Tribhuvan University

Voice of the Voiceless in Susan Faludi's *Backlash: Undeclared War Against American Women*

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By

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Letter of Approval

The thesis entitled "Voice of the Voiceless in Susan Faludi's *Backlash: Undeclared War Against American Women"* submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Ms. Sunita Kumari Sharma has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Letter of Recommendation

It is certified that Ms Sunita Kumari Sharma has prepared this thesis entitled "Voice of the Voiceless in Susan Faludi's *Backlash: Undeclared War Against American Women"* under my guidance and supervision. I recommend this thesis for approval to the Research Committee.

- -
Hem Lal Pandey

Supervisor

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May 2016   Sunita Kumari Sharma

Abstract

Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women (1991) by Susan
Faludi has been analyzed from the subaltern or voice of the voiceless perspective that
powerfully subverts the elitist ideology. The memoir recollects 1980s American
women movement with resistance and self representation by generating issue to
change their fate and raising their voice against the marginalization which is rewritten
in a form of report, interview and victim's experiences. This study aims to deconstruct
the conventional women's experience and binaries centrally collected in Faludi's
memoir. Furthermore, analyzing Faludi's memoir, this paper shows that the subaltern
is not the subaltern inborn, the very term 'subaltern' is a social construction. It shows
that sublaterns have the energy and capacity to change their fate, their condition and
position by their own efforts. They can raise their voice against all sorts of
marginalization. In this way, this paper explores the voice of the voiceless through the
memoir of Falaudi that she seeks to explore what is unexplored.

Contents

I. Voice of the Voiceless in Susan Faludi's *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*

This research work focuses on Susan Faludi's *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women in* (1991), that depicts the voice of the voiceless through the explanation of the autobiography of the writer self. Smith and Watson mention in *Reading Autobiography "*Narrators selectively engage their lived experience through personal storytelling" (14). In particular, this project explores the evils of patriarchy in backlash who are doomer to bound in domestic patriarchal norms and values. Throughout the text, Faludi manifests how the patriarchy causes the females face the problematic associated with their identity. Susan Faludi is badly exploited from her friend and from patriarchal norms as other contemporary American women in the text. All the women, events and themes in the text seem to be accepting patriarchal and domestic rules and duties. So, feministic literary analysis in the text could e better tool to build-up this project. Drawing upon Simone de Beauvoir "feministic perspective on the self", this project claims that protagonist of text but marginalized female as the other female on the text are not worthy and influential as they offer a critical position to challenge the patriarchal conventional norms and values. This project makes significant in the area at critical concern. First, this study brings the suppressed American women in *The Undeclared War Against American Women* within the preview of critical analysis. Second, this study makes a significant theoretical connection between feminist critique of patriarchy and who evokes for women's 'self'.

Faludi's *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, is a methodically challenging conventional wisdom about the American women's movement and women's gains in achieving equality in the latter years of the twentieth

century. Faludi begins by looking carefully at then-current myths about the status of women, including the press reports that single career women are more likely to be depressed than other women, that professional women are leaving their jobs in droves to stay at home, and that single working women over age thirty have a small chance of ever getting married. Not only are these myths not true, says Faludi, but they are evidence of a society-wide backlash against women and what they have achieved in recent years. She describes this backlash as a "kind of pop-culture version of the Big Lie" (xii) and declares that "it stands the truth boldly on its head and proclaims that the very steps that have elevated women's positions have actually led to their downfall" (152).

Faludi believes that although there is no longer a backlash, this may not be a good thing. She notes that we are being told that feminism's goals have been achieved, and young women no longer need to identify as feminists. During 1990s, women made political and economical headway that brought them closer to equal representation and pay, but Faludi believes it is a distorted view of feminism that is present in mainstream America today. She claims feminism has been co-opted by commercialism, and economic independence has become buying power; self-determination has become commodified self-improvement of "physical appearance, self-esteem and the fool's errand of reclaiming one's youth"; and public agency has been transformed to publicity (xv). Faludi says we have yet to find our way to the (23) . Her concern is that our social structure and cultural ideology have not fundamentally changed – "We have used our gains to gild our shackles, but not break them"(Faludi xxvi).

Different critics have seen this novel via different perspectives and find various themes. Critic Ellen Goodman on "Man Shortage' and Other Big Lies"

mentions:

> This is just one of the dozens of "studies," trend stories and misguided media events that provide Susan Faludi with grist for "Backlash," her bracing look at the counterassault in our society on women's progress over the last decade. Just as Anita Hill's accusations of sexual harassment provoked spontaneous outrage, this book will have a spine-stiffening effect on any woman who thinks she is paranoid. Yes, says Ms. Faludi, they are after you. (15)

Faludi begins by stating that, though many may agree that the end of the twentieth century is a good time to be a woman, press reports and surveys indicate that women are unhappy with their lives. Often, this is blamed on a variety of factors related to feminism, such as women working outside the home. "Women are enslaved by their own liberation,(Cornell Draucilla).claim many commentators who argue against feminism. But Faludi disagrees, arguing instead that women are unhappy because the real work of achieving equality has barely begun. She uses statistics that show that women still make less money and hold more low-status jobs than men and that domestic violence and rape are on the rise.And in another, albeit more scholarly example that is nonetheless in much the same vein, in *Material Girls: Making Sense of Feminist Cultural Theory,* Suzanna Danuta Walters entitles her chapter exploring representations of women in contemporary popular film, "Postfeminism and Popular Culture: A Case Study of the *Backlash*," and focuses on "those media representations that were and still are so much a part of this *backlash…*" (116).In *Journal of International Women studies* Ann Braithwaithe mentions on his article " Politcs of/ and Backlash says:

> multiplicity and plurality dominate contemporary women's studies and

feminist thinking in the late twentieth/early twentieth-first centuries,

then the use of terms such as backlash and postfeminism must be

drawn into and rethought in light of these emphases, and such a

rethinking argues for a more complex understanding of both of these

terms than those too often captured by their more prevalent usages. I

want to begin to do this here, then, by returning to and playing out,

through a fairly close reading, some of the nuances embedded in these

two terms, especially as they are formulated in Susan Faludi's 1991

book *Backlash.* (17)

The author, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*, lays out the

historical and cultural setting for the revisionist messages of the 1980's. "Most

important," she writes, "the press was the first to set forth and solve for a mainstream

audience the paradox in women's lives", the paradox that would become so central to

the backlash. Women have achieved so much yet feel so dissatisfied; it must be

feminism's achievements, not society's resistance to these partial achievements, that is

causing women all this pain. Sherman in his paper says:

Faludi further builds credibility by demonstrating that she is open to

open to considering the opposing point of view. She admits that "to

some of the men falling back, it certainly has looked as if women have

done the pushing. If there has been a 'price to pay' for women's

equality, then it seems to these men that they are paying it" (349).

Rightfully, Faludi goes back and then does well to deconstruct this line

of reasoning, citing statistical evidence that countered Reagan's claim

that the economic crisis suffered in the early 80's was in fact a result of

and increase of women in the workplace. (2)

Such feminist critics as above, the proposed thesis reads suppressed female including the author herself who has tried to raise the voice of the voiceless women in the American society and rights of women.

Although there are many critics who have made comments upon this novel regarding different issues and perspective, this research takes an issue of voice of the voiceless. Because of the nature of the sufferings and hardships of feminist movement in 1980s and the ultimate success, it becomes the appropriate tool which can provide justice to the marginalized women, making them speak against discrimination and exploitation, in order to establish their existence and identity in the society without hierarchy. Faludi takes the press to do task for failing to challenge the myths about women in the 1980s and especially for spreading, through "trend journalism, "stories about how unhappy women are, despite their having reaped the benefits of women's liberation in the 1970s. Watson and Smith argue that "in the autobiography, the narrator is the reader of his/her historical experience. She/he brings the discourse of what happened to them and how to solve it" (25). Thus the experience which is written by someone in her/his autobiography is the interpretation of her/his past experience with present point of view (24). Faludi also talks about 1980 American women's experience. Faludi challenges the prevailing wisdom that the women's movement is to blame for women's unhappiness; she believes their unhappiness actually stems from the fact that the struggle for equality is not yet finished. The personal interviews offer a look at the individuals who are behind the "backlash" and, according to Faludi, are hindering women's progress.

This thesis is developed into three chapters. Introduction chapter which will be followed by a discussion of voice of voiceless as a tool to apply in this novel. in the Moreover, third chapter will focus and analyze the struggle and the achievement of

the subaltern people to live a meaningful life in the society. Similarly, conclusion and works cited will be in the fourth and fifth chapter respectively. Furthermore, this paper examines, since the publication of Susan Faludi's book in 1991, the terms "backlash" and "postfeminism" have come to be widely used in many feminist analyses to critique–and then usually dismiss—representations of both women and feminism throughout media and popular culture. This paper revisits both of these concepts, exploring some of the debates about the definition, meaning, and scope of feminism that both of these terms raise and then shut down. It argues that while seemingly useful ways to talk about popular representations, these concepts also replay many of the central and often contentious debates in feminist thinking, especially around what gets defined as 'feminism,' under what contexts, and for what purposes. Ultimately, it argues that these terms, as they are now most commonly used, deny the possibility of multiple meanings and layers of feminist theorizing and politics, refute the saturation of feminist ideas throughout the broader culture in ways and places in places not originally thought possible, and refuse the changes in feminism that are the locus of so much contemporary dispute. In the third edition of *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, states:

> Feminists believe that our culture is a patriarchal culture, that is, one organized in favor of the interests of men. Feminist literary critics try to explain how what they term engendered power imbalances in a given culture are reflected, supported, or challenged by literary texts. (182)

Based on the quotation above, it is clear that feminist literary critics should focus on the kind of literary texts that reflect feminism and should try to figure out what makes woman struggle against the patriarchal condition and what kind of act and decision they can do to support their belief from the literary text. In this case, the literary text

that will be analyzed here is a book of Faludi *Backlash: Undeclared War Against American Women* about a reflection of patriarchal condition that is challenged by a new vision of feminism as a result of dissatisfaction toward gender inequality and discrimination.

Faludi moves from 195 BC Rome, to 16th century Europe and then on to the Victorian period (344). These historical accounts of men reacting negatively to feminism suggest that the problem is a perpetual one. It also serves as a provision of background or narration, giving historical facts with regards to the current situation. Somehow, the events that take place in the autobiography are always carefully chosen by the author. He communicates the content or the story to the readers because those stories of life experience narrated by the narrator are aimed to gain the "reader's belief". Narrator should convince the reader that the story conceives 'truth'. Smith and Watson state as follows.

> Persuasion to belief is fundamental to the pact between narrator and reader. Appeals to the authority of experience bring to the fore issues of trust in autobiographical narrating, since the autobiographical relationship depends on the narrator's winning and keeping the reader's trust in the plausibility of the narrated experience and the credibility of the narrator. (29)

In the same manner, Fuladi says, "I personally found the argument very informative. It did not carry the burden of having to change my mind, as I have already been made well aware of the lack of gender equality"(xiii). Naturally, some of the main ideas and concepts that were introduced there, with regard for feminist thought, are also prevalent throughout Faludi's argument. "I makes to a coherent story" (Watson and Smith 171). With this in mind, it is likely that the intended audience was both women

and men. Faludi perhaps hoped to empower women, presenting some of her findings as a testament to their accomplishments even in the face of adversity. Faludi's argument would also serve as a wake-up call to women that might believe that enough progress has been made toward gender equality. The men that would benefit most from her argument would be those that believe likewise.

II. Voice of the Voiceless in Susan Faludi's *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*

Susan Faludi's *The Undeclared War Against American Women* (1991) presents the voice of voiceless particularly American women not only as the resistance against the dominant class ideology, but also to subvert such an elitist ideology for their self-representation. The issue has become a global concern, which is hotly debated. The work of subaltern historians does offer a real alternative to traditional historiography in their attempt to rethink history from the perspective of the subaltern. They make subaltern exercising their power. This shows that the subalterns are able to represent themselves and they need not to be represented by others. They are capable of doing the things on their own. Often a question is raised whether the marginalized can speak. It is a fact that the marginalized cannot remain mute for long, they have to speak and find an outlet for their tears and fears, anguish and anger thus, register their existence. The marginalized subaltern never gets the centre stage. Where all action is shown in progress they remain "invisible" as always. "Identity is discursive, which means that it is constructed, not inherited, though social conception often leads us to take identity for given or fixed" (Watson and Smith 33).The centre can subdue and suppress the marginalized voices, but can never silence them forever. Once they find their true voice, they cease to be marginalized. The voices resisting exploitation are fully aware of their own strength and dignity.

With passion and precision, Faludi shows in her new preface how the creators of commercial culture distort feminist concepts to sell products while selling women downstream, how the feminist ethic of economic independence is twisted into the consumer ethic of buying power, and how the feminist quest for self-determination is warped into a self-centered quest for self-improvement. *Backlash* is a classic of

feminism, an alarm bell for women of every generation, reminding us of the dangers that we still face. The author, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for *The Wall Street Journal,* lays out the historical and cultural setting for the revisionist messages of the 1980's. In this regard, she writes:

> The press was the first to set forth and solve for a mainstream audience the paradox in women's lives, the paradox that would become so central to the backlash: women have achieved so much yet feel so dissatisfied; it must be feminism's achievements, not society's resistance to these partial achievements, that is causing women all this pain. (105)

Faludi takes the press to task for failing to challenge the myths about women in the 1980s and especially for spreading, through "trend journalism," stories about how unhappy women are, despite their having reaped the benefits of women's liberation in the 1970s. Faludi challenges the prevailing wisdom that the women's movement is to blame for women's unhappiness; she believes their unhappiness actually stems from the fact that the struggle for equality is not yet finished. Media-driven images of women, it is argued, do not reflect reality and provide a false and stereotypical depiction of beauty and femininity. Faludi contends that women's misery does not come from the pressures of the feminist movement. Instead, these "supposed female crises are a closed system that starts and ends with the media, popular culture, and advertising—an endless feedback loop that perpetuates and exaggerates its own false images of womanhood" (xv). It is not good to blame feminism; blame the media for these unhappy images.

Gender discrimination between males and females actually lead the society to the stigma of the patriarchal standards where men are superior and women are

inferior. Men are always considered as powerful, strong and wise in many aspects, yet women are described weak, weepy, passive and mindless. As announced by Darwin in *The Descent of Man* (1871) quoted by Bressler, that women are of a characteristic of a past and lower state civilization, such are being inferior to men , who are physically, intellectually and artistically superior" (145). Due to the fact that some circumstances have given more chances to men to determine women's personal and social role in the society, there are many pros and cons concerning a struggle of equality between men and women's rights.

The term 'subaltern' refers to the marginalized or oppressed people, whether in terms of class, caste, age, religion, ethnicity and gender. The most prominent violation perpetrated over the subaltern people, is the effacement of their identity in the official representation. The subalterns are marginalized, thinking that, they cannot speak though they are aware of the suppression or marginalization. They lack the language of their own, which can express their pain and sufferings. Not only the language, but also, the theoretical strategies they lack, thereby, the marginalization becomes an ongoing process. Furthermore, Marginalisation is when a person is pushed to the edge of society. This is a potential effect of discrimination because a person is made to stand out therefore feel like all alone and marginalized from the rest of society. In an era when issues relating to human rights have been under critical focus, literary depictions of the experiences of marginalized groups have acquired great significance. Literature as a mode of discursive articulation always endeavors to give voice to the marginal and it gives birth to the concept of Fourth World Literature. Marginalization is a process of domination and subordination. All the movements of the marginalized and the literature produced by them are mutually supportive as they reflect the fourth world discourse, the discourse of the internally colonized people

even in postcolonial countries (16). It sensitizes us to the condition of the oppressed and the one who exists on the margin. The voice of the marginalized is mostly muted. Subjection and subjugation for generations turns an individual's existence into an everlasting hell. Thus, subaltern literature, unlike Marxist literature, does not talk about the class struggle but the struggle between castes, seen from the point of view of the lower caste, the minority, the marginal, the subaltern. The entire ideology of subaltern literature revolves around this. In such a way Fuladi depicted stories who are struggling to came ahead in American patriarchal society.

Faludi uses data from a wide variety of sources, such as government and university studies, newspapers, census reports, scholarly journals, and personal interviews to explore women's status in the 1980s. The personal interviews offer a look at the individuals who are behind the "backlash" and, according to Faludi, are hindering women's progress. Susan Faludi's book, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, deals with conventional wisdom about the American women's movement and women's gains in achieving equality in the latter years of the twentieth century. In a same manner in an interview Faludi evokes:

> Well, I guess we women are still winning in the celebrity culture,
> which is why a lot of men still feel this is a women's world," said Ms.
> Faludi. Then they mistakenly decide it's because of feminism, but
> really it's because we live in this commercial culture where appearance
> and sex appeal and youth and glam, ha ha, are the watchwords of the
> day. (1)

Faludi begins her book by looking carefully at the then-current myths about the status of women, including the press reports that single career women are more likely to be depressed than other women, that professional women are leaving their jobs in droves

to stay at home, and that single working women over age thirty have a small chance of ever getting married. Not only are these myths false, says Faludi, but they are evidence of a society-wide backlash against women and what they have achieved in recent years. She describes this backlash as a "kind of pop-culture version of the Big Lie" and declares that "it stands the truth boldly on its head and proclaims that the very steps that have elevated women's positions have actually led to their downfall" (66).

The subaltern classes believe that those who hold power over them, whether money lenders, grain traders, land holders or officials, should not abuse their power but be responsive to subaltern needs. So the protest is accordingly directed not to overturn the super ordinate classes but to reminding them of the proper use of their power. But when the authority ignores the peasant "they constitute a continuing form of protest by poorer peasant acting together in small bonds, against it" (Arnold 90). Later on, the very term subaltern got a rather authentic voice, when Antonio Gramsci adopted the term to refer those groups in any society "who are subject to the hegemony of the ruling classes" (76). Peasant, workers and also other groups may fall under the term subalterns, who are denied access to hegemonic power. These subaltern classes are forced to stay away from the hegemonic power and suffer the exploitation of the ruling classes.

The questions about autonomy and spontaneity of subaltern rebellion are connected with such issues of historical transition. Neither autonomy nor spontaneity is absolute. Their relativity is revealed in several essays of Subaltern Studies. Subaltern revolts can be spontaneous within their own conscious domain since their forms, aspirations and views of the world have no common ground with the domain of elite life and politics. Beyond the story of success and failure of the elites, subaltern

history may therefore reveal the revolutionary subject with a distinct mind and energy of its own. Thus, autonomy and spontaneity are not immanent in the methodology of the Subaltern Studies, being manifest in the peripheral resistance of subaltern groups in their endeavours against state operation as well as capitalist and pre-capitalist exploitation. These systems of oppression appeared to them not as purely economic phenomena but as a total assault on their life, honour and dignity. As per as elite old was concerned, it remained bound to the conceptual and intellectual framework of a mix between traditional confusion and imported liberal sanctions.

The revolutionary subject of Subaltern Studies is inseparable from the task of Marxist mediation. Though difficult to avoid, we may leave out questions of current political praxis. But historiography itself is a form of the mediation. Guha further says that colonialist historiography amounts to "an act of appropriation" which excludes "the rebel as a conscious subject" of his own history (33). In much the same way, the specificity of rebel consciousness had eluded radical historiography as well. This has been so because; it is impaled on a concept of peasant revolts as a success: on of events ranged along a direct line of descent – as a heritage. In this ahistorical view of the history of insurgency, all movements of consciousness are assimilated to the ultimate and highest movement of the series-indeed to an ideal consciousness. A historiography devoted to its pursuit is ill- equipped to cope with contradictions which are indeed the stuff history is made of. The rich material of myth, rituals, rumors and hopes for Golden Age and fears of an imminent End of the World, all of which speaks of the self alienation of the rebel, is wasted on this abstracts and sterile discourse. Hence, the swift transformation of class struggle into communal strife and vice- versa in our countryside in Guha's words "evokes from it either some well-contrived apology or a simple gesture of embarrassment, but no real explanation" (39).

However, it is not only the religious element in rebel consciousness, which this historiography fails to comprehend. The specificity of a rural insurrection is expressed in terms of many other contradictions as well. There too are missed out. Blinded by the glare of a perfect and immaculate consciousness the historian sees nothing, for instance, but solidarity in rebel behaviors and fails to notice its other, namely, betrayal. It has still to go a long way before it can prove that the insurgent can rely on its performance to recover his place in history.

By producing the 1991 book, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, from which this excerpt comes, Susan Faludi is tasking herself with setting the records straight. She first attempts to do so by providing a great deal of statistical evidence that demonstrates the general apathy shared by American men for gender equality. She cites several surveys, polls and studies like the American Male Opinion Index, the National Opinion Research Poll and Anthony Astrachan's seven-year study of American male attitudes in the 1980's. What is most interesting about her sources is that they in a sense allow men to speak for themselves, presenting their negative attitudes towards feminism by their own admissions. This information is provided quantitatively, through measurable means like percentages and ratios. It is fixed information that required no theoretical formulating by Faludi. As such, these represent her inartistic proofs. Since they are greatly based in fact, they also represent a line of logical reasoning.

Voice of the voiceless can be defined as a theory of change, which sustains vigorous political commitment. This study, that's why, is very much influenced by postmodernism and post structuralism. Cultural studies are getting much more attention from all sides. Voice of the voiceless Studies recently deals also with the issue of representation, critical theory and cultural studies from subaltern politics.

Spivak writes: "The Subaltern Studies perceive their task as making a theory of consciousness or culture rather than specifically a theory of change" (330). Spivakhere is very much concerned about the problematic dealing of the elite to the subaltern. Her essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) has raised the issues related to the welfare of the subaltern people, though it is hotly debated everywhere and also gets many different ideas. And it is credited to have brought the subalternity in to post colonial domain, where she has presented women, as a subaltern group. The ultimate goal of Subaltern Studies, is to seek to rewrite and redraw the boundaries of history and recover the erased or missed history of marginalized people. So, it focuses on the activities and the muted voice of the marginals. Aside from logos, there is also a great deal of pathetic voice which represents the voice of the voiceless that found inFaludi's argument. In this regard Faludi states, "Unfortunately, our social investigators have not tackled 'the man question' with one-tenth the enterprise that they have always applied to 'the woman problem'" (344). It is an emotional appeal by virtue of Faludi's suggestion that this is "unfortunate." She is, by extension, urging her audience to agree. This claim could also function as a logical appeal, as it clearly implies unfair treatment of the issue at hand. Faludi will later give accounts of male brutality inflicted upon women, examples of sexual battery, assault and murder, all appeals to pathos (348).

Faludi's also contains culture which in favor of male domination: "To single out these men alone for blame, however, would be unfair" (348). Here she is demonstrating an ethical regard for fairness. Faludi further builds credibility by demonstrating that she is open to open to considering the opposing point of view. She admits that "to some of the men falling back, it certainly has looked as if women have done the pushing. If there has been a 'price to pay' for women's equality, then it

seems to these men that they are paying it" (349). Rightfully, Faludi goes back and then does well to deconstruct this line of reasoning, citing statistical evidence that countered Reagan's claim that the economic crisis suffered in the early 80's was in fact a result of and increase of women in the workplace. Watson and Smith observes: "Autobiography is not really 'about' the facts and events related; it is about how the writer chooses to interpret and make sense of these events" (55).

So, voice of the voiceless is voiced here and that should be heard by society and the mainstream as well. In such way this paper shows the voice of the voiceless through the report of Falaudi that she seeks to explore what is unexplored. And she tries to bring out analysis about the networks of power relations by locating a human subject in the discursive practices that are constructed by the powerful agent of male dominated society. So this project aims to bring out the feminist reading of American history by SasunFaludi from the perspective of the counter memory. The research questions the traditional mentality of Patriarchal society and evaluates Faludi'rewriting the historiography American women world. Faludi's wants the society where the voice of the female class can be heard and women no longer remain within the periphery of domestic household activities. Women also can carry burden of family and society, they can feel their responsibility to challenge the burden so that they came forward.

In her book *The Second Sex* Simone de Beauvoir explanations is that of human nature, identifying the instinctive tension between male and female. She explains that:

> Man encounters Nature; he has some hold upon her, he attempts to
> appropriate her. But she cannot fulfil him. Either she appears simply as
> a purely impersonal opposition, she is an obstacle and remains a
> stranger; or she submits passively to man's desire and permits

assimilation by him; so that he takes possession of her only through consuming her—that is, through destroying her. In both cases he remains alone. (1989:139)

She proposes that, in order to overcome what is known as the 'woman problem', society needs to permit women the space needed to collectively obtain the necessary economic and political power with which they seek to identify themselves. Fredrika Scarth, in *The Other Within: Ethics, Politics and the Body* interprets as saying, "Neither men nor women live their bodies authentically under patriarchy" (100), insofar as both play into and perpetuate manufactured 'inauthentic' gender roles in a mutually-reinforcing dialectical fashion Through this, she succeeded "in defining a social/political philosophy because of the originality of her method, which locates her critique on the margins of culture, in women's experience and the originality of her subject" (Simons 103). In de Beauvoir's opinion, feminist discourse could be redefined by means of analytically examining the epistemology of various female voices, whilst critiquing the way in which men view women as the' Other'.

Faludi's word choice with regards to men further her opposition to the backlash and also furthers her argument that the backlash comes as a result of insecurity. The chauvinistic men are referred to incessantly as "fearful," "resentful," and even "fragile." Faludi points out that various studies on the male condition would suggest that masculinity is much like a "fragile flower a hothouse orchid in constant need of trellising and nourishment. Nothing seems to crush the masculine petals more than a bit of feminist rain a few drops are perceived as a downpour" (344). This is a very powerful metaphor in that it turns both stereotypes of femininity and masculinity on their heads. The masculine is thereby rendered delicate and "fragile," while the feminine is rendered domineering and powerful.

The subaltern people have their own identity, history and also their own way to be identified. Despite the domination of the subaltern people by the elite group, they try to protest it. Subaltern Studies group has tried their best to provide a fertile platform (Postcolonial Studies) to the third world voices, which is supposed to get enough attention. GautamBhadra tries to focus on certain features called the 'subaltern mentality' which is "not only 'defiance' but also 'submissiveness' to authority is the characteristic of the behavior of subaltern classes" (54). Faludi moves from 195 BC Rome, to 16th century Europe and then on to the Victorian period (344). These historical accounts of men reacting negatively to feminism suggest that the problem is a perpetual one. It also serves as a provision of background or narration, giving historical facts with regards to the current situation.

Faludi offers another list that seems to have a more empowering motive. She reflects that the 80's was "a moment of symbolic crossover points for men and women: the first time white men became less than 50 percent of the work force, the first time no new manufacturing jobs were created, the first time more women than men enrolled in college, the first time more than 50 percent of women worked, the first time more women with children worked" (349). This listing has a dramatic effect as it substantiates the feminist movement by demonstrating the capabilities of women to reach certain benchmarks in their collective progress. It shows that their efforts have not been in vain and brings the audience to question how much greater progress could have been made had there not been an opposing issue of masculine backlash.

In this way, Subaltern Studies has become a global concern. It is no more the phenomena of Indian or South Asian only. "It has gone", as Dipesh Chakravorty says, "Beyond India or South Asia as an area of academic specialization" (9). The way it is marching ahead suggests that, it is a rather creative as well as flexible project. It

draws ideas from diverse discipline like history, culture, sociology, anthropology, literature and so on. So, it is interdisciplinary in nature. It is a different way of writing historiography from the perspective of the marginalized mass. While writing, it has reinvented many terms, which are essential for such kind of historiography including subalternity itself. It is participated in contemporary critiques of history and nationalism. It deals with inferiority and dominating structures of every global society. The history of subaltern classes is a very complex issue, no doubt, as the history of dominant class.

Backlash, as Faludi indicates, is borne out of success; one party makes claims, advances and another party feels left out, resentful threatened. Faludi argues that the anti-feminist backlash has been set off not by women's achievement of full equality but by the increased possibility that they might win it. It is a pre-emptive strike that stops women long before their goals are achieved. She describes the

> Countercurrents and treacherous undertows" of the backlash – which are highly effective in that even those who see themselves as feminists can be dragged down by them. "This counterassault," writes Faludi "stands the truth boldly on its head and proclaims that the very steps that have elevated women's position have actually led to their downfall. (xviii)

Liberation, as Faludi further suggests, has now became the true American scourge. Just when women's quest for equal rights had started to gain ground with extensive affirmative action programs in place; just when women had joined the ranks of virtually all the male dominated and prestigious and even macho professions; just when laws protecting rape victims and battered women from being belittled and attacked in court, almost predictably an antifeminist resistance set in. For everyone or

two steps forward, there has been one step back. In a same manner Faludi quotes:

> Feminism's agenda is basic: It asks that women not be forced to
> "choose" between public justice and private happiness. It asks that
> women be free to define themselves -- instead of having their identity
> defined for them, time and again, by their culture and their men…. The
> internal qualities once said to embody manhood - sure footedness,
> inner strength, confidence of purpose -- are merchandised to men to
> enhance their manliness. What passes for masculinity is being
> extracted and sold back to men. Literally in the case of Viagra. (215)

Susan Faludi is a journalist who wrote *Backlash:The Undeclared War against Women*, 1991, which argued that feminism and women's rights were undermined by the media and corporations -- just as the previous wave of feminism lost ground to a previous version of backlash, convincing women that feminism and not inequality was the source of their frustration. There are two types of views related to the question that either the subaltern people can raise their voice by themselves or they need to be represented by others. On the one hand, there are some critics like Spivak who believe that the subaltern subjects have been regulated to the position of subjects rather than participants in a two-way dialogue. They are made only the subjects. So they cannot speak. They have to be represented by the elite intellectuals because only the intellectual elites can present interpretation of the subaltern voice filtered through the intellectual view-point. It is all because they "have no history" and "cannot speak" (Spivak 32). The subaltern is the marginalized one, which has no access to hegemonic power. So, they lack the means as well as strategy of their own. Moreover, they do not have the privileged position, from where they can express themselves. Therefore, the spokes person of subaltern members becomes their life-giver and

master:

> The small peasant proprietors cannot represent themselves: they must
>
> be presented. Their representing must appear simultaneously as their
>
> master, as an authority over them, as unrestricted governmental power
>
> that protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and
>
> sunshine from above. (Spivak 29-30)

On the other hand, there are so many critics like Dipesh and Arnold who have presented so many examples of protest of the subaltern class people. In the process of making the authority aware about their condition and position, they follow different tracks. Sometimes they use strike as a fruitful means to get the attention of the authority (government). They keep on reminding the authority of the proper use of their power. And when the authority ignores the subaltern people, they constitute a continuing form of protest by acting together in small bonds, against it. Even though, there are two types of distinct views regarding the voice of subaltern, I do believe that, the subalterns are capable of raising their voice against every kind of suppression in this modern age, though they needed to be represented by others in the past.

Two kinds of backlash have been discussed in this paper institutionalized and personal. Institutionalized backlash operates at the societal level, typically as laws that are written or enacted as a reaction against progress by a minority group. Personal backlash may have its origins in social stress or work pressures and is manifest as displaced aggression onto another person such as a family member. Sometimes this backlash takes the form of violence. That much of family violence is associated with the stress on men in a competitive. Both forms of backlash, whether at the macro or micro level, are cultural in origin and derive from basic prejudice against girls and women, but especially against girls and women who are seen as competitive with men

and therefore threatening. Women's bid for equality has been used against girls and women in the United States, and poor and minority women in trouble with the law have paid for the male resentment against their more liberated sisters. Much of the backlash that considered took the form of attempts to reverse feminist-inspired policies and activities.

Similarly, instead of the Reagan administration acknowledging the increasing gender gap and taking the requests of women into consideration, the Republican Party encouraged men to take on macho stances in the hope of making an impact on other men. In Faludi's opinion, "The Republican Party only 'won' the battle over the gender gap by default" (310). As the New Right's 'pro-family' philosophy increased its influence on American politics, women once again tended to become increasingly marginalized. Subaltern Studies attempts rewriting a new kind of national history, which accumulates dispersed moments and fragments. Spivak argues, "To investigate, discover, and establish a subaltern or peasant consciousness seems at first to be a positivistic project- a project which assumes that, if properly prosecuted, it will lead to firm ground, to some thing that can be disclosed" (338). And Subaltern Studies is a project, which tries its best to discover, investigate and establish subaltern consciousness and 'subaltern' means the colonized or oppressed subject whose voice has been silenced.

It would, however, be incorrect to suggest that the New Right were primarily responsible for marketing backlash. "Entrée to centre stage awaited cooler talking heads, intermediaries with the proper media polish and academic credentials to translate fiery tirades against women's independence into tempered sound bites and acclaimed hard covers" (Faludi 314). Their investigation was primarily concerned with a "philosophical, not a personal, discourse over female independence .but they

all carried personal baggage when they stepped up to the mike" (Faludi315). In essence, as Faludi maintains:

> The point is not to reduce the backlash theorists to psychological case studies but to widen the consideration of their ideas to include some less recognized factor – from professional grievances to domestic role strains – that played important contributory roles in shaping these thinkers' attitudes towards feminism. (316)

Feminism's agenda is basic: It asks that women not be forced to "choose" between public justice and private happiness. It asks that women be free to define themselves instead of having their identity defined for them, time and again, by their culture and their men. The internal qualities once said to embody manhood - sure footedness, inner strength, confidence of purpose are merchandised to men to enhance their manliness. What passes for masculinity is being extracted and sold back to men. But as Michel Foucault defines representation in relation to power, the powerful people's authority is enough to manipulate representation as they like and turns representation into a truth by suppressing the representation of their opposites.

In her text, Faludi takes the press to task for failing to challenge the myths about women in the 1980s and especially for spreading, through "trend journalism," stories about how unhappy women are, despite their having reaped the benefits of women's liberation in the 1970s. Faludi challenges the prevailing wisdom that the women's movement is to blame for women's unhappiness; she believes their unhappiness actually stems from the fact that the struggle for equality is not yet finished.Faludi uses data from a wide variety of sources, such as government and university studies, newspapers, census reports, scholarly journals, and personal interviews to explore women's status in the 1980s. The personal interviews offer a

look at the individuals who are behind the "backlash" and, according to Faludi, are hindering women's progress.

In Backlash, Faludi defines this discursive phenomenon as a dynamic that co-opts both males and females to subscribe to highly specific and nonnegotiable gender roles, in terms of which all the gender modifications of second wave feminism are construed as anathema. Essentially, 'backlash' is an achievement reversal tool that has been used as a broad category into which a number of demographics can fall. As Faludi explains, "the successes of the women's movement are inscribed on the charge sheet along with its failures, imagined or otherwise, and both are magnified to suit the purposes of its detractors" (Faludi xiii). Arguably, "the brilliance of Backlash is that Susan Faludi sees these strategies for what they are: an attempt to divide and isolate women at a crucial moment in their struggle for equality, independence and autonomy" (Smith xiv). As Joan Smith goes on to explain, "Backlash, with its sharp historical sense, its clear-sighted perception of the opposition, and its faith in the willpower of women…is the balance-sheet which tells us, in a period of concerned anti-feminist propaganda, exactly where we stand" (xv).

For the most part, Faludi's *Backlash* can be used as a lens through which to examine the images fed to us by the media. Furthermore, it assists us in exposing that which is factual and that which is merely propaganda. That is,

> 'backlash', communicated largely through the mass media, involves: an incredible compendium of incorrect facts, bogus statistics, false logic and unfounded theories, all of which are presented by society and the media in particular as 'true' and 'factual' in order to keep women subordinate. (www.synaptic.bc.ca)

In this regard, according to Faludi:

> From 'the man shortage' to 'the infertility epidemic' to 'female burn-
> out' to 'toxic day care', these so-called female crises have had their
> origins not in the actual conditions of women's lives but in a closed
> system that starts and ends in the media, popular culture and
> advertising – an endless feedback loop that perpetuates and
> exaggerates its own false images of womanhood (Faludi 8-9).

By these lines it can be said that womens are taken as commodities since the
establishement of dominating means such as advertsing, pular culture, meida. A close
attention in terms of its origins, its influence on culture, and its effects on women's
minds and bodies. Faludi's claims will also be evaluated in the light of critical
literature from, among other sources, the European Journal of Women's Studies, the
Journal of Women and Language, and the Women's Studies International Forum.

To begin with, "the truth is that the last decade has seen a powerful
counterassault on women's rights, a backlash, an attempt to retract the handful of
small and hard-won victories that the feminists movement did manage to win for
women" (12). As indicated by its name, the focus point of antifeminism is feminism,
"the role of woman at work, at home, in society, and in the culture", and it aims to
promote "a complex political, social, and cultural agenda" (Wallace 20). In short,
antifeminism can be seen as a response to feminism, voicing opposition toward
feminist standpoints and those responsible for the articulation of such standpoints,
which includes arguing that feminism has debilitated women. "Identifying feminism
as women's enemy only furthers the ends of a backlash against women's equality,
simultaneously deflecting attention from the backlash's central role and recruiting
women to attack their own cause" (Faludi 12-13). In the 1980s and 1990s,

antifeminists debated the formation of content in the academic field and claimed that feminists were sabotaging the university system.

> backlashes [arose] in reaction to women's 'progress', caused not simply by a bedrock of misogyny but by the specific efforts of contemporary women to improve their status, efforts that have been interpreted time and again by men – especially men grappling with real threats to their economic and social well-being on other fronts – as spelling their own masculine doom. (13)

In light of the above, Faludi supports the view that "a backlash may be an indication that women have had an effect as backlashes occur when advances have been small, before changes are sufficient to help many people. It is almost as if the leaders of backlashes use the fear of change as a threat before major change has occurred" (14). Amazons, *Blue-stockings, and Crones: A Feminist Dictionary* elaborates further on the irony of this, defining an antifeminist as a "woman who claims the only place for a woman is in the home and who has come out of the home to prove it" (20). In this regard Beauvoir mentions:

> To emancipate woman is to refuse to confine her to the relations she bears to man, not to deny them to her; let her have her independent existence and she will continue none the less to exist to him also; mutually recognizing each other as subject, each will yet remain for the other another. (576)

That is, antifeminist causes are not solely supported by men. Cynthia D. Kinnard provides evidence of this in her bibliography, whereby she indicates that "almost half of the antifeminist books and pamphlets and nearly one-third of the articles were written by women" (cited in Kowaleski-Wallace 1997: 20). Faludi provides further

examples of this in her critique of Beverly LaHaye's antifeminist campaign to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment, "highlighting the paradox inherent in the female antifeminist activist's position: such women often make a public career of campaigning against women's right to a public life" (cited in Kowaleski-Wallace 1997: 20). In this regard Kowaleski-Wallace worthy to quote here as:

Taken as a whole…these codes and cajolings, these whispers and threats and myths, move overwhelmingly in one direction: they try to push women back into their 'acceptable' roles – whether as Daddy's girl or fluttery romantic, active nester or passive love object. (16)

However, once the right for women to vote was successfully achieved by the women's movement, antifeminists turned their attention to issues involving abortion and the importance of proper childcare, and accused "the women's movement of creating a generation of unhappy single and childless women" (Faludi 17).

Specifically, Faludi focuses her analysis on the feminism of the second wave, which took place in the 1970s, and the subsequent antagonistic response of antifeminism, which took place in the 1980s and 1990s. The war between antifeminists and feminists became exceedingly problematic when the bar moved from verbal abuse to physical violence; when women around the world found themselves being "imprisoned, tortured, and killed for violating patriarchal codes" (Kowaleski-Wallace 1997: 20). This occurred not only in forgotten corners of society but also in some of its most elite institutions. A brutal example of such antifeminist violence occurred at the University of Montreal in December 1989. After separating the male engineering students from the female engineering students, Marc Lepine shouted, "You're all fucking feminists" before opening fire. "He killed fourteen women and wounded nine more because he felt that feminists had invaded traditional

male territory" (Kowaleski-Wallace 1997: 21). For a more recent example, one simply needs to refer to the prosecution of Martha Stewart, who "was indicted on charges of conspiracy, obstruction of justice and securities fraud, all linked to a personal stock trade she made in 2001". However, when it came to investigating the elaborate scam behind the Enron scandal, it was discovered that the men responsible "did not receive jail time or the public scrutiny that Martha Stewart did".

When it came time for the Ronald Reagan election, women were slowly but surely worked out of the federal system. To expand on this, Faludi explains how "the New Right women who received political appointments typically landed with posts that came with inflated titles but no authority or required them to carry out the administration's most punitive anti-feminist policies" (292). If the Reagan environment was limiting for New Right women, one can only imagine how lethal it must have been for feminist women. For example,

The Department of Education, which had starred in the campaign to oust the feminists, now directed the effort towards crowning the fathers. If the 'pro-family' movement was 'pro' anything, it was paternal power. (Faludi 297)

Male backlash voices were also prevalent; for example, George Gilder became categorised as America's top male chauvinist, while simultaneously establishing for himself a literary career. In Faludi's opinion, "Unlike some other backlash writers, he is at least honest about the advantages marriage offers his sex and about the real ratio of single men to single women" (320). To concur with Faludi's opinion, Gilder believes that in general, single men should be characterised as an extremely unpleasant species. He goes further to describe them as "'a baboon troop' of 'naked nomads' who are far more likely than married men to become drug addicts, alcoholics, compulsive gamblers, criminals and murders" (Faludi321). Through

statements such as these, in the blink of an eye, Gilder went from being a freelance writer to the brains behind the Reagan administration.

In many cases, the voices of feminists fared no better, insofar as their words were all too often co-opted by backlash dynamics and used against women and their struggle for freedom. A prominent figure that comes to mind in this regard is Sylvia Ann Hewlett. Drawing attention to the lack of campaigning done around the issue of working mothers and their children, Hewlett sparked instant interest from the backlash press. For years to come, many newscasters, columnists and journalists would appeal to select and account actualized aspects of Hewlett's work on the unfortunate ramifications of feminism.

Similarly, many feminist scholars initially focused their investigations on the various differentiations between the sexes, in the hope of overcoming the traditional notions that characteristics such as objectivity and reason are primarily associated with men, whereas characteristics such as emotionality and irrational behaviour are associated with women. In light of this, Faludithematizes the way in which, "sometimes academics seemed to forget the force of socialization altogether and presented women's and men's roles as biologically predetermined and intractable" (360). For example, Carol Gilligan set out "to show how women's moral development has been devalued and misrepresented by male psychological researchers, how ethics has been defined only in male terms" (Falud362). In essence, the results were as follows:

> The differences in moral reasoning that social science researchers have
> been able to find are most often linked not with sex but with class and
> education – that is, those very social and economic forces that
> relational feminists, Gilligan included, have given such a wide berth"

(Faludi 364).

Because of this, during 'backlash', Gilligan's theories were easily appropriated to support prejudicial viewpoints that engendered bias against women. In effect, the backlash was responsible for shaping "much of Hollywood's portrayal of women in the eighties" (Faludi 141). To elaborate on this, Faludi explains:

> In typical themes, women were set against women; women's anger at their social circumstances was depoliticized and displayed as personal depression instead; and women's lives were framed as morality tales in which the 'good mother' wins and the independent woman gets punished. (141)

In essence, women were once again depicted as their own worst enemy, and the primary reason for why they remained single and childless was advanced as relating to their single-minded pursuit of independence. Attempts to silence the female voice in Hollywood films have been a recurrent theme during times of backlash. Although the character of Marilyn Monroe has been construed as a critical figure for her capacity to tap into the repressed fifties male sexual psyche arguably, for the most part, women of the time perceived her as the epitome of female docility and submission to male domination through the male gaze. This pattern of submission was once again repeated in Hollywood during the late- 1980s, with filmmakers solely preoccupied with the task of "toning down independent women and drowning out their voices" (144).

The script was slowly reworked so that the husband came across as ever more lovable, whereas the single woman was slowly but surely transformed into the likes of a malicious and deadly vixen. In essence, "the attraction is fatal only for the single woman, which underlines the point driven home in the final take of Fatal Attraction:

the best single woman is a dead one (Faludi 152).

When attempting to define the style of the 1980s backlash movies, it is clear that they contain elements of the Pygmalion tradition. The Pygmalion tradition is based solely on the notion that women are nothing more than the property of their fathers or husbands. This being the case, men are then seen as the primary guardians of feminine virtue. Once again, one is faced with the battle between facts versus fiction. To shed further light on the situation, Faludi draws attention to the following comparison: "In the real world, blue collar men might be losing economic and domestic authority, but in these movies the cops and cabbies were demanding respect from cowering affluent women" (167). While men were being portrayed as the hunky heroes, women were being subjected to discrimination, torture and sometimes even death. Yet, Smith and Watson also state that there are also "human experiences outside discursive narratives, like: feeling of the body, feeling of spirituality, powerful sensory memories of events and images" (26). An autobiography draws on "real life" and "real events," in the end; it is not an objective or pure version of the life being told. An autobiographer offers a carefully selected and highly constructed version of his or her life a story (even a fiction) about who they are. That story is always *motivated*. There is a reason the writer feels compelled to tell their life story; in most cases the autobiography is a means for the writer to make sense of some significant experience or psychological need.

This was all the more so on television during the 1980s, as women seemed to become increasingly marginalized within television narratives. With the genre of action-adventure growing in popularity, women were more often than not portrayed as the ultimate 'damsel in distress'; while the villains were beating women to a pulp, the heroes were focusing their energies on embodying the macho male façade.

Complaints to the Independent Television Commission about such subtle gender discrimination only surfaced during the early 1990s, when women had simply had enough of being portrayed as the desperate housewife, the sensuous vixen or the virginal nun, solely to meet the desires of men. To shed light on the modus operandi of the backlash perpetrators, Faludi explains:

> The lurking quality of television's backlash against independent women is the product of the industry's own deeply ambivalent affair with its female audience [, which] succeeded in depopulating TV of] and replacing them with nostalgia-glazed portraits of 'apolitical' family women by banishing feminist issues and reconstructing a 'traditional' female hierarchy i.e. housewives, career women, singles. (179-182)

As one delves deeper into the analysis of the backlash in television of the 1980s, it becomes clear that while babies became the metaphorical representation of marriage and motherhood, their absence also constituted a source of condemnation. In short, Faludi explains, "At the same time that 1980s TV was busy saluting the domestic angels of 1950s TV, it was maligning mothers who dared to step outside the family circle" (190).

On the other hand, with regard to their minds, women were psychologically patronized into assuming a vulnerable, childlike mentality. The attack on the female mind was conceivably the most intimate, "impressing its discouraging and moralistic message most effectively, and destructively, on the millions of women seeking help from .therapy books and counseling women who were already feeling insecure and vulnerable, already bunkered in isolated private trenches" (Faludi 370-371). The devastating ramifications that such a cultural attack would have on women's psyche,

and thereby, albeit inadvertently, became part of the problem.

In essence, women were encouraged to imbibe feelings of serenity and acceptance towards situations that they had no say over, instead of the courage needed to effect change in situations where their influence did hold ground. In order to fully grasp this notion, it is important to refer to Faludi's definition of 'addiction'. "The meaning of 'addiction' itself 'the giving of oneself to a desire' nicely matches the traditional Victorian vision on feminine passivity" (380). In terms of the 1980s backlash, it was advanced that women should return to childlike attitudes. Despite the fact that backlash has incorporated feminist language into its attack on women's minds through the medium of self-help therapy books, it rejected the most fundamental principle of feminist theory, namely the significant role of personal and social growth. Furthermore, as Faludi notes, "Backlash therapists of the 1980s firmly rejected another fundamental feminist principle that men can, and should, change too" (374)." Identity is discursive, which means that it is constructed, not inherited, though social conception often leads us to take identity for given or fixed" (Smith and watson 33). The community in social life has such identities and people who live in one social system may be influenced by ideology from the community itself. It can be her or his background identities. However, it is possible that ideology can be changed at any time when someone has interaction and gets connected with other people or other social system different from his/her original society.

III. Challenging American Society in *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*

Susan Faludi in her book *Backlash: Undeclared War Against American Women* presents the voice of voiceless through her own collection of report, interview, theories by criticizing what really feminism is, popular images that have been using by patriarchal society to indicate female. Depicting the women movements in America Sasan Faludi is able to depict the reason behind the declination of women movement and also show how they over come through difficulties. In this sense, the book stands against the concept that the subaltern can not speak and they should be represented by others.

Susan Faludi's bestselling book, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, is a methodically researched and documented work challenging conventional wisdom about the American women's movement and women's gains in achieving equality in the latter years of the twentieth century. Faludi begins the book by looking carefully at then-current myths about the status of women, including the press reports that single career women are more likely to be depressed than other women, that professional women are leaving their jobs in droves to stay at home, and that single working women over age thirty have a small chance of ever getting married. Not only are these myths not true, says Faludi, but they are evidence of a society-wide backlash against women and what they have achieved in recent years. She describes this backlash as a "kind of pop-culture version of the Big Lie" and declares that "it stands the truth boldly on its head and proclaims that the very steps that have elevated women's positions have actually led to their downfall.

This paper shows the backlash against feminism aims to remold women into their 'acceptable' patriarchal roles, succeeding in this regard by not appearing to be a

political struggle but rather simply the advancement of the natural way of life. In contrast, "feminism…asks that women not be forced to 'choose' between public justice and private happiness. It asks that women be free to define themselves – instead of having their identity defined for them, time and again, by their culture and their men" (Faludi 18).

From the beginning part of the book, Faludi tries to prove herself as an feminist, who wants to show the real picture of feminist movement in 1980s America that is to say looking carefully at then-current myths about the status of women, including the press reports that single career women are more likely to be depressed than other women, that professional women are leaving their jobs in droves to stay at home, and that single working women over age thirty have a small chance of ever getting married. Not only are these myths not true, says Faludi, but they are evidence of a society-wide backlash against women and what they have achieved in recent years. She wants to say through her book that there should not be any enmity between women and women, they have to stand together to tackle the patriarchal ideology, images which patriarchy have been using to dominate women community. She though the subaltern groups are knowingly or unknowingly marginalized, and their voices have been suppressed in every sector of the society but through this book Faludi let the voice reveal of voiceless and at the end of the book, Faludi ultimately prove that the subaltern is not the subaltern inborn, the very term 'subaltern' is a social construction. It is a traditional concept and becoming useless because, they too, do have the energy and capacity to change their fate, their condition and position by their own efforts. They can raise their voice against all sorts of marginalization. In short, they cannot be ignored any more.

In sum up, voice of the voiceless is voiced here and that should be heard by

society and the mainstream as well. In such way this paper explored the voice of the voiceless through the report of Falaudi that she seeks to explore what is unexplored. And she tries to bring out analysis about the networks of power relations by locating a human subject in the discursive practices that are constructed by the powerful agent of male dominated society. So this project bring out the feminist reading of American history by SasunFaludi from the perspective of the counter memory. This research questioned the traditional mentality of Patriarchal society and evaluates Faludi'srewriting the historiography American women world. Faludiwants the society where the voice of the female class can be heard and women no longer remain within the periphery of domestic household activities. Women also can carry burden of family and society, they can feel their responsibility to challenge the burden so that they came forward.

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