignon, 2007, p. 279). Authenticity derives and comes from inauthenticity and that inauthenticity as a public, possibly intersubjective communal pool occupying for the most of the lifetime is where authenticity becomes possible (Stroh, 2015, p. 249; O' Brien, 2014, p. 534). Therefore, authenticity and inauthenticity, though carrying two distinctive existential contents and operations, do not live in conflict with each other, but are the two modes as the two sides of the same coin in Dasein, and each side is a modification of the other side — "it is rather an existentiell modification of the "They" — of the "They" as an essential existentielle" (Heidegger, 1996: 130). What is more, Dasein as Being-with contributes to the justification of the inevitability of "The They" around Dasein. No matter whether Dasein is physically alone or not, it possesses unavoidably ontologically relational structure, and this means that even though Dasein achieves its authentic Being-with, Dasein does not extricate itself from its own Being-with but remains constitutive in it as Being-with (Heidegger, 1992: 248/342; emphasized by Freeman, 2011). This tells that the influence of "The They" was still effective and overwhelming. What is more, the presence of "The They" and the origination from "The They" contributed to the justification that "parts of what makes these women stand out as so exceptional is their ability to embody values culturally defined as masculine: they've been tougher, more decisive, more aggressive, more calculating, and more emotionally controlled than most men around them" (Johnson, 1997, pp. 167-168). As a result, feminist women somehow possess qualities defined as masculine mentioned in previous sections, and thus in such a derived feminist context, we can regard patriarchal settings not merely as an oppressive setting imposed on women, but also as an opportunity for women to acquire masculine qualities such as control, strength, efficiency, competitiveness, toughness, coolness under pressure, logic, forcefulness, decisiveness, rationality, autonomy, self-sufficiency, and control over any emotion, [.....] invulnerability" (Johnson, 1997, p. 166). When authenticity derives from inauthenticity, certain characteristics of inauthenticity can be seen to be possessed by authenticity. Therefore, this is not a one-off transition between authenticity and inauthenticity among women, but a volatile and oscillatory



transition between the two, which existentially constituted the ambivalent and dilemmatic constraints on women.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This paper selects the consciousness-raising stage of second-wave feminism in the U.S. in the 1960s, before the establishment of the National Organisation for Women in 1966, as the main site of investigation. The consciousness-raising stage had witnessed certain constraints on women's lives in the context of emerging second-wave feminism, and one of the conspicuous constraints was the dilemma between leaving homes for gainful employment and being pushed back into homes for unpaid domestic work. Employment for women was available due to the increasing dissatisfaction with tedious domestic work and the increasing number of available jobs for women. However, women's desire was quenched generally because of the internal reasons such as the required presence of mothers and wives at homes, women's employment regarded as threatening to men, and so on, and of the external reasons such as workplace inequality and unfairness and inadequate support for women's work from authorities. Such a dilemma, or a struggle, can be existentially explained by Heidegger's philosophy, its oscillation between the authentic state and the inauthentic state of human beings. Inauthentically, women were into their own full average everydayness of the long-lasting and powerful patriarchal world with mostly men as "The They". In this condition, women as Dasein harboured "the Self of the Other" or "the They-self" listening to the norms and values of patriarchy and taking male-assigned roles. Authentically, women as Dasein with feminist consciousness raised, as a marginalized group, attempted to speak up for themselves to reclaim their long-lost authentic "Self of one's own" by attempting to overcome the oppression by patriarchal society as "The They". However, due to wide-ranging social constraints which exacerbated women's fear of confrontation and weakened their rebel, women chose to live by the status quo, getting back to their usual average inauthentic everydayness with full absorption with seldom reflecting on women's own assigned inferior roles. From time to time and alternately, women found the male-assigned roles inferior, tedious and dissatisfactory, and chose to give up on the desire to climb up the social ladder. This paper argues that this is not a one-off transition between authenticity and inauthenticity, but a volatile, frequent and close oscillatory transition between the two, which constituted the ambivalent representation of women, existentially due to firstly the temporariness of authenticity and the strong pulling power of inauthenticity and secondly the unavoidable existence of the influence of "The They" in Dasein's Being-with – struggles for and against feminism.

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<sup>i</sup> This is to clarify that the consciousness-raising stage by 1966 was mainly attributed to liberal feminism whereas near the end of the 1960s there was another brand of consciousness-raising initiated by radical feminism concerning male essential oppression of women and perceiving radical feminism itself as a revolutionary womanhood/ sisterhood of the universal linked fates, instead of merely reforming the legal system in the liberal approach (Heale & Heale, 2001, p. 151; Rhode, 1989, p. 59; Tong, 2009, pp. 24-48). Therefore, consciousness-raising had not stopped right since 1966.

<sup>ii</sup> Mothers' Union (MU), the Catholic Women's League (CWL), the National Union of Women Workers (NCW), Women's Institutes (WI), and the Townswomen's Guilds (TG) (Beaumont, 2013) remained popular and influential with unavoidable feminist effects due to mass-membership engagement in wide-ranging voluntary and charitable work, and positions as councillors (Beaumont, 2013). The organizations (1) provided wide-ranging educational, social and practical activities and courses, (2) spoke up for women on local and national issues, (3) criticized the media for the image that women aspired only to get married and be wives, and (4) convinced women of the domesticity as a power base for female activism (Beaumont, 2013, pp. 191-192).

<sup>iii</sup> Existence of women, human beings: Dasein, a Heideggerian term designated to represent Being of human beings, literally translated as "Being-there" from German to English (Anowai & Chukwujekwu, 2019, p. 1; Schmidt, 2006, p. 51), which indicates that human beings' existence is essentially, repeatedly and invariably interconnected in the world and becoming itself, which is the most fundamental, undeniable mode of existence unless human beings are no longer living and no longer Being-possible without consciousness – death (Stefani & Cruz, 2019).

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<sup>iv</sup> In the Marburg lectures of 1928, Heidegger explicitly suggested Dasein as gender-neutral: “For the being which constitutes the theme of this analytic, the title ‘man’ has not been chosen, but the neutral title ‘das Dasein’” (Holland, 2001, p. 57). Heidegger’s philosophy is also suggested denying differences in terms of not only gender, but also race, class, ethnicity and sexuality, even though Chanter problematises Heidegger’s denial (Chanter, 2001).

<sup>v</sup> Average everydayness: a daily fundamental and primordial experience that Heidegger emphasizes with regard to such humans’ ultimate usual existence as one’s use of a toothbrush, a chef’s cooking duties, a teacher’s teaching duty, and a footballer’s daily training, which are conducted when being into their respective worlds without “asking too much why” and “thinking twice”; this experience has been here and there before a Subject-Object dichotomy where humans hold their own Subject position to view an Object phenomenon and world as external and something seemingly alienable (Schmidt, 2006, p. 51).

<sup>vi</sup> This is to clarify that Dasein’s mine-ness cannot be lost, but the grip of it can be lost, since authentic and inauthentic ways of living are built upon Dasein’s mine-ness — “always-being-on-own-being” (Heidegger, 1996: 42; Schmidt, 2006, p. 63). This is attested in the saying that Dasein must be “*in each case mine*” (Heidegger, 1962: 67/42).

<sup>vii</sup> By understanding, I refer to a human being’s incessant flow of subliminal primordial understanding which must be here and there one way or another (Stefani & Cruz, 2019), — the moment I understand, I find myself existing in the world — which is different from understanding a thematic and theoretical content and topic (Schmidt, 2006, p. 63). Such subliminal primordial understanding precedes, is prior to and is a necessary condition of all later thematic and theoretical understanding to address something external in front of “me” in a scientific fashion as a derivative (Heidegger, 1996: 134).

<sup>viii</sup> The emphasis on intersubjectivity instead of subjectivity is due to Dasein’s essential relational ontological structure which cannot be altered, and it means that Dasein can never ontologically be independent from others, but can be so physically — a person is in a room physically alone, but his/her own existence is interconnected with other people of different relationships, contexts, traditions, cultures, society and histories at any time (Freeman, 2011, pp. 374-375). Even if Dasein is authentically Being-in-the-world and Being-with, it possesses relational autonomy, understanding itself within a context of a relational and intersubjective horizon (Freeman, 2011, p. 373).