

Review of: "Simone de Beauvoir's Existentialist Ethics as a Prophylactic for Ideology Obsession and Ideology Addiction: An Uplifting Philosophy for Philosophical Practice"

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This is a well written paper, mostly fluently presented.

The setting out of the de Beauvoir ideas is particularly good.

There are two issues that could be resolved, one structural and one substantive.

First, the structure of the paper makes it anti-climactic. By putting the proposed solution first - de Beauvoir's notions on these matters - first, and only then setting out what the problem is that these concepts are the proposed solution to, the end of the paper trails off in an unsatisfactory manner. It would be better to set out the problem in detail first of all, then bring in de Beauvoir, and then add more discussion of how her ideas solve the problem.

Second, the philosophy elements are sharper, better and more convincing than the political elements. The latter are problematic in various ways. Secular political ideology is conflated with religious belief, and the two domains are made to seem identical when that is at best an arguable but not self-evident proposition. The reliance on the less-than-sophisticated and highly tendentious theorizing of Scruton about such matters makes the treatment seem simplistic and uninformed by other, arguably better, authors. Far left and far right ideologies go undefined and are treated in a much too commonsensical manner. There is no distinction made between very extremist versions of these and less extremist ones. An assumption is smuggled in that some sort of centrist politics is psychologically normal. Beyond obvious (in a commonsense framing) cases like Maoism and Nazism, can an ideology like neo-liberalism have extremist versions too?