



# WOMEN AND IDENTITY in Literature



*Edited By*

**Shikha Sharma**

10. Women amidst the Mayhem of Partition  
Shrishti Dey 87
11. Reframing the Roles: A Study of Shifting Narrative Strategies  
with Relation to Gender in Post Covid Malayalam Cinema 96  
Akhila Ajith
12. Food as a Tool for Identity: A Study of Food and  
Diaspora in Bharti Kirchner's *Pastries* 101  
Apoorva Poonia
13. The Contagion of "Falleness": The Portrayal of Prostitution  
in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* and Leo Tolstoy's *Resurrection* 110  
Jagari Mukherjee
14. Analysing Opportunities for Women in Journalism with  
Reference to Susannah Cahalan's novel *Brain on Fire:  
My Month of Madness* 116  
Biju Chetia and Daisy Priya Gogoi
15. Food Politics and Female Autonomy: The Difficulty of  
Making Choices in Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* 124  
Dr. Nivedita Gupta
16. Partition and Women Writers: A Study 134  
Dr. Gurpreet Kour
17. Journey from a Widow to a Father 141  
Hina Koser and Hiba Khan
18. The Woeful Condition of Tribal Women:  
Re-Contextualising Mahasweta Devi's  
"Draupadi" in the Present Time 146  
Supriyo Mapder
19. Queering the Woman-Widow: Visiting this Gender as an  
Oxymoron! 156  
Ms. Suparna Roy
20. Portrayal of Women in the Cinema *The Great Indian Kitchen:*  
A Comparative Study 164  
Nahan N. K.
21. Identity of Women in Society 172  
Deepa Sharma
- List of Contributors* 181
- 183

## CHAPTER 14

---

# Analysing Opportunities for Women in Journalism with Reference to Susannah Cahalan's novel *Brain on Fire: My Month of Madness*

Biju Chetia and Daisy Priya Gogoi

### Abstract

Discrimination against women has been witnessed from time immemorial. Perhaps Virginia Woolf couldn't have been more right when she stressed on how the conditions that a woman is exposed to affects her identity. With the advancement of time, technology and science have seen huge progress. However, the stereotypical mindset of the patriarchal society still remains unchanged. In this paper, the discrimination faced by women in the world of journalism shall be analysed through an indepth reading of Susannah Cahalan's illness narrative *Brain on Fire: My Month of Madness*. The work describes the competition and the insecurities that haunted Cahalan, most of which were directly affected by the pressure in her field of work. Women are doubly pressured – firstly because of the competition in the workplace, and secondly because they are judged on the basis on their gender. Along with Cahalan's work, other texts of writers shall also be analysed where they speak on how the women face discrimination in the world of journalism, a profession dominated by males. Moreover, the media present an image of a perfect woman which comes at the expense of the true woman that possesses equal capabilities and talent as males. As a reporter herself, Cahalan expresses the challenges she faces in her line of work while suffering from NMDA-autoimmune encephalitis.

**Keywords:** women, journalism, discrimination, inequality, patriarchy.

### Article

“Women have served all these centuries as looking glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size.” – Virginia Woolf.