SOCIOLOGY REFERENCE GUIDE

GENDER ROLES & EQUALITY

THE EDITORS OF
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Introduction

The study of sociology has only recently begun to consider gender and its effects on social construction. In the last half century, the modern conception of the intersection of gender, identity, and their social influence has become a central focus among sociologists. Today, notions of what constitutes gender difference and the social authority generated by such perceptions continues to inspire research and debate.

The Sociology Reference Guide series is designed to provide a solid foundation for the research of various sociological topics. This volume broaches the subjects of gender difference and the challenges to dominant social arrangements that historically defined strict gender roles. Introducing these topics is a set of sociological essays that examines the defining characteristics of gender and the analytical models used in the field. The essays discuss the influence of family life in conceptions of gender roles and the effects that feminism had on transforming foundational beliefs about gender inequality in such diverse atmospheres as the classroom, office, household, and government.

The field of sociology and gender studies as we know it today may be traced to at least one watershed study. In "The Kinsey Report," Karin Carter-Smith revisits Alfred C. Kinsey's controversial and groundbreaking research that challenged medical and social beliefs about sexual identity and radicalized the modern understanding of homosexuality. The issue

of gender definition is also explored in regard to "socialization." Ruth A. Wienclaw analyzes how both biology and cultural roles determine everyday conceptions of gender identity, while Noelle Vance explains how language serves as a means toward the social imprint upon gender. In her essay "Gender Roles," Wienclaw notes that as "society changes, its gender roles also often change to meet the needs of the society." The function of socialization is further explored by Jennifer Kretchmar, who explains that "gender scholars attempt to challenge our 'taken-for-granted' assumptions about men and women, point out the ways in which our behavior is culturally rather than biologically produced, and encourage us to imagine different ways of being male and female." In a group of essays on family and identity, Simone I. Flynn and Wienclaw provide a helpful account of the different family and domestic arrangements that establish male and female identities, roles, and responsibilities.

This volume is also anchored by several essays that examine gender inequality and the radicalization of women's rights. Carolyn Sprague offers an historical survey of the development of rights issues that covers everything from the early nineteenth-century women's suffrage movement to the cultural transformations affected by the 1960s women's rights movement. Wienclaw then turns more directly to feminist theories of gender inequality with a helpful look at the different "feminisms" that have emerged during the past century. Marie Gould, in an essay discussing gender and morality, scrutinizes the development of moral perspectives grounded in gender, a subject she defines as "an ethics of care, rather than justice."

The essays that follow discuss social arrangements and gender differences in the classroom, workplace, and the economy. Sherry Thompson transitions into the topic of social marginalization, specifically in relation to women, who must negotiate and balance work, home, and family life. In another essay, it is argued that women's relative minority status in politics rests on many of the traditional cultural beliefs examined in the volume's preceding essays. The significance of studying gender in a cross-cultural dimension and within a globalized society is the topic of this volume's concluding essay.

Many of the private and public factors that generated controversy after the radicalization of women's rights in the 1960s continue to dominate

the debates on gender today. This volume will provide readers with an overview of these issues and the diverse range of methodologies in the study of gender difference. Complete bibliographic entries follow each essay and a list of suggested readings will locate sources for advanced research in the area of study. A selection of relevant terms and concepts and an index of common sociological themes and ideas conclude the volume

The Kinsey Report

Karin Carter-Smith

Overview

Alfred C. Kinsey (1894-1956) was an American, Harvard-educated biologist and professor of entomology and zoology. In 1947, Kinsey founded for the Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction at Indiana University. It was posthumously renamed The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction. Kinsey is best know as the lead researcher and author of the 1948 Sexual Behavior in the Human Male, which became an international bestseller and drastically changed the perceptions of human sexuality among both the public and the academic body researching the field. Along with the 1953 volume, Sexual Behaviors in the Human Female, the two reports created a great deal of discussion and controversy and became an enduring part of American culture (Steinberg, 2005; Herzog, 2006).

References to "The Kinsey Report" abound in both the academic literature and in popular culture. In 1964, U.S. poet Ogden Nash titled a piece "The Kinsey Report Didn't Upset Me, Either" in which he wrote, "I won't allow my life to be regulated by reports, whether rosily optimistic or gloomily cadaveric" (Nash, 1964, p.1). In 2004, the critically acclaimed movie Kinsey starring actor Liam Neeson as Alfred Kinsey, portrayed the researcher who revolutionized the study of human sexuality. In addition, there have been academic and trade books published about the studies, their impact on science and culture, and lately, about Kinsey himself.

In the decades following the publication of Kinsey's seminal studies, debates about the methods he used, the conclusions he drew and recently, about his own sexual practices, have fueled a controversy that began soon after the reports were first disseminated. Kinsey received a great deal of praise for breaking the silence that had surrounded sexual matters and for making public norms and behaviors that had been considered much more rare and deviant than the research revealed (Herzog, 2006).

Historical Background

The study of human sexuality was considered a moral issue prior to 1890, when the medical community began to address issues of sexual function and sexually transmitted diseases, albeit with a nod to the moral standards of the times. Doctors, with backgrounds in biology, anatomy and medicine, were seen as the most logical experts in the field (Bullough, 1998). Havelock Ellis and Magnus Hirschfeld were physicians whose research focused on sex through the use of sexual histories, much like Kinsey. The significant difference in their methods, though, is considered to be critical to the divergence in their findings. Ellis compiled histories through correspondence with volunteers, while Hirschfeld relied upon historical data and personal knowledge until late in his career when he began to conduct personal interviews (Bullough, 1998). "Unfortunately, Hirschfeld used only a small portion of his data in his published books, and before he could complete a comprehensive study of sexuality, his files were destroyed by the Nazis" (Bullough, 1994 as cited in Bullough, 1998, p. 127). While some of the data reported in those early studies came from the physicians' own practices and research, it was supplemented by anthropological studies, and much of it was informed by the political and moral standards of the early twentieth century (Bullough, 1998).

Other early research by physicians was published by psychiatrists, especially those trained as psychoanalysts, such as George Henry. These studies lacked validity in that their basic assumptions were flawed (for example, that homosexuals were ill). Furthermore, their questions were designed to determine differences among heterosexuals, but they lacked comparative studies with which to validate them (Henry, 1941, as cited in Bullough, 1998). Despite the difficulties in producing valid research, assumptions about the medical community's authority to explore human

sexuality endured. When the Committee for Research in the Problems in Sex (CRPS), a grant-funding organization endowed through the Rockefeller's National Research Council, began awarding funds to researchers to conduct sex surveys, physicians were among the first to receive the monies (Bullough, 1998).

Kinsey was a classically trained scientist who taught courses in general biology, an author who had published several textbooks and a researcher and world-renowned expert on gall wasps. He began his study of human sexuality in 1938 when he was invited to become a member of an interdisciplinary team delivering a course on marriage and family at Indiana University (Bullough, 1998). In 1941, he received an initial exploratory grant from the CRPS, which was followed by full funding the following year. Kinsey's approach to the study was clinical; he used taxonomy to dispassionately classify and describe behaviors and had no moral, ethical or political agenda to inform his conclusions. The CRPS viewed Kinsey as a favorable candidate for research into human sexuality; he was a bench scientist with impeccable research skills, he was a full professor at a major university, his research into the field had the full support of the university administration, and he was married with adolescent children (Bullough, 1998). According to Bullough (1998), "the CRPS came to be so committed to Kinsey that by the 1946-1947 academic year, he was receiving half of the committee's total budget" (p. 129).

Kinsey's Research Methods

Kinsey's method of data collection involved personal interviews with volunteer subjects. One issue that he faced was in the creation of a representative sample population of American adults. Steinberg (2005) states, "People who agreed to give their sexual histories would necessarily be a self-selected, and therefore skewed, subset of the total population" (p. 19). Kinsey sought to mitigate the problem by using a large number of subjects hoping that the volume would lessen the bias. This also worked with his methodology as the taxonomic approach required that data from as many subjects as possible be gathered. Although Kinsey had hoped to interview 100, 000 subjects from a variety of distinct cultural subgroups for the report, only 18,000 were completed by the time the Rockefeller Foundation had stopped funding for the research in 1954. Kinsey had personally

interviewed 8,000 participants. He believed that self-administered questionnaires encouraged dishonest responses and inaccuracies. He held that participants would only be truthful about their sexual experiences when questioned personally because discrepancies, untruths and contradictions could be explored by the interviewer (Steinberg, 2005; Bullough, 1998).

Kinsey developed a system of variegated questions and checks to detect lies that respondents might tell, and he believed that his system was effective. Interviewer bias was also a concern, and to mitigate that, he instituted a process through which two interviewers would meet with the same subject independently and at different times and responses would be compared. According to Bullough (1998), there were four interviewers, including Kinsey, and "if there was a bias, it came to be a shared one. The questions, however, were so wide-ranging that this too would limit much of the potential for slanting the data in any one direction" (p. 129).

Kinsey's challenge was to create an interview instrument and environment in which subjects would feel free to discuss a subject on which they had largely remained silent. Kinsey taught his researchers to project a sincere and objective demeanor that would put subjects at ease to disclose their sexual identities. Steinberg (2005) asserts, "his basic method—a contribution to sexual science as profound and long-lasting as the data he produced—was to lead people out of their socially enforced silence around sex and into a bubble of free speech where they had permission to speak openly and honestly about sex" (p. 19). In removing the moral overtones from the research, Kinsey removed the taboo that had kept subjects from disclosing their sexual truths; by keeping the research clinical and for scientific use, they were able to elicit more information.

In his reports, Kinsey dismissed sexual practices he deemed outliers, or statistically insignificant. Pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases were ignored along with sexual behaviors such as swinging, group sex, sadism, masochism, transvestitism, voyeurism and exhibitionism. Homosexuality, pedophilia and bestiality, however, were studied in some depth. He treated sex as a part of human behavior, demystifying its discussion and bringing into focus the aspects of sexuality that defined individuals by making the study scientific rather than voyeuristic (Bullough, 1998).

Further Insights

Kinsey's Findings

The Kinsey studies had a profound impact on both American culture and the study of human sexuality. Bethell (2005) states, "Remember the Kinsey sermon: there is no such thing as abnormality, just ceaseless sexual variety" (p.1), and Steinberg offers, "'Everybody's sin is nobody's sin,' Kinsey proclaimed" (p. 20). The studies brought to light the fact that American sexual activities were radically different from what people believed. "Homosexuality, bisexuality, premarital sex, extramarital sex, oral sex, anal sex, masturbation, sadomasochism, sex with animals, sex with and between preadolescent children, sex between older people, sex with prostitutes—all of these were found to be common practices" (Steinberg, 2005, p. 19).

Kinsey's reports challenged many conventional beliefs about human sexual experiences. Romesburg (1998) states, "he also found that nearly 50% of the women had engaged in sex before marriage and more than 25% had experienced extramarital sexual intercourse" (p. 1). In addition, he portrayed extramarital sexual intercourse as a neutral activity rather than as a societal ill. Bullough (1998) suggests, "he questioned the assumption that extramarital intercourse always undermined the stability of marriage… he seemed to feel that the most appropriate extramarital affair, from the standpoint of preserving a marriage, was an alliance in which neither party became overly involved emotionally" (p. 131).

Another convention challenged by Kinsey's research was that of the asexuality of women. According to Herzog (2006), "American commentators on the female volume were especially distressed by high rates of female marital infidelity and by Kinsey's assertions that female orgasmic response was almost identical to men's "(p. 39). Bullough concurs, stating that among women"40%…had experienced orgasm within the first months of marriage, 67% by the first six months, and 75% by the end of the first year" (p. 131). In addition, "Twenty-five percent had experienced orgasm by age of 15, more than 50% by the age of 20, and 64% before marriage" (Bullough, 1998, p. 131).

The creation of a taxonomy of human sexual behaviors was one of the many points of controversy when the reports were made public. This scientific

approach to the subject allowed for the objective classification of all sexual activities in which humans engaged and classified none as abnormal. The classification of human sexuality into a zoological framework failed to incorporate aspects of human psychology and emotion, which impact sexual experiences. Critics argued that defining what is normal for humans in the same manner as what is normal for animals neglected key aspects of human sexuality (Bullough, 1998).

Prevalence of Homosexuality

Kinsey developed a seven-point bipolar scale, which was one of the standards means of organizing social science research data at that time. Homosexuality and heterosexuality were seen as points on the seven-point continuum with the only objective indicator being what activity resulted in orgasm. Most people would respond in such a way that they would be in the middle of the scale. Bullough explains, "when one rates heterosexual orgasm as 0 and homosexual orgasm 6, a logical decision in terms of taxonomy, he in effect weights the scale by seeming to imply that exclusive heterosexuality is one extreme and exclusive homosexuality the other" (p. 130). While Kinsey found that most people could be classified exclusively heterosexual, his scale suggested that homosexuality was simply another sexual activity, which was revolutionary at the time. It was his findings that homosexual activity was much more prevalent than it had been believed to be, and his implication that it was within the normal range of behavior, that led to many of the attacks on his research (Bullough, 1998).

According to Romesburg (1998), after Kinsey interviewed nearly 6,000 men, he "concluded that 37% had engaged in at least one homosexual experience to orgasm between the ages of 16 and 55 [but] only 4% of the men were what he called 'exclusively homosexual'" (p. 1). Among women, Kinsey "reported that while 28% of women had "experienced homosexual arousal" by age 45, fewer than 3% could be classified as 'exclusively homosexual'" (Romesburg, 1998, p. 1). The idea that 10% of adult Americans are homosexual arose from these data; 13% of men and 7% of women had more homosexual than heterosexual experiences or psychological response for at least three years of adulthood; it is a simple average of the two numbers. (Romesburg, 1998). The statistics related to the practice of homosexual behavior had a worldwide impact. Herzog (2006) states, "the homophile reception—especially in France and West Germany—was

thoroughly enthusiastic…in France, where adult homosexuality was legal but nonetheless subject to social sanction, activists effused about Kinsey's contributions" (p. 42).

Also among the sample population, the research revealed that in rural areas "about 40 to 50% of the males had had at least one sexual encounter with an animal, and 17% had even experienced an orgasm as a result of sexual contact with animals during adolescence" (Beetz, 2005, p. 48). The prevalence among the entire population of American men in the study was closer to 8%. (Kinsey, Pomeroy & Martin, 1948 as cited in Beetz, 2005) and the prevalence of sexual contact with animals among women was much lower at 3% (Kinsey et al., 1953 as cited in Beetz, 2005). Given the social stigma of these activities, it is likely that they were under-reported to researchers rather than over-reported, and many participants indicated that curiosity was their primary motivation rather than sexual attraction (Beetz, 2005).

Numerous challenges to the statistical methods Kinsey employed have been raised in the 60 years since the first report's publication; however, the report demonstrated that although exact numbers of people engaging in forms of deviant sexual activity may vary, there were significant numbers of Americans engaging in those acts without physical and societal repercussions. "They were not all going crazy, committing suicide, getting pregnant, or dying of grossly disfiguring sexually transmitted diseases, as the popular sex mythology of the day would have predicted" (Steinberg, 2005, p. 20).

Viewpoints

Continuing Criticism

Herzog (2006) states, "American critics variously attacked Kinsey and his associates for methodological insufficiencies (especially in their statistical sampling techniques) or for moral turpitude (for implying that the lived prevalence of non-normative behaviors also suggested that the norms themselves should be adapted)" (p. 40). Indeed, the issue of statistical sampling was a point of contention for the duration of his research. Attempts were made to encourage him to validate his data with a random sample of individuals, but Kinsey refused "on the grounds that not all of those included in the random sample would answer the questions put to them

and that, therefore, the random sample would be biased" (Bullough, 1998, p. 132). The sample population on which Kinsey reported is not random, and among the over-represented groups are Caucasians, students, residents of Indiana and prisoners incarcerated for sexually deviant behavior (Bullough, 1998).

Bethell (2005) challenges Kinsey's statistics, stating that the report maintained "85 percent of American men had sex before marriage, 70 percent had sex with prostitutes, 10 percent were exclusively homosexual. His figures were undermined when it was revealed that he had disproportionately interviewed homosexuals and prisoners (many sex offenders)" Furthermore, when refused to adopt more valid statistical sampling procedures, the CRPS funding through the Rockefeller foundation was terminated (Bethell, 2005).

A significant incidence of intergenerational sexual behavior (between minor children and adults) was also reported in the study, and this is an area that remains controversial 60 years after its publication. According to Bullough (1998), "one of his more criticized sections in recent years is the table based on data he gathered from pedophiles. He is accused of not turning these people over to authorities" (p. 131). Further, Kinsey's controversial research demonstrated that many individuals who experienced intergenerational sex as children were not seriously harmed by it (Bullough, 1998). In 1981 questions were raised of how Kinsey and his staff collected data relevant to this area of their study. According to Pool, (1996) "Attention was directed to Tables 30-34 of Sexual Behavior in the Human Male, which report observations of orgasms in over three-hundred children between the ages of five months and fourteen years" (p. 1). Leadership at The Kinsey Institute confirmed that some of the data were collected from a group of pedophiles whom Kinsey opted not to report to authorities (Pool, 1996).

Kinsey's implication that homosexual behavior was normal and acceptable caused a great deal of debate among homosexual rights activists and those opposed to its decriminalization in both the U.S. and in Europe. Herzog (2006) explains, "conservative opponents of Kinsey on both sides of the Atlantic were hostile to the notion that the prevalence of a particular sexual practice also implied that it was a morally acceptable practice (in other

words, that "what is" was also "what ought to be)" (p. 42). Activists, on the other hand, held that what was natural, normal human sexual behavior should be both legally and socially sanctioned (Herzog, 2006). In the end, Kinsey's report brought to light the high incidence of homosexuality, and helped to spur the movement toward its legal and social acceptance.

Interest in Alfred Kinsey and his research persists into the present day. Recent biographies, as well as the popular movie, have helped to keep his name and ideas at the forefront of American culture. The impact of the work remains both controversial and profound. In 2005, the conservative publication Human Events named "The Kinsey Report" #4 on its list of "Top Ten Most Harmful Books of the 19th and 20th Centuries" behind such books as The Communist Manifesto, Mein Kampf and Quotations from Chairman Mao and among others like Das Kapital and The Feminine Mystique. While critics have most recently called into question the researcher's own sexual proclivities and those of his staff, the fact remains that he removed the taboo from the discussion of sexuality.

Kinsey's reports continue to be cited and his data continues to be used. Among his other achievements was the establishment of a library at Indiana University for the collection of sources related to sexuality that is now among the most impressive collections in the world. The Kinsey Institute for the Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction at Indiana University is among the leaders in research in the field of human sexuality. Bullough (1998) concludes, "Kinsey was the major factor in changing attitudes about sex in the twentieth century. His limitations and his personal foibles are appropriately overshadowed by his courage to go where others had not gone before" (p. 132).

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Gender Differences: Biology & Culture

Ruth A. Wienclaw

Overview

"Women are the weaker sex and need to be protected." "Big boys don't cry." "Women and men are different but equal, and each has a unique role within society." These are just a few of the beliefs about gender that can be heard in discussions on the roles of women and men in society. It is difficult to parse out the extent to which any of these beliefs is true, and examples of the entire spectrum of attitudes toward gender can be seen in society: Women who stay at home, keep house, raise the children, and are subservient to their husbands can be seen along with those whose mates stay home with the children while they go out to work. In between is a whole array of other approaches to how individuals and societies "do gender," or interpret what it means to be one gender or another through the ongoing social interactions that individuals have with each other.

Gender vs. Sex

There is a difference between gender and sex. In most cases, it is obvious to the casual observer what the sex of another person is: Biological differences typically make it relatively easy to distinguish adults of one sex from the other. In many cases, it is also relatively easy to tell one gender from another: Women tend to dress and act in one way and men tend to dress and act in another. There are, of course, exceptions to each of these rules of thumb. From a psychosocial point of view, individuals may be

androgynous, displaying feminine and masculine characteristics or traits. From a biological point of view, hermaphrodites are individuals who are born with both female and male sex organs. However, these are exceptions to the rule. Sex is biological in nature and determines one's biological destiny, such as the ability to bear or sire children. Gender, on the other hand, helps define one's role within society. Gender – or the psychological, social, cultural, and behavioral characteristics associated with being female or male – is a learned characteristic based on one's gender identity and learned gender role. Gender can be thought of as a society's interpretation of the cultural meaning of one's sex. In fact, the perspective of "doing gender" posits that gender is a construct that is interpreted by members of a society through the ongoing social interactions that individuals have with each other.

Gender Stereotypes

Such notions can easily give rise to gender stereotypes, or culturally defined patterns of expected attitudes and behavior that are considered appropriate for one gender but not the other. Gender stereotypes tend to be simplistic and based not on the characteristics or aptitudes of the individual, but on over-generalized perceptions of one gender or the other. For example, although the traditional gender stereotype might be that women stay home and clean the house and raise the family while men go out and work, the fact that many women in today's society are successful physicians, scientists, lawyers, business owners, and executives (among other jobs traditionally thought to be "male") demonstrates that it is the abilities and aptitudes of the individual – not her/his gender or sex – that should prescribe the parameters in which s/he can work.

The Basis of Gender

In some ways, gender roles are biologically based. For example, physiologically, it is women who must gestate and bear the young of the species. However, this does not necessarily mean that it is the woman who must take care of the child after it is born, as is demonstrated by stay-at-home fathers who nurture the child while the mother returns to work in a reversal of traditional typical Western gender roles. Although gender has a biological foundation in the physiological differences between females and males, the way that gender is interpreted differs from culture to culture

and, in some ways, from individual to individual. For example, although some societies are patriarchal in nature in which the male is the head of the family, descent is traced through the father's side of the family, and men have power over women, others are matriarchal with women holding these roles instead of men.

Nature vs. Nurture

Scientists have long been divided over the relative influences and contributions of nature (i.e., heredity and constitutional factors) and nurture (i.e., sociocultural and environmental factors) in the human development and the degree to which these sets of factors affect his/her eventual personality, abilities, and other characteristics. Part of this issue comprises ongoing questions concerning the extent to which individuals in society ascribe to one gender or another due to biological imperatives such as their sex or to psychosocial factors such as the way that they were raised. One of the assumptions that some people make regarding gender is that because human females in general tend to be not as strong as the male of the species, women are "inferior" in other ways as well. However, scientists have found no gender-based differences in general intelligence between the genders. This does not mean, of course, that every female is as smart as every male or vice versa, but that general intelligence and other mental traits tend to be normally distributed within each group. There is no scientific reason to believe that women and men (as genders) differ from each other on intelligence.

At first glance, it might seem relatively easy to sort out the influences of nature and nurture on the acquisition of gender identity and gender roles. After all, the argument might go, males and females and preprogrammed by the sex organs and hormones to behave in a certain way. Socialization then takes over and determines whether or not these biological predispositions are followed or ignored. However, the interaction between nature and nurture in regard to gender is much more complicated that that. Biosocial theories of gender posit that gender roles are the result of complex interactions between biological and social forces. This interaction helps explain why not every little girl grows up to be a stay-at-home mother or even a mother at all. In one example of a biosocial approach to gender, Udry (2000) hypothesizes that the effect of gender socialization during child

hood is constrained by biological processes that produce natural behavior predispositions.

Udry & Biologically Produced Behavior Predispositions

Basing his work on primate research that has been performed with rhesus monkeys, Udry performed a longitudinal study using secondary data and prenatal blood samples that had been collected in the Child Health and Development Study (CHDS) from 1960 through 1969. Udry selected subjects for his study who had mothers with at least two prenatal blood samples in the CHDS study and who had been interviewed themselves at that time. Of 470 daughters who were eligible for participation, 75 percent completed the questionnaire. In addition, subjects completed the Personality Research Form, the Adjective Check List, the Bem Sex Role Inventory, and the Strong Vocational Interest Inventory. Measures of adult gendered behavior included questions in four general factors:

- Importance of home (e.g., ever married to a man, number of live births, importance of career);
- Feminine interests (e.g., feminine appearance factor, likes baby care, score on discriminating factors on Strong);
- Job status (e.g., proportion female in current job and previous job);
- Masculinity-femininity (e.g., feminine and masculine scales on Bem, Adjective Check List, and Personality Research Form).

A 10 ml venous blood sample was also drawn from each subject.

Although produced in males in significantly greater amounts, androgens (male hormones that control the development and maintenance of masculine characteristics) are also produced in females by the adrenal glands and ovaries. One of the factors that may affect androgen levels in females is stress. The results of the study showed that mothers' prenatal hormone levels had an effect on the gendered behavior of their adult daughters. In particular, prenatal androgen exposure from the second trimester (but not the other two trimesters) affected gendered behavior, with women who had experienced greater prenatal exposure to androgens exhibiting more typically masculine or androgynous behavior as adults.

Applications

One of the venues in which Western society has seen great changes in gender roles over the past century is in the workplace. Traditionally, Western society typically assigned men to the role of breadwinner and head of the family while women were assigned the role of homemaker and mother. When women did work, it was historically in support roles: Secretaries, sales clerks, and other jobs that did not offer women the same type of upward mobility as did "male" jobs of business owners, executives, and so forth. This changed to a great extent as a result of the women's liberation movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Women came to believe that they could do anything a man could do, and started going into more technical and professional jobs than ever before. However, although some women today are firefighters, police officers, soldiers, and other professions that were traditionally concerned the domain of men, the fact remains that there is still not equity in many workplaces. Although in some cases this may be due to issues of sexual discrimination, in other cases the argument for the subordinate status of women in the workplace is based on biological factors. In general, these arguments revolve around three issues.

- First, it is argued in some situations that the physical capacities of women (e.g., their size, shape, and strength) make them less fit for some jobs that are traditionally performed by men.
- The second argument against gender equity in some workplaces is that many of the occupational illnesses experienced by women on the job may not, indeed, be job-related, but be due to their psychological and psychological makeup.
- The third argument that is often proffered to support seemingly discriminatory practices in the workplace is that women's reproductive biology makes them more likely to be unfit to work than men.

Physical Strength & Fitness

Objectively, many women are unqualified for jobs that require a great deal of physical strength or a larger than average size body (for a woman). For

example, to be a firefighter requires that the individual be able to haul and hold heavy fire hoses, carry people from burning buildings, and perform other tasks that many women cannot perform easily. The muscle mass of most women is less than that of most men, which means that they can lift less weight. That said, it must also be remembered that just because the average woman is not as strong as the average, it does not mean that no woman has the size and strength necessary to do the job of firefighter or other job requiring these characteristics. Similarly, not every man is physically capable of doing these jobs, either. Further, differences in strength between the sexes vary according the particular muscles and the demands under which they are placed rather than according to a general rule.

The issue of physical characteristics necessary to be a firefighter has gone all the way up to the Supreme Court of Canada. The precedent-setting case concerned a female forest firefighter who had previously been told by her supervisor that her performance was satisfactory for three years. However, when she was required to take a new physical fitness test of strength and aerobic fitness, she was able to meet the strength standards, but failed the 11-minute run to test aerobic fitness by 49 seconds. She was subsequently laid off by the government. She was able to win her appeal based on the argument that the requirement was discriminatory because the aerobic fitness test was not directly related to the job or to the specific tasks of the job. In addition, the test was more likely to exclude women than men.

Employment law can be a complicated thing. Although it might make sense to hire only the "best" person for the job regardless of sex, the reality is that other things need to be taken into account in making this decision. First, many jobs set minimum standards that a person needs to meet in order to be able to adequately do the job. For example, the job of warehouse worker might have a requirement that a person be able to lift 50 pounds to a height 7 feet. If the warehouse routinely receives 50 pound items that need to be placed on shelves at that height, this might be a bona fide requirement of the job. If, however, the warehouse only receives such items occasionally, this may not be considered a bona fide requirement for the job. In addition, if the worker never needs to be able to lift anything heavier than 50 pounds or higher than 7 feet, it does not matter whether or not someone can lift heavier items to greater heights: Meeting the minimum standard suffices. Further, most employment law requires that an organization

make reasonable accommodations for an individual so that s/he can meet the requirements of the job. In the example of the warehouse employee, this might mean that a shorter person could use a step stool in order to be able to reach the higher shelf. In the example of the 2.5 km running test for aerobic fitness discussed above, the test did not meet the requirement of being job related. The 2.5 km distance and concomitant 11 minute limit were randomly determined and not related to such job-requirements as the radius of forest fires or the speed at which they travel. Therefore, the test was determined not to be a bona fide requirement of the job.

Susceptibility to Occupational Illness

It has been repeatedly observed that although women tend to live longer than men and enjoy similar years of good health, women tend to report more illnesses than do men and take more advantage of health care services (Messing, Lippel, Demers, & Mergler, 2000). Further, although women tend to have significantly fewer accidents on the job than do men, they do tend to have more occupational illnesses such as chemical poisoning, cancer resulting from exposure to toxic substances, and musculoskeletal problems such as carpal tunnel syndrome and back problems. This has been used by some employers to discriminate against women in the workplace based on the assumption that they will be absent more often than male workers.

A number of hypotheses have been posited to explain these differences in occupational illness.

- The first of these is that occupational illnesses are psychologically-based and that women are more likely to report them.
- The second hypothesis is that these are, in fact, real illnesses and that women are more prone to developing them because of their biological make-up (e.g., hormones).
- A third hypothesis also grants that the illnesses are real, but posits that they are related to the work that women do in their homes rather than the work that they do on the job.
- Another hypothesis is that the illnesses are real and related to the working conditions that women encounter on their jobs.

- A final category of hypotheses posits that the increased occurrence of job-related illness is the result of an interaction between biological specificity and paid or unpaid working conditions.

At this time, research does not point to one of these hypotheses being superior to the other. The difficulty lies in the fact that the working conditions and job requirements vary widely for men and women and it is difficult to sort out their effects.

Fitness & Reproduction

As opposed to arguments that can be made about the differences in size and strength and their relationship with fitness for the job being relative, the differences between the sexes that are due to the nature of their reproductive systems are not. Although some organizations today offer paternity leave in addition to maternity leave, when given the opportunity to return to work early so that their husbands can stay home and bond with the new baby, most women still prefer to stay home themselves (Peters, 2005). Further, although some women may work up until the time that they go into labor, this tends to be the exception rather than the rule.

Although many women are able to continue to work well into their pregnancy, some work environments can negatively impact a fetus, particularly in the early part of the pregnancy when major organs are being established. However, it is not only in the early stages of pregnancy that damage from the external environment can occur: Miscarriage, low birth weight, malformation, or prematurity can be risks from toxic environments throughout a pregnancy. Further, it is not only toxic environments that have been found to have a negative effect on female reproduction. Factors such as extremes in temperature, shift work, heavy work, fast work speed, and irregular schedules can all affect fertility, menstrual regularity or pain, and fetal development.

Conclusion

The determination of one's gender is a complicated thing, involving both nature and nurture. Biologically, one's sex organs and concomitant sex hormones determine her/his biological sex. This, in turn, often affects the way that the individual is socialized so that s/he learns to behave in accordance with the gender expectations of society. Gender can be affected in

many more ways other than nature or nurture including the environment within the mother's womb to the extent to which one is encouraged to either conform or breakout of gender stereotypes. In addition, the obvious biological differences between females and males have led some people to make assumptions about the capabilities of individuals based on their sex. However, job requirements need to be demonstrably related to the job and developed so not to discriminate between women and men on factors that are not bona fide job requirements.

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Language, Gender & Reality

Noelle Vance

Overview

Every day in the media, articles abound describing the unique characteristics that make women women and men men. In magazines and on the Internet, the "dating beat" produces stories that provide insight into what men really want or what women really need. The underlying message is that there is something essentially different about women and men. That difference creates a mysteriousness about members of the opposite sex that must be uncovered in order for relationships between the sexes to become deeper and more satisfying. But are these differences inevitable? Does the physical reality of having different genitalia necessarily equate to having psychological, emotional and behavioral differences? Many sociologists, linguists, anthropologists and other researchers in fields related to the topic of language, gender and reality believe the answer is no. There is no one absolute, biologically-driven set of behavioral characteristics that define gender. Rather, they say, gender is a socially constructed concept. This means that our understanding of what gender is and what it means to behave as a member of a specific gender develops through our social interactions in a particular culture. Throughout time, different cultures have conceived of gender in various ways, providing evidence that gender is not biologically, but rather socially defined (Boswell, 2003; Lorber, 2003).

For instance, take the case of the introduction to this article in which it is proposed that there are two and only two genders that exist in our society.

Quite likely, many will read this and agree without second thought that this is indeed the case. Possibly, having already recognized your gender category, you are interested in learning more about how you differ from your gender opposite. This is almost certainly the case, unless, of course, you are one of the approximately 4% of individuals who is not born fully male or female (Fausto-Sterling, 2003). If you are one of these intersexuals, born with both female and male genitalia, and lucky enough to have been told of how you were surgically modified of this somewhat rare but perfectly natural biological/medical condition, you might have a different perspective. Perhaps you are more open to a definition of gender that includes more than two polar opposites. Maybe you readily agree that men and women can exhibit similar behaviors. Theoretically, you might be prone to accept the idea that whatever is socially constructed can be changed.

Social Constructionism

Social Constructionism is a theory that describes social realities as a product of human interaction. In other words, much of what we take for granted as being "real" was originally created by humans and only acquired the status of being "real" because individuals taught one another to see and accept it as such.

3 Stages of Construction

Researchers have defined three stages of the construction of social realities. The first stage is externalization. In this stage, cultural products are produced through human interaction. These products might be values or beliefs about a specific group, a social institution or cultural artifacts. For instance, gender as a cultural product is defined by a set of culturally-appropriate beliefs about what gender is, how members of a gender behave and must consequently be treated. Once these products are created, they exist external to their original creators; they are available to other members of the group.

The second stage is objectivism. In this stage, the products take on an objective reality that is separate from the people who created them. In other words, individuals lose sight of the fact that they created the product and begin to see the product as existing independently in the world regardless of human interactions.

The third stage is internalization. In this stage, members of the cultural group learn the "objective facts" about the cultural products in their society. These facts are passed down from generation to generation and between members of the group through a process called socialization. This is the process by which individuals learn the roles, rules and expectations that a society attaches to particular social positions (Ore, 2003). Because of socialization, members of the same cultural group learn to perceive the world in the same way and are not likely to question their beliefs unless they are challenged by a cultural/social system that has defined the world differently (Lorber, 2003).

The argument for gender as a social construction states that gender is just one category of identity which society creates, defines, and makes real through socialization processes. People are not born knowing how to act as members of a particular gender. Rather, they learn how to act through their interactions with other members of the culture. This learning process begins at birth when babies, who in a diaper alone might otherwise look genderless, are adorned in pink or blue to denote their sex. Dressed in their gender-marked color, others respond to them with language and actions they deem appropriate for girls or boys: "She's so pretty; look at her eyes!" or "Hey, little fella, are you an ornry one?" As children grow, they continue to learn the rules and expectations that society creates for them, essentially learning to "do gender." (Lorber, 2003; West & Zimmerman, 2002).

The Role of Language

Language plays an important role in these socialization processes. Language is the medium of interaction, and as such, it is the means through which social norms are transmitted. Through language, individuals are able to describe their perceptions of reality, and in doing so, they shape how others perceive and respond to them and the world. While language is certainly not the only social factor shaping reality – society's social institutions such as the family, education, economy, media, etc. all play their part– it is an extremely important one (Ore, 2003; Tannen, 1994).

Further Insights

How does language create gender? Such a question naturally entails a complex interplay of interactants, contexts, cultures, discourses, languages

and power-relationships, so there is no one easy answer. First, language allows us to name and categorize things. Once something is named, it can be investigated and facts and/or status can be associated with it. Consider the "invention of heterosexuality." Katz (2003) writes that prior to the late 1800s, heterosexuality was not the common sense way of perceiving relations between the sexes. Instead, couched in terms of the Victorian age, men and women aspired to be free from carnal lust, and sex was seen only as a means to reproduction, not pleasure. In the 1880s, however, new changes in the economy promoted a pleasure ethic that encouraged an exploration of human sexuality. The medical profession redefined sexual norms, "Doctors, who had earlier named and judged the sex-enjoying woman a 'nymphomaniac,' now began to label women's lack of sexual pleasure a mental disturbance, speaking critically, for example, of female 'frigidity' and 'anesthesia'" (Katz, 2003, p. 139). Along with the redefinition came new terminology.

The Language of Gender

The first uses of the term heterosexual came in 1892. Two different doctors used the term. Dr. James Kiernan described heterosexuals as having a mental condition impelling them towards both sexes. Dr. Krafft-Ebing defined heterosexual as an individual with feelings for members of the opposite sex, and as someone unique from homosexual (same-sex attraction) and pseudo-hermaphroditic (dual-sex attraction) individuals. Gradually, the medical profession came to define heterosexuality as an attraction to the opposite sex that embodied a perceived "need" (p. 141) for procreation. According to Katz, the emphasis on the oppositeness of the sexes reflected not only sex differences, but also anxieties about the changing role of women and men in an industrialized society. As the term became dominant within American discourse, it came to represent a concept for normalcy that separated it from other previously recognized sexual behaviors such as homosexuality and bisexuality. It also solidified the idea that male and female genders are opposite, a concept that continues to pervade the discourse on gender and gender role expectations today.

While it should be clear that language alone does not create reality, language and language use are widely perceived to reinforce individual perceptions of reality. Much of the sociological research on language and gender attempts to understand how language contributes to the main-

tenance of male-dominated power structures. One way this happens is through the marking of a language by masculine and feminine forms. In many languages, words are marked as either being masculine or feminine (e.g., In French, le chat is masculine while la chatte is feminine). Also in many languages—including English—male forms and pronouns have traditionally been used to describe both men alone as well as women. For instance, although not very common now, at one time the use of the pronoun "his" in the following sentence: A student should bring his paperwork to the admissions office would have been considered appropriate even if the student was female. The reason the example may seem inappropriate now is that feminist social constructionists have successfully made the argument – at least within academia – that the use of male-based generics constitutes a form of suppression of women. As Kleinman (2002) writes, when male-generics are used, women become an invisible, linguistic subset of men. When any group is made invisible by another, it becomes easier for the more powerful group to do what they want with the less powerful one. Kleinman, like other feminist social constructionists, supports replacing words that mark members of a category as specifically male with gender-neutral terms; for example, firefighter instead of fireman and chair instead of chairman. By changing language, she says, we begin to view our world differently and that can lead to changes in reality.

Linguistic Strategies

The quest to understand how language recreates systems of dominance has led researchers to examine the conversational interactions between males and females. The speculation has been that men and women, because they are perceived to be of opposite natures, may use linguistic strategies differently. In so doing, they may create and reinforce power differentials (Tannen, 1994). The results of this kind of research are a bit fuzzy. Are there differences between men and women's interactional styles? Frequently. For instance, in a study examining conversational cohesion between genders across four age groups, Tannen (1994) found striking differences in the way boys/men and girls/women oriented themselves to each other. Girls and women consistently oriented their bodies towards each other and gazed at each other more directly when talking. In contrast, boys and men oriented in parallel with one another and rarely made eye-contact. Other studies have noted differences in the use of linguistic strategies such as topic raising, interrupting, and using silence or indirectness.

But do these kinds of differences always reinforce male-dominant relations? No.

Tannen (1994), in her work on conversational styles and their consequences, says that there is no question that men tend to dominate women in society. However, one cannot ascribe the reason for that dominance to the use of any one linguistic or set of linguistic strategies. This, she says, is because linguistic strategies are neutral. They can be used for different purposes by different people in different contexts with different resulting effects. For example, in the context of male-female interactions, it has been found that men interrupt women more often than women interrupt men. Some researchers have used this finding to argue that men in these instances are dominating women because they are wresting the floor from the female speakers. Tannen disagrees with this interpretation. She writes that interruption does not necessarily entail power, which in linguistic terms is associated with asymmetrical relationships in which one participant is subordinate to another. Instead, she says interruption can also be a means of showing solidarity-associated with relationships of equality-and support.

Interactional Styles

As a case in point, Tannen conducted an in-depth analysis of friends interacting at a Thanksgiving Dinner. In the conversation between East-Coast Jewish participants and West-Coast Christian participants, two different conversational styles emerged. The East-Coast Jewish friends used what Tannen called a "high-involvement" style. In this style, speakers used frequent overlaps–beginning to speak over another speaker while that speaker continued talking–to demonstrate support and agreement. Though these overlaps would be considered "interruptions" in the traditional sense, she argues that they do not constitute a display of power but of solidarity.

Tannen contends that male-female interactional differences should be viewed as cultural differences. As when any two individuals with differing cultural conversational styles interact, miscommunication can occur. Frequently, the miscommunication works to the disadvantage of members of groups who are already stigmatized or who hold minority status in society. This is because those with dominant status control what is perceived to be the norm for interactional behavior.

Stereotypes

Differing styles become negatively stereotyped. For instance, Tannen refers to the stereotype of Jewish individuals as being pushy. This stereotype, she says, most likely formed as the result of Jews and non-Jews interacting with dissimilar styles. She points out that in the case of the Thanksgiving Dinner, those participants without a high involvement style indicated that they thought those with such a style dominated the conversation. Stereotypes, she says, are created when the majority blames the minority for the effect of differing interactional styles.

In the context of discussions about male and female power relationships in society and discourse, Tannen goes further to state that if it is wrong to blame the minority for interactional differences, then it must also be wrong to blame men for dominating women in a conversation when each participant is exhibiting a different interactional style.

Viewpoints

Where does the research on gender, language and reality fit in when contemplating the day-to-day interactions with regard to gender? Perhaps the greatest effect is to raise one's awareness that reality is not always the concrete, unchanging state of being that many would like it to be. Alternate ways of viewing the world are available and should be explored. One such alternate vision might be a change in the way the world defines gender. Maybe there should be more than two classifications of sex. This is indeed the proposal that Fausto-Sterling (2003) makes in suggesting that society should recognize five sexes. These would include male, female and intersexual beings with intersexuals further classified into three categories according to their physical characteristics. Another result of raised consciousness may be appropriate at the individual level. If one can change societal views, one can also change individual behaviors. When one finds oneself in a heated disagreement with a member of another sex, angered by something he or she has said or done that seems insensitive, instead of assigning blame to that individual for the insensitivity, ask how style differences are affecting the conversation. Maybe, by mutually deconstructing the situation and recognizing common ground behind the differences, participants can find a calmer, more culturally-sensitive point from which to move forward.

The theory of Social Constructionism is the predominant theory by which researchers in sociology, linguistics and anthropology explore the concept of gender. Using this theory, researchers have argued that there is no one set of biologically-determined behavioral characteristics that necessarily define an individual who is male or female. Instead, gender roles and behaviors result from processes of socialization. Because language and language use are important factors in socialization, these have been extensively studied. In particular, researchers have sought to define whether there are differences in male/female interactional styles, and if there are, how these may contribute to the maintenance of male-dominated power structures. Although differences in how males and females interact have been found, the argument has been made that the differences themselves do not cause male-domination. Instead, it has been suggested that dissimilar interactional styles should be viewed as cultural differences, and the consequences of the interaction of different styles should be examined.

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Gender Roles

Ruth A. Wienclaw

Overview

Gender roles have changed in many ways not only over the centuries, but within recent memory as well. In the 1950s, for example, little girls were said to be made of "sugar and spice and everything nice" and wore pastel organdy dresses and gloves to church. In the 1960s and 70s, however, this had all changed for many women, and bras were burned and patched jeans became de rigueur. In fact, each succeeding generation has brought with it differing expectations for how men and women are to act within society. Despite these changes, however, the truth is that even today, society still has expectations for how men and women are to act. Although we may be more open to exceptions than were past generations, there still are expected norms of behavior for the way that women and men act in society.

Gender vs. Sex

In biosocial terms, gender is not the same as sex. Gender refers to the psychological, social, cultural, and behavioral characteristics associated with being female or male. Gender is defined by one's gender identity and learned gender role. Sex in this context, on the other hand, refers to the biological aspects of being either female or male. Genetically, females are identified by having two X chromosomes and males by having an X and a Y chromosome. In addition, sex can typically be determined from either primary or secondary sexual characteristics. Primary sexual characteristics

comprise the female or male reproductive organs (i.e., the vagina, ovaries, and uterus for females and the penis, testes, and scrotum for males). Secondary sexual characteristics comprise the superficial differences between the sexes that occur with puberty (e.g., breast development, hip broadening for women and facial hair and voice deepening for men).

Biology as Gender Role Determinant

It is relatively easy to see that biology has an impact on gender and the subsequent actions and behaviors that are thought to be of relatively more importance for either females or males. For example, no matter how much a man might want to experience giving birth, the simple fact is that he cannot, except as an observer. From this fact it is easy (if not necessarily logical) to assume that biology is destiny and, therefore, women and men have certain unalterable roles in society (e.g., women are the keepers of home and hearth because of their reproductive role and men are the protectors and providers because of their relatively greater size and strength). However, before concluding that biology is destiny in terms of gender roles, it must be observed that not only do gender roles differ from culture to culture, but they also change over time within a given culture. Early 20th century American culture emphasized that women's role was in the home. As a result, many women did not have high school educations and never held jobs, but quite happily raised families and supported their husbands by keeping their households running smoothly. Nearly a century later, this gender role is no longer the norm (or at least not the only acceptable norm), and sounds quite chaffing to our more educated, career-oriented, 21st century ears. If biology were the sole governor of destiny for gender roles, however, such changes would not be possible.

Culture as Gender Role Determinant

In 21st century United States culture, gender roles continue to be in a state of flux to some extent. However, in many quarters, traditional gender roles still apply. For example, boys are often encouraged to become strong, fast, aggressive, dominant, and achieving. Traditional roles for girls, on the other hand, are to be sensitive, intuitive, passive, emotional, and interested in the things of home and family. However, these gender roles are culturally-bound. For example, in the Tchambuli culture of New Guinea, gender roles for women include doing the fishing and manufacturing as well as controlling the power and economic life of the community. In addition,

Tchambuli women also take the lead in initiating quartering behavior as well as sexual relations. Tchambuli men, on the other hand, are dependent, flirtatious, and concerned with their appearance; often adorning themselves with flowers and jewelry. In the Tchambuli culture, men's interests revolve around such activities as art, games, and theatrics (Coon, 2001). If gender roles were completely biologically determined, the wide variation between American and Tchambuli gender roles would not be possible. Therefore, it must be assumed that culture and socialization also play a part in gender role acquisition.

Society as Gender Role Determinant

Socialization is the process by which individuals learn to differentiate between what the society regards as acceptable versus unacceptable behavior so to act in a manner that is appropriate for the needs of the society. The socialization process for teaching gender roles begins almost immediately after birth. For example, infant girls are typically held more gently and treated more tenderly than are infant boys. The socialization process continues as the child grows, with both mothers and fathers usually playing more roughly with their male children than with their female children. As the child continues to grow and mature, little boys are typically allowed to roam a wider territory without permission than are little girls. Similarly, boys are typically expected to run errands earlier than are girls. Whereas sons are told that "real boys don't cry" and encouraged to control their softer emotions, girls are taught not to fight and not to show anger or aggression. In general, girls are taught to engage in expressive (i.e., emotion-oriented) behaviors while boys are taught to engage in instrumental (i.e., goal-oriented behaviors). When the disparity between the way they teach and treat their daughters and sons is pointed out to many parents, they often respond that the sexes are naturally different not only biologically but behaviorally as well.

Gender-Specific Toys

The teaching of gender roles, however, does not only occur through obvious verbal teaching from parents and other elders in society: It also occurs in more subtle ways as well. Many people have observed that children's toys are strongly gender-typed. Girls are often given "girl" toys such as dolls, play kitchens, and other gender-typed toys with which to play and to learn socially-approved, traditional gender roles for when they grow up. Boys,

on the other hand, are often given sports equipment, tools, and toy trucks with which to play, all toys that help them prepare to act within traditional male gender roles when they grow up. Although nothing may ever be said to children about the gender-appropriateness of these toys, by the time they reach school age, research shows that many children have already come to believe that professions such as physician, pilot, and athlete are the domain of men while women are supposed to have careers as nurses, secretaries, or mothers (Coon, 2001).

To investigate the influence of gender-specific toys in the development of gender roles, Caldera & Sciaraffa (1998) performed a research study with 42 pairs of parents and toddlers (aged 18 to 23 months). Each dyad was videotaped while playing with a box of toys that contained a large baby doll that cried, a small baby doll with a bottle, and a soft, stuffed clown. The baby dolls were classified for the study as stereotypical girl toys while that clown was considered to be more appropriate for boys. The parents were told to play with the toys in the box for at least four minutes. The experimenters had three hypotheses.

- First, it was hypothesized that dolls would elicit more doll-appropriate play and the stuffed clown would elicit more object-appropriate play.
- Second, it was hypothesized that mothers would initiate higher rates of doll-appropriate play with daughters and fathers would initiate higher rates of object-appropriate play with the stuffed clown.
- Finally, it was hypothesized that girls would be more likely to initiate doll-play than would boys.
- These predictions were generally supported. The researchers concluded that giving stuffed toys to boys is not the same as giving them baby dolls. Further, by giving a toddler a stuffed toy (as opposed to a baby doll), one is not encouraging traditional feminine gender stereotyped play.

Heredity & Environment

There has been ongoing debate for years regarding whether gender roles are a biological imperative or are the result of socialization. As the illus-

tration of the Tchambuli gender roles demonstrates, it is difficult if not impossible to argue that gender roles are completely biologically determined. However, this is not to say that there is not a biological component in their acquisition. Research suggests, for example, that the exposure of female fetuses to androgens (male hormones) during the second trimester results in individuals more likely to break out of traditional female gender stereotypes (Udry, 2000). Mitchell, Baker, and Jacklin (1989) performed a twin study with pre-adolescents and adolescents to attempt to determine the relative contributions of genetic and environmental factors in the development of femininity and masculinity in children. The sample included both monozygotic pairs of twins (i.e., identical twins with the same genetic background) and dizygotic pairs of twins (i.e., fraternal twins with similar genetic backgrounds). Data on femininity and masculinity were collected by asking subjects to respond to two standardized instruments of personality and self-perception. The analysis of the data suggested that both heredity and environment were important in the development of gender identity. Genetics was found to play a significant role in the acquisition of gender identity (accounting for 20 to 48 percent of the observed variation) as was environmental influences (which accounted for the remaining 52 to 80 percent of the variation).

Applications

Androgyny in Contemporary Society

When it comes to gender roles, traditional instrumental behavior for men and traditional expressive behavior for women are not the only two options available, nor are they the only two options that are accepted and tolerated by society today. Women can become pilots and nuclear physicists or be business owners or politicians without most people thinking that they are accomplishing anything more out of the ordinary than if a man had done the same thing. Similarly, men are calmly accepted in today's society as artists and poets, and are also nurses and social workers. In fact, 21st century Western society is very accepting of the concept of androgyny, or the presence of both feminine and masculine characteristics or traits as traditionally identified in one individual.

It has been posited that today's complex society is best supported by flexible rather than traditional gender roles. So, for example, in addition to being

nurturing, caring, and displaying expressive behaviors, girls need also to learn instrumental behaviors such as being assertive, self-reliant, and independent when called for by the situation. Similarly, boys should not only display instrumental behaviors such as being goal-oriented and aggressive, but should learn to also be compassionate, sensitive, and yielding when called for by the situation. It can be argued that such blurring of the lines between traditional gender roles is good for both the individual and for the society. When women display more instrumental behaviors, they are able to use their talents more fully than if they restrict themselves to traditional gender roles of wife, mother, or support person. Further, by learning to display instrumental behaviors, women can be better able to take care of themselves when a man is not available to do so (as is necessary in many cases under the paradigm of traditional gender roles). Similarly, this situation is also good for society because it widens the pool of talent for many jobs and allows people – no matter their sex – to fulfill the role best suited for them.

The same is true when men learn to be more androgynous and demonstrate more expressive behavior when appropriate (e.g., fathers can be more nurturing to their mates and children or can learn to express their emotions and communicate more fully). In some ways, the move toward more androgynous gender roles in itself reinforces the need for androgynous gender roles by making it easier for either sex to break out of the traditional gender stereotype. Another way androgyny in gender roles is good for both the individual and for society is that androgynous individuals have been shown to be more adaptable. Particularly in today's rapidly changing society with its new technological demands and opportunities, faster communications channels, and globalization, adaptability is a characteristic greatly to be desired. Research has shown that androgynous individuals tend to be more flexible when coping with difficult situations and also tend to be more satisfied with their lives (Coon, 2001).

Conclusion

Virtually every culture in the world has gender role expectations for how women and men should act. Sometimes these are in line with biological factors and the extrapolation of reproductive roles to other areas in society (e.g., traditional Western gender roles where the woman is nurturing and expressive and the man is aggressive and instrumental). However, such

roles are not the result of biological destiny, as the reversed roles (at least from a Western perspective) of the Tchambuli people in New Guinea illustrate. Further, individuals in postmodern 21st century society are increasingly displaying androgynous gender roles in which they are either expressive or instrumental as the situation demands.

Gender, however, is more than a socialized role that one learns; it is also part of one's identity and self-concept. Neither the traditional Western gender roles of expressive females and instrumental males nor the New Guinea Tchambuli gender roles of instrumental females and expressive males are inherently good or bad or even better than the other. Similarly, although there is evidence that androgynous gender roles can be good for both the individual and for society, they, too, are not inherently superior. Although some observers advocate for traditional roles and others advocate for androgynous roles or even anti-traditional roles, in the end, it is what works best for the individual and for society that is important. Families can be functional in any of these settings, and so can societies. More research is needed so that we can better understand the biological and social components of gender roles, the way that gender roles affect one's self-concept and mental health, and how gender roles change over time to support the needs of society.

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Gender Socialization

Jennifer Kretchmar

Overview

As topics of study, both gender and gender socialization are relatively new areas of interest within sociology, and the social sciences more generally. As Chafetz (1999) explains, "with few exceptions, the best that can be said for our classical tradition [of sociology] is that gender issues were peripheral" (p. 4). With the advent of the women's movement in the late twentieth century, however, feminists began criticizing the academic disciplines for their 'male bias' and demanded that women be included as subjects of study. As a result of their efforts, courses on the sociology of women were added to the core curriculum in what became known as the "add women and stir approach" (Wharton, 2005, p. 5). Gradually, however, the sociology of women morphed into the sociology of gender with the recognition of gender as relational; that is, sociologists began to recognize that "understanding what women are or can be requires attention to what men are or can be" (Wharton, 2005, p. 5).

The increasing focus on gender introduced as many new questions as it answered. When do children first develop a gender identity, recognizing themselves as a member of one sex group or the other? Are our behaviors as males and females determined by our environment – through culture, our interaction with others, our social institutions – or are they determined by biology and genetics? Sociologists admit that the answer to such ques-

tions remain elusive. Stockard (1999) writes, "the extent to which physiological factors influence differences between the sex groups is an active and contentious issue and will probably not be resolved any time soon" (p. 217). Nevertheless, sociologists believe that social influences matter most, and as a result, have turned their attention to the study of gender socialization, the "processes through which individuals take on gendered qualities and characteristics…and learn what their society expects of them as males or females" (Wharton, 2005, p. 31).

Definition of Gender

One of the first steps sociologists take in defining gender is to distinguish it conceptually from the term sex. Burn (1996) writes, "In most contexts, psychologists prefer the word 'gender' because it includes the idea that many differences between men and women are culturally created while the word 'sex' implies that the differences are caused directly by biological sex" (p. xix). Thus, when referring to anatomical or reproductive differences between men and women, many social scientists use the term sex; when referring to differences not directly caused by biology – for example, different hair or clothing styles of men and women – social scientists prefer the term gender.

Unfortunately, the distinction between sex and gender is not quite so clear. Whereas defining key conceptual terms typically clarifies, the varying definitions of sex and gender often muddy the waters. As Wharton (2005) explains, "there is no firm consensus on the appropriate use of these two terms among gender scholars. Some reject the term 'sex' altogether and refer only to 'gender.' Others use the terms almost interchangeably…" (p. 18). The confusion stems largely from the varying degrees of emphasis placed on biology and culture in understanding what it means to be male and female. On one end of the spectrum are those who believe gender is entirely socially constructed, and therefore not grounded in any physiological reality (Wharton, 2005). On the other end are those who believe the two sexes are a biological fact. And in the middle is the biosocial perspective, the idea that gender is constructed within limits already established by our biology.

Although most agree that biology and society interact to shape human behavior, sociologists place their emphases on the social influences on our

behavior. Accordingly, one of the working definitions of gender used by many sociologists features three characteristics:

- Gender as a process rather than a fixed state;
- Gender as a characteristic of society as well as individuals; and
- Gender as a system that creates differences and inequalities (Wharton, 2005).

In addition, sociologists often study gender using different frameworks. Some emphasize gender as a characteristic of the individual, some as a product of social interactions, and others as a characteristic of social institutions (Wharton, 2005). Wharton (2005) explains that all frameworks are "necessarily partial and selective" and that none alone is sufficient for understanding gender. Those who are interested in socialization processes, however, usually study gender as a characteristic of the individual; as such, much of the theoretical work on socialization is drawn from psychology as well as sociology (Burn, 1996; Wharton, 2005).

Theoretical Approaches to Gender Socialization

Several theories that attempt to explain gender socialization – social learning theory, and gender schema theory, for example - fall within the category of learning theories more broadly (Wharton, 2005). Such theorists understand the processes by which children learn gender appropriate behavior in the same way children learn in general. Other theories focus on gender and sexuality exclusively. Psychoanalytic theory, for example, emphasizes the unconscious processes involved in developing gender identity. Stockard (1999) suggests that all three theories help explain the process of gender socialization, even though evidence for some – as comprehensive, stand-alone, explanatory theories – is lacking.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory, most closely associated with the work of psychologist Albert Bandura, is an outgrowth of the behaviorist tradition, which defines learning in terms of stimulus and response. According to this perspective, children are reinforced – both positively and negatively – for gender appropriate and inappropriate behavior (Burn, 1996; Wharton,

2005). A young boy playing with dolls, for example, might be ignored by his father; the lack of attention serves as a negative reinforcement, so that the boy eventually stops playing with dolls altogether. Or, parents might hug a young girl who cries – the hug serving as a positive reinforcement – thereby increasing the likelihood the girl will cry again in the future. In this way, the theory suggests, boys and girls learn which behaviors are expected of them. Boys learn that playing with dolls is 'inappropriate'; girls learn that expressing emotion is consistent with being female. Social learning theory also suggests that children learn by observing and imitating the behavior of same-sex adults. A young girl learns what it means to be female by observing her mother, whereas a boy learns what it means to be male by observing his father.

First proposed in the 1950s and 1960s, social learning theory has not withstood the test of time. Research has shown, for example, that parents who themselves exhibit sex stereotypical behaviors are not more likely than other parents to have children who exhibit strong sex stereotypical behaviors, thus discrediting the idea that children imitate same-sex adults (Stockard, 1999). In addition, children – and especially boys – display gender appropriate behaviors even in the absence of reinforcement (Wharton, 2005). Finally, evidence is mixed with regard to the extent to which parents reinforce male and female children differently. All of which suggests, critics argue, that children are more actively engaged in their socialization than the theory acknowledges. Wharton (2005) writes, "To simplify somewhat, we can say that social learning theory tends to view children (and other targets of socialization) as lumps of clay that are modeled by their environment" (p. 32).

Cognitive Development Theory

Cognitive theories of gender socialization offer a different perspective, emphasizing the developmental nature of the socialization process, as well as the active role the child plays in the construction of his or her gender identity (Stockard, 1999). Lawrence Kohlberg, best known for his theory of moral development, was one of the first to apply theories of cognitive development to gender identity. Specifically, he argued that "children's views of appropriate gender roles ...change as they grow older, reflecting their changing cognitive development" (Stockard, 1999, p. 218). Younger children between the ages of five and eight tend to have the most rigid

definitions of gender, and apply the most severe sanctions for violations of gender norms. As they age, however, children are able to develop more complex and flexible definitions of gender (Martin & Ruble, 2004). In general, however, Kohlberg believed that once children develop gender constancy – the recognition of themselves as male or female and the stable, unchanging nature of their gender – they become more motivated to demonstrate gender appropriate behavior (Wharton, 2005).

Critics of Kohlberg's theory pointed to contradictory evidence – the fact that children demonstrate gender-typed behavior as young as two or three years of age, long before they develop gender constancy – to discredit his theory (Martin & Ruble, 2004). They also argued that Kohlberg's theory failed to explain why children use gender, rather than some other construct, to organize their view of the world (Wharton, 2005).

Gender Schema Theory

In response, Sandra Bem introduced a second cognitive theory of gender socialization known as gender schema theory. According to Bem, in cultures where distinctions between men and women are emphasized, children learn to use gender as a way to process information about the world. The cognitive structures, or gender schemas, help children organize information, and maintain a sense of consistency and predictability (Stockard, 1999). For Bem, two characteristics of gender schemas are particularly noteworthy. She argues that gender schemas tend to be polarized, so that children believe "what is acceptable and appropriate for females is not acceptable or appropriate for males (and vice versa)" (Wharton, 2005, p. 34). And secondly, gender schemas tend to be androcentric; that is, children internalize the message that males and masculinity are the standard or norm, and are more highly valued than females and femininity (Wharton, 2005).

Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalytic theory differs from both social learning and cognitive developmental theories in two important respects; it isn't a learning theory, and it suggests that some aspects of gender identity result from unconscious psychological processes, rather than more conscious processes such as modeling or actively seeking information consistent with schemas (Wharton, 2005). The psychoanalytic approach was founded by Sigmund

Freud, but its application to gender socialization was more fully outlined in the late 1970s by Nancy Chodorow. For Chodorow, the key factor in the development of gender identity is the role of the mother as the primary caregiver (Stockard, 1999). Because children spend more time with mothers than fathers, Chodorow argues, their first identification is with the feminine. Eventually, however, children need to develop a sense of themselves as separate, as individual identities. For girls, the process is easier because by identifying with the mother she has already learned how to be female. Boys however, in developing a male gender identity, must first reject their identification with the feminine. "Because the boy knows most intimately what is feminine," Stockard (1999) writes, "he comes to define masculine as being 'not feminine'" (p. 222). In the process of separation, boys often learn to devalue femininity as well. The psychoanalytic theory, like other socialization theories, has not escaped criticism. Gender scholars argue that it's difficult to verify empirically, that it reinforces gender stereotypes – that women seek connection, whereas men prefer separation, for example – and that it places too much emphasis on the unconscious (Wharton, 2005).

Further Insights

Theory has been used to conduct gender socialization research in many ways. Various themes introduced above – reinforcement, the child as active participant in the socialization process, and developmental changes – will be discussed in relation to research findings. Some findings are more conclusive than others. The gender-segregated nature of childhood play, for example, is demonstrated repeatedly in study after study. The belief that parents treat male and female children differently, however, has been met with mixed results. As a relatively new field of study, gender socialization research will continue to evolve.

Parents as Socialization Agents

According to those who study gender using the individualist framework – gender as a characteristic of the person – parents are believed to be the most significant source of gender socialization. In one of the first studies to document the differential treatment of male and female infants, researchers asked parents to indicate the extent to which a list of adjectives described their babies (Rubin et al., 1974, as cited in Wharton, 2005). Parents

of female infants selected adjectives such as 'soft,' 'fine-featured,' 'little,' and 'inattentive' more often than parents of male infants. The researchers concluded that "because the infants were physically very similar…parents were not reacting to real differences between children as much as they were applying gender stereotypes that could possibly result in differential treatment of their male and female children" (Wharton, 2005, p. 124). More recent research continues to document differences. Clearfield and Nelson (2006) showed that mothers engage in more conversation with female infants and also interact more with female infants. Even first-hand observations of new parents often reveal differential treatment. As Coltrane (1998) writes, "male and female infants are similar to one another, but most adults go to great lengths to make them appear dissimilar" (as cited in Wharton, 2005, p. 123).

On the other hand, a significant amount of evidence suggests that parents do not treat male and female children differently. Lytton and Romney (1991, as cited in Wharton, 2005) conducted a meta-analysis of over 150 published studies and concluded that parental treatment of boys and girls has become significantly less differentiated over the last sixty years. Their research suggests that in areas such as "encouragement of achievement or dependency, warmth of interactions, restrictiveness, and disciplinary practices, parents tend to treat boys and girls similarly" (Stockard, 1999, p. 217).

Although much of the research on parent socialization is ambiguous, it is more conclusive in one respect – with regard to parental attitudes toward toys, games, and activities. Research demonstrates that when given a choice, parents tend to offer different toys to boys and girls (Stockard, 1999, Wharton, 2005). They are more likely to choose a football for a boy, for example, and a doll for a girl. In addition, the choice of toy influences the types of activities parents engage in with their children; parents' play with boys – and especially the play of fathers – tends to be more physical, rough-house play (Wharton, 2005). Research also shows that parents have different attitudes toward cross-gender play for boys and girls. As Freeman (2007) notes, "researchers who describe adults'…responses to cross-gender play consistently report that boys who engage in 'girls' games' are more likely to be criticized by parents [and] teachers…than are girls who enjoy activities and materials labeled as 'for boys'" (p. 58). Additionally, it appears that fathers react most negatively to cross-gender play, especially

when engaged in by their sons. Such evidence supports the notion that gender roles for girls and women are expanding, while those for boys and men are narrowing (Freeman, 2007).

Peer Group Socialization

Gender scholars who study peer group interaction bring a different perspective to our understanding of socialization. Too much socialization research, they argue, has been conducted using the 'transmission model' of socialization – the idea that socialization is a hierarchical, top-down process in which adults socialize children (Tholander, 2002). They prefer a dialogical model instead, studying the ways in which children socialize one another. Those who study peer groups view gender through a different lens – focusing on interactions between children, rather than on characteristics of the individual children themselves (Tholander, 2002).

One of the most consistent findings in peer group socialization research is the sex-segregated nature of childhood play. Both boys and girls, beginning by age three, prefer same-sex playmates (Wharton, 2005). This preference is found across various cultures, is not influenced by adults, and generally lasts until adolescence. Although the preference first appears in girls, boys become more rigid about gender segregation than girls, and are less likely to interact with adults as well. As a result of this self-segregation, boys and girls learn about what it means to be male and female from same-gender peers. Stockard (1999) refers to this as a 'cult of childhood;' a pattern of games, activities, norms, and roles passed down from one generation to the next. It is not easily influenced by adults, and is highly gendered, with distinct roles for males and females, and severe sanctions against those who violate them.

Research provides one possible explanation for gender-segregated play; boys and girls play very differently, and therefore may actively seek others whose play style is most similar (Stockard, 1999). Specifically, girls tend to form close, intimate friendships with one or two other girls. They are more likely to take turns speaking, and express agreement. Boys, on the other hand, play in larger groups, engage in rougher activities that take up more space, and use interruptions, threats, and boasts (Stockard, 1999). As Stockard (1999) explains, "both boys and girls successfully influence others in their interactions; they simply tend to do so through differently

styles" (p. 221). While girls successfully influence other girls, they find it more difficult to influence boys; as a result, Maccoby (1990) suggests, girls intentionally avoid boys, thereby reinforcing gender segregation (as cited in Stockard, 1999). The theory is less successful, however, in explaining why boys avoid girls.

On a final note, it is important to acknowledge that peers, like parents, significantly influence cross-gender behavior. Just as parents have more negative attitudes toward cross-gender behavior for boys, peers also seem to 'punish' boys for engaging in girl behaviors and activities more than they punish girls for behaving like boys. The term tomboy, for example, was found to be a label rarely used to describe girls who act like boys, even though it was widely understood; on the other hand, the use of the term 'sissy' was widespread for boys acting like girls, and was used consistently as a negative label (Thorne, 1993, as cited in Wharton, 2005). As Wharton (2005) concludes, "Girls seem to face less pressure than boys to conform to gender stereotypes, are more likely than boys to cross gender boundaries, and girls receive less negative attention than boys when they do participate in activities or games with the other gender" (p. 133).

Media Socialization

In addition to parents and peers, the media – television, computer games, and literature – also communicate ideas about what is gender appropriate behavior for boys and girls. Research has shown that children's books, for example, are beginning to portray girls and boys in non-stereotypical ways; however, many of the books that predate this change are still available in libraries and book stores everywhere. These classic books tend to portray girls in traditionally gender-appropriate ways – doing household chores, for example – while showing boys engaging in a wider variety of activities. They also show girls holding household cooking and cleaning objects, while they are more likely to show boys using outdoor tools or building things (Burn, 1996).

Content analyses of television shows also reveal a significant male bias in programming. Male characters typically outnumber female characters, female characters are significantly younger than male characters, and female characters are less likely to be portrayed as working women, according to several studies conducted in the early 1990s (Burns, 1996).

Atkins (1991) reviewed over 500 television characters and concluded that "the vast majority [of female characters] conformed to male fantasies of scantily clad half-wits who need to be rescued" (as cited in Burns, 1996, p. 15). In commercials too, the voice of authority is typically a male voice, and men and women are portrayed stereotypically. Researchers estimate that by the time children graduate from high school they will have spent more time watching television than in the classroom (Davis, 1991, as cited in Burns, 1996). Indeed, correlational studies show that children who watch more TV tend to have more sex-stereotypical views of men and women; other studies show that watching sex-stereotypical models on TV influences choice of toys, career aspirations, and self-esteem (Burns, 1996).

Viewpoints

One of the major assumptions adopted by scholars who study gender from the individualist view is that differences between men and women are greater than differences within each group (Wharton, 2005). Indeed, much of the research on gender socialization attempts to explain how men and women become different. What this perspective obscures, many argue, is the reality that men and women are more alike than they are unalike (Burn, 1996). Even Maccoby and Jacklin's 1974 classic The Psychology of Sex Difference, which was intended to be a catalogue of differences between men and women, concluded that "differences between men and women were fewer and of less magnitude than many had assumed" (Wharton, 2005, p. 24). Feminists argue that the emphasis on differences is problematic, because such differences have often been used to justify unequal treatment (Wharton, 2005). Demonstrating similarities, on the other hand, could help eradicate gender inequality.

For feminists, however, emphasizing our similarities isn't just about eradicating unequal treatment of women. As mentioned in the introduction, the sociology of gender has evolved from its focus on women, to a focus on men and masculinity as well. The way in which we are socialized, and the roles and behaviors we adopt as a result, feminists argue, aren't just limiting to women, they're limiting to men as well (Burn, 1996). Watts and Borders (2005) document, for example, that boys begin feeling gender role conflict during their teenage years. They experience pressure to succeed and to dominate, and intentionally avoid expressions of affection

with peers, believing the only appropriate emotion they should express is anger. Researchers have begun looking for a link between gender role conflict in males and some of the academic problems they experience, like poor grades and dropping out of school (Watts & Border, 2005).

In the end, one of the basic intentions of gender scholars is to bring to our attention a topic that is often taken for granted. Because gender is such a pervasive aspect of social life, in many ways it goes unnoticed. As Wharton (2005) writes, "challenging the taken-for-granted is one essential component of the sociological perspective. In fact, sociologists argue that what people view as unproblematic and accept as 'the way things are' may be most in need of close, systematic scrutiny" (p. 2). Indeed, by demonstrating the ways in which we learn to become men and women – through parents, peers, and media – and the ways in which such roles and behaviors might be limiting, gender scholars suggest a different, and perhaps, better social arrangement.

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Deviance & Gender

Sherry Thompson

Overview

By definition, deviance is any action or activity that differs from accepted social standards or what society deems to be normal (Webster's New World College Dictionary, 2001). Early studies on deviance largely ignored the intersections of deviance and gender in society. However, recent researchers have been able to better understand and define deviance by examining the points where deviance and gender converge.

Upon hearing the phrase, deviant behavior, most people immediately think of criminals. And when speaking of criminals, most people will envision males as the criminals. In fact, males are more often found to be involved in criminal behaviors than females. For research purposes, criminality is often divided into various categories such as violent crimes, substance abuse crimes, and property crimes; all in which males tend to dominate the landscape (Baron, 2003). Yet, a lot of non-criminal behavior is also, by definition, deviant (or was considered deviant in the past and is now considered to be acceptable behavior). Defiant behavior, rebellious behavior, causing harms to oneself, and acting outside of roles assigned by society are all considered to be deviant behavior. Due to its location in social attitudes and practices, the definition of deviance changes as society evolves. For example, women who chose to exert themselves in an effort to preserve their constitutional rights were considered to be social deviants from the

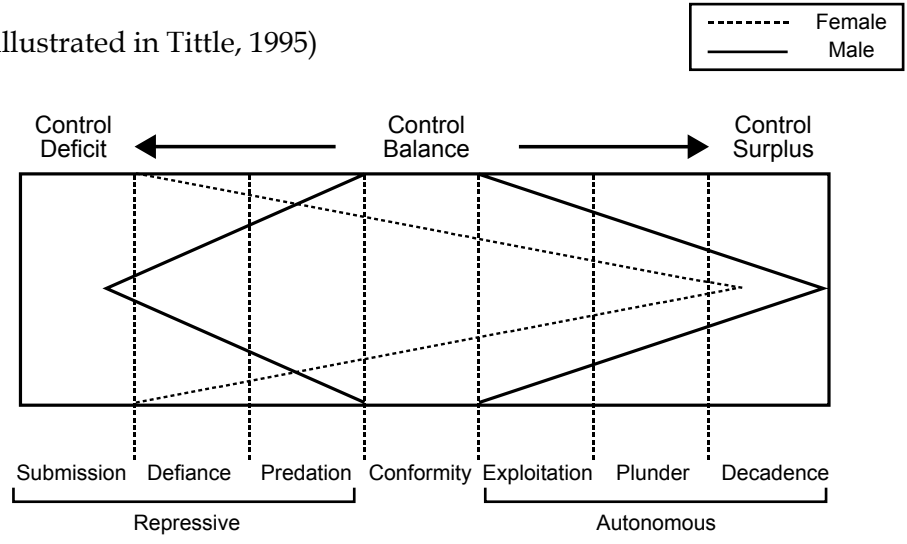
inception of the United States until the early 19th century (Kerber, 2000). As society changed and accepted women's claims to personal rights and freedoms, the definition of deviance slowly began to exclude these women.

Today what is considered to be deviant behavior continues to evolve. Consider how views of homosexuality have changed over the past decade. Once considered deviant behavior by the majority of people and the American Psychological Association (APA); it is now viewed as personal choice by many people in society and the APA has dropped it from its diagnostic manual (Cummings, 2006). The evolving nature of what is considered to be deviant makes deviance a bit difficult to understand from a sociological perspective. However, understanding deviance and its impacts on people within a society helps to inform how people deal with the roles imposed on them by society and how society works to maintain these social roles. Hence, many theories of deviance have developed and many researchers have examined the differences in perceived deviance in males and females. Some of the more prevalent theories here discussed are:

- Control Balance Theory;
- Self Control Theory;
- Differential Association Theory; and
- Strain Theory

Figure 1: Control Ratio Distribution Based on Gender

(as illustrated in Tittle, 1995)



Applications

Control Balance Theory

This theory, devised by Charles Tittle, (1995) claims that the types of deviance in which one engages is based on a control ratio (i.e., the amount of control that one is under as compared to the amount of control commands). Control is placed along a gradient line wherein in too little control lies to the left of center (i.e., a control deficit) and too much control lies to the right of center (i.e., a control surplus). It is only when achieving a balance in the center of this gradient that a person will be motivated to conform to social conventions. Tittle hypothesized that when deviance is examined along lines of gender, most females will be subjected to constraints in their ability to exercise control and will most likely violate social conventions via predation or defiance. On the converse, males will experience imbalances which are more centered toward an actual balance of control and will most likely violate social conventions via predation or exploitation (Tittle, 1995; Hickman & Piquero, 2001).

In other words, because women are relegated to social positions in which they (relative to males) are forced into a role of submission, they are more likely to violate social conventions by defying the structures which control them or by manipulating the structure to get what they want. Men, who are located in social positions which largely afford them control or dominance, are more likely to manipulate the social structure or engage in the outright exploitation of others to get what they want. Figure 1, below, illustrates this hypothesis.

Control Balance theorists believe deviance will occur when all three of the following factors are present:

- The person is motivated toward deviance by virtue of temperament or situational circumstances;
- Constraint is perceived as low (i.e., low risk of being caught or punished); and
- Opportunity is present.

If one of these factors is absent, the deviance is less likely to occur. This theory clearly reveals the convergence of deviance and gender by taking

into account the differences in how females and males are socialized in society. Females are generally socialized to care for others, consider the needs of the group as opposed to the individuals, and to provide support and maintenance for the social group. Males are generally socialized to a position of dominance and privilege within the society in which competition and acquisition of material goods are valued. This position, though providing greater motivations for males to conform (thus maintaining a status quo in which they are centered) also moves them to commit acts of deviance that are more often categorized as criminal activity within the society (Beutel & Marini, 1995).

Self-Control Theory

This theory purports to have identified one of the major causes of deviant behavior. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) hypothesize that the amount of self-control one has is predictive of how likely one will engage in socially deviant behavior (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). They suggest that people who are "insensitive, physical (as opposed to mental), risk-taking, short-sighted, and nonverbal" (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990, p. 90) will have lower self-control than other people in the general population. Intuitively this makes sense. A person with low self-control would seem more likely to break a law or engage in behavior that is exciting or gratifying without a thought of future consequences.

Self-control theorists suggest that propensity for self-control is established during childhood, is correlated to the quality of child rearing practiced by parents, and is unlikely to change much during one's lifetime. They also claim parents must exert strong influence over a child's level of self-control by setting and adhering to strict behavioral expectations up until the child is eight years old (Unnever, Cullen, & Pratt, 2003). An adult with low levels of self-control will have difficulty refraining from temptations that arise when working to create long term personal or working relationships within a societal structure. People with low self-control will not have the fortitude to pass up opportunities to cheat on spouses, lie for self-gain, steal from work, or execute other breaches of the social contract.

This theory has been challenged and tested several times in the past two decades and remains a valid predictor of social deviance (Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Grasmick, Tittle, Bursik, & Arneklev, 1993; Hay, 2001). A few studies

have indicated gender to be a significant, indirect factor correlated with criminal and delinquent behavior (Unnever, Cullen, & Pratt, 2003; Tittle, Ward, & Grasmick, 2003). It is suggested that parents are more attentive and controlling of their daughters' behaviors due to their more vulnerable position in society; supporting the finding that females are involved in fewer criminal offenses while manifesting similar levels of self-control as boys (Tittle, Ward, & Grasmick, 2003; Gibbs, Giever, & Martin, 1998; LaGrange & Silverman, 1999). Notably, these studies focused more on criminal behaviors than other types of socially deviant behaviors (e.g., smoking, eating disorders, alternative lifestyles, etc.). It has been noted in the literature that people reporting low self-control tend to form friendship groups with similar people and they tend to engage in deviant behaviors as a group (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). This observation led to the development of a theory that deviance is a product of socialization (i.e., social learning) and group association known as the Differential Association Theory.

Differential Association Theory

Older people always have a saying which helps describe what they have learned from life experience, such as, "Birds of a feather flock together;" meaning people who are similar will hang out with each other. That is the gist of the Differential Association Theory, except the theory notes that people tend to adopt the behaviors of the group (rather than deviant people seeking out groups who are deviant). This is more a case of peer influence than one of peer pressure. People who hang out with each other will come to adopt the attitudes and behaviors of those with whom they associate: social deviance is learned from direct and indirect association with one's friends (Akers & Lee, 1996; Sutherland, 1940). In other words, one will adopt the deviant attitudes and behaviors displayed by the majority of one's friends and this adoption will usually begin with forms of mild experimentation that are rewarded and encouraged by the peer group. Once mild forms of deviance have been noticed by other groups, those groups will come to exclude the person exhibiting the deviance from further membership; leaving one largely associating with the original group.

Unfortunately, the "learning" referred to in Social Learning theories, under which Differential Association is grouped, often means the person is being excluded from groups who find the deviant behavior unacceptable.

Instead of learning more socially accepted behaviors, the deviant person will be forced to seek out peers who manifest similar behaviors (Akers & Lee, 1996). People will seek out friendship groups whose members generally agree on what is deemed to be fun, acceptable behavior. Good students will join clubs that honor and value good students while religious students seek out groups which study and value religion. Adventure seekers will locate themselves in a group of friends who skateboard, snowboard, and surf while Emo kids will hang out and listen to their own brand of alternative music while discussing who is into cutting.

Once a person has found a group based on certain interests and proclivities, the group will help to socialize that person to the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors it believes to be normal (or comfortable) while providing opportunities to experiment with and refine their participation in those behaviors. It is in this way a person with tendencies toward deviant behaviors will become involved in a group with similar interests (e.g., penchant for excitement, anti-establishment) and attributes (e.g., easily frustrated, short sighted, impulsive) and will come to adopt the attitude of the group majority. A deviant peer group is likely to encourage similar deviant and criminal behaviors within the group while seeking opportunities to exhibit those behaviors (Evans, Cullen, Burton, Dunaway, & Benson, 1997).

Males tend to gravitate toward the development of large groups which are governed by physical and competitive interactions. Females tend to interact in smaller groups which are organized around cooperation and relationship maintenance. This difference in associative preference tends to provide more opportunity and support for deviant and criminal behavior in males (Broidy & Agnew, 1997). Additionally, females are more likely to adopt the deviant behaviors of their love interests than are males. Some critics of this theory disagree that people with similar attributes and interests will find each other and form a self-supporting social group. They suggest the groups are actually imposed on people via the social barriers in place within the society. These opponents call this competing theory the Strain Theory.

Strain Theory: Classic & General

Based on Emile Durkheim's "anomie" and developed by Robert Merton, Classic Strain Theory predicts that people who have long term, high aspi-

rations coupled with low, long term economic expectations will be most likely to engage in criminal and deviant behavior as they attempt to beat the odds society has structured for them (Merton, 1938). These theorists believe that much of crime and social deviance is directly or indirectly related to social class, i.e., the strain of being a member of a lower social class. However, this theory was not easily validated because many of the people included in strain studies were not manifesting deviant or criminal behaviors and women were dismissively regarded as being insulated against the effects of strain due to their positioning in the social structure (Broidy & Agnew, 1997).

Subsequent theorists realized that strain cannot be simply measured by absolute deprivation (i.e., level of poverty) but must also be examined from the perspective of the person's perception of the gap between expectations and reality - as well as the person's reactions to strain. Studies began to suggest that Strain did indeed contribute to criminal and deviant behavior (Pratt & Cullen, 2000). Agnew (2001) revised Classic Strain Theory to create General Strain Theory; extending the theory to allow researchers to further explore the factors that influence how a person reacts to strain. These new factors add: 1) the loss of positive stimuli (e.g., jobs, friends, romantic partners, etc.) and 2) the acquisition of negative stimuli (e.g., excessive demands, stress, all types of abuse, etc.) to the original strain of failing to achieve aspirations/goals (Broidy & Agnew, 1997).

Once the theory was extended, researchers were better able to identify and measure strain unique to females (e.g., abortion, sexual abuse, unjust treatment based on gender, burdens associated with private realm responsibilities, etc.) and to examine both objective and subjective levels of strain. Evidence suggests females are subjected to as much or more strain than males; negating the assertion that the level of strain correlates positively with commission of crimes. Related research suggests the differences in how males and females experience the world will predict whether strain will correlate with deviant/criminal behaviors. Men are more focused on fairness in outcomes while females are more focused on fairness in the process that results in the outcome (Broidy & Agnew, 1997). Recent research in General Strain Theory suggests it is one's emotional response to strain that is the true predictor of criminal behavior.

Anger is the driving emotion that leads to crime: anger lowers inhibitions, moves a person toward action, and increases individual energy (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Sharp, Brewster, & Love, 2005). Anger is acknowledged to be both situational and trait-based. While situational anger is a robust predictor of shoplifting and assault, trait-based anger only predicted assault. Researchers assert that all people experience similar levels of anger. However, differences in how females and males are socialized accounts for their differential responses to anger (Sharp, Brewster, & Love, 2005). Following this assumption, criminal acts are more prevalent in males due to their learned responses to strain (i.e., moral outrage). They have been taught that it is okay to be angry. Females are taught that their anger is less appropriate (and less effective) than men's. They tend to turn their anger inward, resulting in depression or guilt; thus reducing non-criminal activities but resulting in more covert types of deviant behaviors such as eating disorders, drug abuse, and ignoring or reframing problems (Sharp, Brewster, & Love, 2005; Broidy & Agnew, 1997).

Viewpoints

In 1969 a well-respected psychologist, Lawrence Kohlberg, was deeply involved in research that described moral development. His research suggested that personal morality involves a complex mix of: a) how stringently a person is willing to follow societal conventions; and b) how willing that person is to defy those conventions when faced with a situation in which one must choose between upholding conventions or upholding a personal respect for human life and welfare. Kohlberg's research outcomes suggested that adult females remained morally immature throughout their lives; only men tended to reach the pinnacle of morality (based on his operationalized definition of morality). His lab assistant, Carol Gilligan, criticized his work heavily, noting that women – based on their place of relative oppression within American society – were not morally deficit. Indeed, these women developed a morality which was firmly grounded in care for the ongoing needs of society (i.e., sacrificing the good of the individual in favor of society) which differed from Kohlberg's biased analysis. Kohlberg believed the pinnacle of moral behavior was reached when a person was able to value the needs of the individual over the general benefit of society (Gilligan, 1982).

In this debate lies the seed of how females and males may be socialized in ways that differ; creating differing levels of potential deviance. It is also an important example of how personal perspective can introduce bias into research and theories. Studies on deviance and crime often have biases based on gender, race, socioeconomic status, and class. Crime, for instance, is usually regarded as acts for which one is prosecuted and sent to jail. This definition precludes the examination of what is typically referred to as White Collar Crime. In reality, crimes are committed by many people in the upper class but are prosecuted in civil courts or are handled by administrative boards or commissions (Sutherland, 1940). These activities are still, however, crimes and should be carefully considered as such when one is determining whether a theory can be generalized to all types of deviant behaviors.

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Family Gender Roles

Simone I. Flynn

Overview

Sociologists study family gender roles as a means of exploring how gender is constructed and performed; how familial relationships are maintained; and the ways in which the family unit affects society. In 1955, two sociologists, Talcott Parsons and Robert Bales, published a book, entitled "Family, Socialization and Interaction Process," which provided a functionalist explanation for the existence of the nuclear family and differentiated family gender roles. Parsons and Bales described the roles of women and men necessary to support the individual family. According to Parsons and Bales, the nuclear family, with its gender-based social roles, functioned to support the economy and society. The functionalist explanation of family gender roles advanced by Parsons and Bales typifies sociology's classical or traditional take on family gender roles until the 1960s. Beginning in the 1960s, contemporary sociology, strongly influenced by the feminist and civil rights movements, argues that family gender roles are converging and changing to accommodate shared responsibilities of employment, education, and parenting.

Understanding how sociologists conceptualize and study family gender roles is vital for all those interested in the sociology of family and relationships. This article explores the sociology of family gender roles in five parts: An overview of family gender roles and social roles in general; a

description of social role theory; a discussion of the family studies field; an exploration of the ways in which sociologists apply social role theory to studies of family life and behavior; and an analysis of the issues associated with changing family gender roles.

Types of Social Roles

Modernization and industrialization reshaped American society and the composition of the American family unit. Starting in the early twentieth century, the family became nuclear and isolated from its extended kin. The nuclear family is comprised of husband, wife, and dependant children. According to Parsons, the nuclear family is a functioning system that requires and depends on equilibrium and successful role performance. Common family roles in the nuclear family unit include providing income, cleaning house, preparing food, caring for children, disciplining children, socializing children, and visiting and maintaining relationships with friends and family (Huntington et al, 2001). Classical or traditional sociology, as represented by sociologist Talcott Parsons, divides family gender roles into expressive roles and instrumental roles.

In traditional social role division, women's roles and men's roles in the family are differentiated. The classical sociological view of the male care giving role is managerial and instrumental in nature. Men play instrumental roles by earning money in their chosen profession. In contrast to the men's role in the family, the classical sociological view of the female care giving role is characterized by emotional, physical, and maintenance work. Female family roles are tradsitionally understood to include relationship maintenance and an overall effort at keeping kin close and connected. Women play expressive roles, taking care of the home and emotional life of a family.

In the 1950s, Parsons advanced the idea that the isolated nuclear family contributes to the functioning of economy and society. The isolated nuclear family socializes and educates their young but remains mobile and able to move should the man's employer require. In industrialized societies, social institutions such as schools, libraries, community centers, and government programs take over some roles that were once served by families. Parsons believed that the family performed very clear functions for its members and society as a whole. Family functions included socialization of children

and stabilization of adult personality. Parsons argued that a full-time mother was responsible for the family needs while the father/husband was responsible for income and thus could move between home and work contexts. Women were limited to their roles of wives and mothers. Parsons predicted increased gender role segregation in the future. According to Parsons, the marriage becomes the source of feminine and masculine role socialization. Sociologists in the 1950s believed that young girls were given mixed messages by providing the girls with a full education and then offering marriage and motherhood as the best or only roles available (Breines, 1986).

Ultimately, the work of Parsons, along with Bales, represents the classical sociological belief of a division between gendered family roles (i.e. instrumental versus expressive roles within the nuclear family). In general, contemporary sociological theory, including feminist theory, opposes the belief in differentiated gendered family or caregiving roles (Carroll & Campbell, 2008).

Social Role Theory

The field of sociology has long studied the importance of social roles for individuals and society. For instance, French sociologist Emile Durkheim studied the part that social roles play in solidarity and social cohesion. Durkheim found that the interdependent social roles or functions that people perform hold society and institutions together. Contemporary sociologists recognize that gender roles, particularly family gender roles, are socially constructed and taught through the socialization process. Social constructs refer to culturally created parameters for social action or behavior. Common social constructs include social roles, gender, time, nature, illness, and death. Sociologists explain and explore social roles, including family gender roles through the lens of social role theory.

Social Roles

Social role theory argues that men and women act in accordance with their social roles. Social roles, which tend to be gender-based, require unique skill sets and are associated with unique expectations. Gender stereotypes, such as women are natural nurturers and men are natural leaders, are linked to clearly differentiated gender-based social roles (Vogel et al, 2003).

Sociologists apply social role theory to diverse contexts. For instance, social scientists have studied the changing social roles of contemporary Palestinian women (Huntington et al, 2001); the relationship between managerial responses and gender-based roles (Bowes-Sperry, 1997); the connections between sex-specific family-work roles and well-being in African-American families (Broman, 1991).

Social role theory, also referred to as role theory, originated in the field of social psychology. A social role refers to the social behavior, rights, and duties associated with a specific identity or situation. Roles may be asociated with cultural expectations, gender, biological characteristics, or a given situation. Social roles function to differentiate groups of people by class, gender, education, etc. Over the life course, an individual will play or serve multiple social roles. Individuals may have multiple roles at the same time such as parent, child, sister, teacher or volunteer. Social roles specify particular norms of behavior and associated values.

Role Conflict

Social role theory anticipates and explains role conflict. Individuals with competing or conflicting roles may experience role conflict. Sociologist Robert Merton (1910-2003) described the problem of role conflict by classifying two different types of role conflict: Intrapersonal role conflict and interpersonal role conflict.

Intrapersonal role conflict refers to conflict that may exist between people, seen often in work settings, regarding the expectations associated with different roles.

Interpersonal role conflict refers to the conflict that arises from the competing roles performed simultaneously by a single person.

Both intrapersonal and interpersonal role conflict may cause tension, stress, and antisocial or deviant behavior. Merton made significant contributions to the sociology of deviance (O'Connor, 2007).

Role Attribution

An individual's social roles may be chosen or attributed to them by their family, institution, or society. The gender role self-concept refers to an in-

dividual's sense of self as related to gender roles, attributes, and behavior. Social scientists have found that an individual's identity, as related to gender roles, attributes, and behavior, is affected by their chosen role models and reference groups (Wade, 2001). The theory of social role valorization argues that roles vary widely in their degree of social support, respect, and compensation. Social role theory offers suggestions for building self-esteem and success through active changes in one's social roles. For instance, a woman who performs devalued social roles (such as that of an addict) may build self-esteem through the choice or opportunity to take on valued roles (such as that of an employee). The acquisition of socially valued roles is part of the recovery process for some types of addicted or abused individuals. For instance, Alcoholics Anonymous encourages its members to seek out valued social roles and opportunities to serve as role models for others (Stenius et al, 2005). Critics of social role theory argue that the theoretical perspective offers no means of evaluating and explaining deviant behavior.

Social Structure

Ultimately, social role theory is part of sociology's larger concern for social structure. Traditional sociologists take social structure and society as their objects of study. Social structures include roles, status, groups, and institutions. Roles are the actions associated with a person's status. Individuals generally play multiple roles in society. Status refers to the socially defined position of individuals in society. The roles people perform, which may be gendered, professional, authentic, conflicting, or multiple, reflect the social status they occupy at any given time (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004).

Family Studies

Following World War II, the popular topics of sociological inquiry included sociological study of marriage and family; social stratification and political sociology; study of work and organizations; large scale studies of corporations; and gender roles and gender relations. The field of family sociology, also referred to as family science or family sociology, was established in the early twentieth-century by prominent sociologists such as Ernest Burgess, Talcott Parsons, Florian Znaniecki, William Thomas, Willard Waller, and Reuben Hill. For instance, sociologist Ernest W. Burgess (1886-1966), the 24th president of the American Sociological Association, devel-

oped schemes to predict marriage success and outcome. Burgess' work on the study of marriage and family remains influential. The family, as an object of study for sociologist, became extremely popular and important in the early twentieth-century (Spanier & Stump 1978).

By the 1950s, sociologist Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) advanced the idea that the family is a social institution whose functions are determined by a functionally organized society. Sociologists believed that a family's function, purpose and performance would be determined by factors such as a society's gendered division of labor. Mid-century sociology furthered the belief that a nuclear family was the ideal family form or construct. Parsons advanced the concept of the isolated nuclear family with differentiated gender-based family roles for men and women. Parsons believed that a family's class position was determined by a husband's occupation and described a gender-based division of labor in households. Parsons studied families and society in general through a functionalist lens and believed that gender-based division of labor in households and families strengthened the family and contributed to its overall stability. According to Parsons, the gender-based division of labor, in which the man's career is prioritized, eliminates power or status competition between spouses and allows the family to move whenever the husbands' career requires without the complication of a second career in the family to consider (Szelényi & Olvera, 1996).

Collectivity

Parsons' concept of the collectivity, a term which refers to distinct human groups united by shared social structures, identity, and customs, influenced sociological conception and understanding of the family unit. Parson's concept of the isolated nuclear family is a form of collectivity. In his book "The Social System" (1951), Parsons defined the parameters and characteristics necessary to create collectivities. For example, Parsons believed that a group must have loyalty toward the members and the group. Examples of loyalty include attachments, rights to relational rewards, and a commitment to act based on a system of shared standards and symbols. Parsons considers attachment to refer to a generalized system of expectations with regards to the gratifications to be received from a category of persons and generally favorable attitudes toward the qualities and performances associated with them. Members must accept the preservation of the collective

as a moral obligation and must develop a system of sanctions to direct behavior. The system should stress certain actions as desirable and identify other actions as hostile to and ultimately incompatible with the collective (Treudley,1953).

Changing Family Systems

During the 1960s and 1970s, researchers developed conceptual schemes or perspectives to explain changing family roles, behaviors, and functions. In the 1960s, family sociology, lead by Harold Christensen and Ira Reiss, became increasingly liberal. For instance, researchers studied the function and effects of women's paid work outside of the home. In the 1970s, family sociology recognized and studied the changing trends in families such as co-parenting, daycare, premarital sex, cohabitation, divorce, extramarital sex, homosexual relationships, childlessness, single mothers, step-families, open marriage, group marriage, and new divisions of household responsibilities. Sociologists developed the idea of an alternative lifestyle or family. Family sociology began to recognize the importance of applying integrated models, theories, and perspectives to understand complex family relationships in society. In the 1980s, family sociology continued to focus on alternative families, individuation, and hedonism. Multiple competing family models emerged to account for the diversity of modern families. In the 1990s, family sociology recognized the existence of the post-modern family that defies categorization with diffuse boundaries and an evolving composition.

Family sociology's changing subjects over the course of the twentieth century reflect the changes occurring in society. Families changed throughout the twentieth century as a result of immigration, modernization, world wars, the civil rights movement, and women's rights. Sociologists have analyzed and reported on the evolution of the traditional or functional family, liberal family, alternative family, and the postmodern family. Sociologists study areas of family relations such as marriage across life span, mate selection, sexual behavior, parenthood, family planning, retirement, sex roles, divorce, premarital sexual relations, contraception, cohabitation, extramarital sexual relations, homosexual relationships, group marriage, open marriage, adoption, voluntary childlessness, communal living, single parent households, and step families (Jallinoja, 1994).

Applications

Social scientists apply the perspective offered by social role theory as a means of exploring gendered role performance and identity formation. Sociologists study family gender roles across societies, cultures, classes, and ethnicities to see how gender is constructed and performed; how familial relationships are constructed and maintained; and the ways in which the family unit affects society. Sociologists apply social role theory to diverse contexts. For instance, social scientists have studied the changing social roles of contemporary Palestinian women (Huntington et al, 2001); the relationship between managerial responses and gender-based roles (Bowes-Sperry, 1997); the connections between sex-specific family-work roles, and; well-being in African-American families. This section provides an example of the way in which sociologists investigate family gender roles in African-American families. This example is representative of the multitude of sociological studies of family gender roles and dynamics in societies world-wide.

Case Study: Gender Roles in African American Families

In 1990, sociologist Clifford Broman conducted a study into the connection between family gender roles and psychological well-being in African-American families. Broman believed that social role theory, which asserts that men and women act in accordance with their chosen or ascribed social roles, was likely to be less apparent and well supported in African-American families than in white families. Broman hypothesized that sex-specific social roles, including specific family gender roles, would be both fluid in African-American families and have impact on the well-being of African-American families. Broman used data from the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA) to complete his research. The National Survey of Black Americans, which includes 2,107 completed interviews, is considered to be a representative sampling of the black population living in the United States. Broman found that family-life satisfaction among African-Americans was higher if the family included an employed male or female. Broman found that while social roles in African-American families have an effect on familial well-being, the social roles were not linked to gender or sex.

Social scientists, particularly sociologists and historians, have found that African-American families engage in significant, flexible, role-sharing behaviors. African-American family roles are more egalitarian than gendered.

Social historians suggest that non-gendered family roles may have served as a coping mechanism against poverty, racism, and discrimination in African-American families during economic depressed periods; allowing family members to contribute as needed. Due to family role sharing, as seen in the egalitarian practice of co-parenting, African-American men and African-American women have different relationships with and roles within the labor force and economy. Ultimately, research demonstrates that African-American families tend to have a more egalitarian structure than families of European origin. African-American families do not generally divide responsibilities and behaviors into male and female roles. Sex-specific family roles, also known as family gender roles, may be more common in families of European origin (Broman, 1991).

Issues

Changing Gender Roles

Gender roles changed significantly within families and society during the mid-twentieth century. Sociology was slow to incorporate notions of changing family gender roles into sociological theory and understanding. For instance, sociology was slow to recognize women's massive entry into the labor force. The large-scale entry of women into the work force, particularly during and after World War II, changed family gender roles. Following World War II, significant numbers of women and mothers entered the work force and sought out higher education. Mid-century American society was characterized by prosperity and a growing push for equal civil rights (Breines, 1986). Other changes in society that influenced and changed family gender roles included the trend in marrying and parenting for the first time at an older age; sharing parenting responsibilities; greater participation of married women in the work force; and greater commitment of women to their careers. Sociology, from the 1950s through the 1970s, considered the family unit rather than the individual to be the main sociological unit of inquiry or study. As a result, mainstream sociology was slow to recognize new and converging gender roles for men and women. Mainstream sociology was slow to retire classical sociology's belief in differentiated family gender roles (Szelényi & Olvera, 1996).

Prior to the 1950s, sociologists primarily studied women's roles in families and households. Talcott Parsons's work reinforced this sociological take on

women's existence and importance. Many in the feminist movements and feminist sociology criticized Parsons for marginalizing women's roles in his theoretical perspective. Starting in the 1970s, sociology began to recognize that women had roles and lives outside of the family worthy of recognition and exploration. Sociologists, in response to civil rights movement and feminism, began to study women's role in the economy along with women's role in family and household (Swedberg, 1987).

While the 1950s was characterized by clearly differentiated gender roles, reinforced by the mass media, the 1960s saw convergence and homogeneity in role options and performance. Feminine and masculine sex roles converged in post-1960s American society. The convergence of masculine and feminine gender roles occurred in the family and work setting. The reasons for this convergence include new civil rights laws, new female role models, economic need, and co-ed education in which boys and girls began to learn from the same curriculum. Ultimately, social and economic transitions changed family gender roles. Family gender roles, whether differentiated or converging, are a reflection of the socio-political times at which they're performed.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, sociologists study family gender roles as a means of exploring how gender is constructed and performed, how familial relationships are maintained, and the ways in which the family unit effects society. The work of sociologist Talcott Parsons provides a functionalist explanation for the existence of the nuclear family and differentiated gender roles. According to Parsons and Bales the nuclear family, with its gender-based social roles, functioned to support the economy and society. The functionalist explanation of family gender roles advanced by Parsons and Bales typifies sociology's classical or traditional take on family gender roles until the 1960s. Beginning in the 1960s, contemporary sociology, strongly influenced by the feminist and civil rights movements, argues that family gender roles are converging and changing to accommodate shared responsibilities of employment, education, and parenting. Family gender roles, whether they are differentiated or converging, are a fundamental part of social role theory and family studies. Understanding how sociologists conceptualize and study family gender roles is vital for all those interested in the sociology of family and relationships.

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Gender & Domestic Responsibilities

Ruth A. Wienclaw

Overview

Traditional Division of Labor

Within the home, there has traditionally been a division of labor based on gender. Although in some cultures today this structure is being replaced by a more egalitarian one; traditionally, women and men have each had their own set of responsibilities in the home, typically based on the perceived abilities and demands on each of the sexes. In virtually every culture and society around the planet, women have the primary responsibility for child care. Although alternatives for breast-feeding exist today, historically it has only been the woman who has been able to nurse the child and ensure the survival of the race. Similarly, hunting and waging war are traditional responsibilities for the men of a culture. This division of labor arose due to the fact that the physical capacities of women (e.g., their size, shape, and strength), women's psychological and psychological makeup (hypothetically), and women's reproductive biology made them less suited for war and hunting than men. Conversely, the physical capacities, psychological makeup and reproductive biology of men made them less suited for home life and more suited for hunting and war. While norms regarding child care tend to be fairly consistent (at least historically) from culture to culture, all the aspects of the division of labor between the sexes are not. For example, in some societies, women care for fowl, small animal, or dairy animals, in other societies men have these responsibilities. Although the norms for

division of labor between the sexes differ from culture to culture, every culture does have norms regarding the division of labor between the sexes.

Sex vs. Gender

To understand the division of domestic labor that occurs between genders in many cultures, one must first understand the differences between sex and gender. Sex is biological in nature and gender is sociocultural in nature. One's sex determines one's biological destiny, such as the ability to bear or sire children. Gender, on the other hand, is the psychological, social, cultural, and behavioral characteristics associated with being female or male; gender is a learned characteristic based on one's gender identity and learned gender role. Gender is a society's interpretation of the cultural meaning of one's sex. In fact, some theories posit that we "do gender." This means that gender is a social construct that is interpreted by members of a society through the ongoing social interactions that individuals have with each other. Such constructs can easily give rise to gender stereotypes, or culturally defined patterns of expected attitudes and behavior that are considered appropriate for one gender but not the other. Gender stereotypes tend to be simplistic and over-generalized perceptions of one gender or the other and do not take into account the characteristics or aptitudes of the individual. For example, although the traditional gender stereotype for domestic responsibilities might be that women stay home and clean the house and raise the family while men go out and work, the fact that many women in today's society are successful physicians, scientists, lawyers, business owners, and executives (among other jobs traditionally thought to be "male") while many men share in domestic responsibilities or even stay home with the children demonstrates that it is the abilities and aptitudes of the individual – not her/his gender or sex – that should prescribe the parameters in which s/he can work.

Despite being social constructs, in some ways, gender roles are biologically based. Physiologically, it is women who must gestate and bear the young of the species. However, it can be argued that biological destiny in many ways ends there, at least when it comes to domestic responsibilities. It is no longer necessary for women to even stay home to nurse an infant. Not only can infants be bottle-fed using formula, women can express breast milk so that the baby continues to get all the immunological benefits of breast feeding without the mother needing to be physically present. Gender does

have a biological foundation in the physiological differences between females and males. However, the way that gender is interpreted differs from culture to culture and, in some ways, from individual to individual.

Changing Roles in Developed Societies

Although the historical norms regarding the division of labor between the sexes are similar across cultures, to a great extent these norms are changing in more developed societies. As mentioned above, women are no longer confined by their biology to be physically present with an infant to ensure its survival. Similarly, many of the jobs in industrial and postindustrial societies no longer require the physical strength necessary in hunter-gather societies to go out an literally bring home the bacon. For example, jobs today in information technology require little more physical strength than the ability to sit up in front of a computer. In postindustrial societies, success in the job market depends on mental rather than physical skill. Research has repeatedly shown that there is no difference between the sexes in intellectual capacity. As women earn more gender equality in the workplace, they tend to look for more gender equality in the home as well. This attitude affects the division of labor for domestic responsibilities.

Applications

Equal Division of Labor in the Home

Although the increasing participation of women in the workplace brings with it a concomitant need in many cases to renegotiate the division of labor within the home, this can be a tricky proposition. Despite the fact that married mothers are increasingly working outside the home, research indicates that wives are still performing many of the domestic responsibilities in the home (Rasmussen, Hawkins, & Schwab, 1996). This phenomenon – sometimes referred to as the "second shift" – can be the source of significant conflict within the home if it is not satisfactorily resolved. Further, research has found that the equal sharing of domestic responsibilities (including both child care and housework) can significantly increase the psychological health of both mothers and fathers.

Difficulties: Male Hang-Ups

Coming to the point of equal domestic responsibilities can be a difficult process. First, as discussed above, the traditional division of labor between

the sexes has been for men to work outside the home and for women to work inside (including being primarily or totally responsible for both caring for the children and for housework). Since the work of women in the home is typically devalued by many cultures, the adjustment to equally shared domestic tasks is often more difficult for men to make than for women. In many ways, discussions of the division of domestic labor are only the tip of the iceberg and represent deeper attitudes and beliefs held by the wife and husband concerning gender roles and identities in general. For example, although they may be egalitarian in theory, some men find the actual practice of sharing domestic responsibilities to be difficult either to envision or to practice. This typically means that there are deeper issues regarding gender roles and what tasks or activities are or are not masculine.

Difficulties: Female Hang-Ups

However, cultural norms and gender roles are deeply ingrained, and it is not necessarily only men who find it difficult to share domestic responsibilities in practice. For example, when their husbands actually take over some of the traditional domestic responsibilities in the family, some women gatekeep, or resist or manage their husband's participation in domestic responsibilities, even if they are working full-time themselves. This situation may arise from the woman's own concepts of traditional gender roles and the reluctance to give up this role or feeling that her gender identity is threatened by her husband's non-traditional participation in the home. It has also been hypothesized that women may gatekeep because the types of jobs that many of them can find outside the home typically do not have as much prestige as those of their husbands. As a result, sharing domestic responsibilities can negatively impact the self-esteem of some women because they see their husband as more competent outside the home and do not want to see him as equally competent inside the home as well. For this reason, gatekeeping can occur even when women work full-time and objectively need help with domestic responsibilities. Similarly, some women attempt to take over managerial responsibility for their husband's domestic tasks. Women may plan the task (e.g., making appointments with a pediatrician) and the man may carry out the task (e.g., taking the children to the pediatrician appointment). In fact, research has shown that men are less likely to take managerial responsibility for domestic tasks even when they are the ones carrying out those tasks.

Difficulties: Standards of Domestic Responsibility

Women and men often differ on the standards to which domestic responsibilities need to be performed. For example, one spouse may deep clean every time s/he takes out the vacuum cleaner while the other spouse either performs the task less often (i.e., tolerates more clutter or dirt) or performs it less minutely. This can lead to disagreements over how a task should be done. In many cases, this means that the spouse who has more rigid standards for how the task should be performed either over-manages the task or takes it over her/himself. In such cases, it is often important for the couple to determine the difference between their standards for the performance of a task and set minimum standards for the performance of the task. For example, for hygiene reasons, bathroom fixtures need to be routinely cleaned and sanitized. Determining minimum standards for the performance of this task is a more or less objective matter that can be discussed dispassionately. On the other hand, there are other domestic tasks within the bathroom that are more subjective (e.g., streaks on the mirror, placement of objects on the vanity top, or even how one squeezes toothpaste from the tube). Spouses frequently disagree on the standards to which such tasks need to be performed.

Difficulties: Guilt

Less educated women are not the only ones who may experience difficulty when trying to balance their domestic responsibilities with their jobs. Professional women, as well, may experience problems with their self-esteem, stress, or guilt when they find that they cannot take on all the domestic responsibilities involved in child care and housework as well as all the duties and activities associated with their careers. The guilt experienced by these women, however, may be more than a personal issue related to gender identity and self-esteem. Some observers have suggested that guilt arising in such situations is actually inherent in society (Guendouzi, 2006). Research in the United Kingdom has found that women often look for employment that will allow them to continue to do their domestic tasks (child care in particular). However, it is unclear whether this trend is due to women choosing to take on a greater portion of the domestic responsibilities in the household or because the pressure of society to do this is difficult to resist. The construct of a "good mother" is prevalent throughout Western society, and can be seen in the media and advertising.

The Benefits of Technology

As communications and information technology continue to advance, it is becoming increasingly possible for women to telework from home so that they can continue to play a major role in the lives of their children or do other domestic tasks during the day (e.g., put a load of laundry in the washer while waiting for a fax to come through). The use of personal computers in business environments as well as advances in information technology is changing the paradigm of how an increasing number of workers do their jobs. This is particularly good news for women who want to have both a career and keep up with a major portion of their responsibilities at home. Today's information systems allow workers to do their jobs more efficiently and transmit information faster than ever before. In addition, this technology allows many employees the option of working outside the traditional office setting through telework, virtual teams, and virtual workplaces. In teleworking, an employee works outside the traditional office or workplace – typically at home or on travel. In telework, the transmission of data and documents occurs via telecommunications or network technology, including the Internet. The teleworker typically has little personal contact with coworkers, but communicates with them electronically through e-mail, telephone, teleconferencing, or other communication media. Data, documents, and communication are transmitted via telecommunications or network technology.

Conclusion

Although there historically has been little change in the division of labor for domestic responsibilities across cultures, the increasing numbers of women entering the workplace and the changing nature of many jobs in the postindustrial 21st century means that this division of labor needs to be rethought in many situations. Some couples continue to work best under the traditional paradigms of a wife/mother who stays at home and tends to the children and household while the husband/father goes out and works for a living. However, increasing levels of education for women and the changing nature of many jobs means that more and more women are also working outside the home. Some women try to handle this situation by working not only at a full-time job but also trying to do all the domestic responsibilities to the same pre-career level. Other women attempt to compromise by not working full-time outside the home, lowering their stan-

dards at home, or hiring someone to do the domestic tasks for them (e.g., housecleaner, personal chef, nanny). Still other women attempt to work out a more equitable split of domestic responsibilities with their husband. In today's age of high technology, telework options are also available to help couples balance these responsibilities.

On the one hand, it is important to note that objectively there is no reason to assume that it is the woman's responsibility to make sure that all the domestic responsibilities are completed to a satisfactory standard. Men, too, can participate in doing these tasks. On the other hand, it must also be remembered that the guilt that many women feel when "abdicating" their responsibilities at home so that they can continue in a job or career are socialized and reinforced by the norms of society. However, times are changing as are expectations about the division of labor for domestic responsibilities. Through the courageous acts of both women and men, it may be possible for social norms and expectations in this area to change as well.

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The Women's Rights Movement

Carolyn Sprague

Overview

Women's Rights

Like any almost every other modern social movement, the women's rights movement comprises diverse ideals. Feminist and American responses to the movement have generally fallen along three lines:

- Staunch opposition to change
- Support of moderate and gradual change
- Demand for immediate radical change (Leone, 1996)

The women's rights movement rose during the nineteenth century in Europe and America in response to great inequalities between the legal statuses of women and men. During this time, advocates fought for suffrage, the right to own property, equal wages, and educational opportunities (Lorber, 2005)

In the United States, suffrage proved to be one of the driving issues behind the movement. However, when the movement first began many moderate feminists saw the fight for voting rights as radical and feared that it would work against their efforts to reach less controversial goals like property ownership, employment, equal wages, higher education, and access to birth control. The divide between moderate and radical feminists started

early in America's history and continues to be present in the women's movement today (Leone, 1996).

Suffrage

First proposed as a federal amendment in 1868, women's suffrage floundered for many years before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote in 1920. It was 1917 when the National Woman's Party (NWP) met with President Woodrow Wilson and asked him to support women's suffrage. When the women were dismissed by Wilson, members of the party began a picket at the White House. Their protest lasted 18 months. Harriot Stanton Blatch, the daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Alice Paul were amongst the first organizers of the picket. However, the picket was not supported by the older and more conservative women's rights group the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Its members saw the picket as somewhat "militant," and sought to win suffrage state by state rather than through a federal amendment (Leone, 1996)

America's involvement in World War I during the spring of 1917 impacted the women's suffrage movement in a number of ways. The NWP refused to support the war effort while NAWSA saw support of the war as an act of patriotism and a way to further women's rights issues. The differences between the two groups led to hostility that continued until August of 1919 when the Nineteenth Amendment was passed. Both the NWP and NAWSA claimed responsibility for the passage of the amendment. Historians disagree about which party was most influential. Many credit the combination of militant and moderate strategies that were employed by each group (Leone, 1996).

After the women's suffrage movement, some men and women considered the fight for women's rights to be over. Many of the organizations that had been so active in promoting suffrage disbanded after the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified. Though some women's suffrage groups did continue as organizations – namely, The League of Women Voters – the feminist movement sputtered without a unifying cause (Leone, 1996). The Great Depression of the 1930s further hurt the women's movement: most women simply did not have the time or energy to dedicate to feminist causes. With America's entry into World War II, many women entered the workforce for the first time. However this entry was accompanied by

the assumption that women would exit the workforce once American men returned from service. Postwar America saw a steep decline in participation in the women's rights movement. The numbers of women attending college dropped during the 1950s as women married earlier and had more children.

Applications

The women's rights movement re-formed during the 1960s as the women's liberation movement (Lorber, 2005). The period would mark the "revitalization of feminism" (Leone, 1996).

According to Judith Lorber, twentieth century feminism is more fragmented than nineteenth century feminism, perhaps as a result of deeper understandings of the sources of gender inequality (Lorber, 2005). There are still many issues that challenge women's economic and political status in the world, and women of all kinds are fighting many battles on many fronts.

Challenges to gender equality occur in many ways. Some of the most commonly recognized issues are:

- Education: Men tend to have higher educational attainments, though in the US and Western world this gap is rapidly closing
- Wages and Employment: Men occupying the same jobs as women tend to be paid more, promoted more frequently, and receive more recognition for their accomplishments.
- Healthcare: In some countries men have more access to and receive better healthcare than women.
- Violence and Exploitation: Women are subjected to violence and exploitation at greater rates than men.
- Social Inequality: Women still perform the majority of domestic duties like housework and childcare. (Lorber, 2005)

Issues

Educational Attainment

Women's unimpeded access to educational opportunities is strongly supported by feminists. The gap in educational attainment is shrinking rapidly

in the industrialized world, and today the gap in the US is quite small. However, lack of education still hurts women in fundamental ways, the most obvious being economic. This essay will discuss in more detail the gender wage gap that exists in the US. While education does increase a women's earning potential, research suggests that a definite and pervasive gender wage gap exists at every level of the workforce.

Gender Pay Gap

A "gendered division of labor" exists across the globe. A 1980 United Nations report stated that women do two thirds of the world's work, garner 10% of wages world wide, and own 1% of the world's property (Lorber, 2005). The workplaces of industrialized nations demonstrate a curious paradox. While research shows that companies which encourage diversity and promote women to leadership roles have higher levels of financial performance than companies with less diversity, women's earnings are still significantly less than men's (Compton, 2007).

Great Britain, like the US, has grabbled with the existence of the gender pay gap for many years. The US passed the Equal Pay Act in 1963 and Great Britain instituted its own Equal Pay Act in 1970. Both of these acts, "offered women a legitimate avenue to seek remuneration for unequal pay"(Compton, 2007, ¶20). In 1970 the pay differential in Great Britain between men and women's wages was 30%. Four decades later the gender pay gap hovers around 17%, and is the highest of all EU countries (De Vita, 2008). Some project that, at the present rate, the disparity in wages won't be eliminated for another 20 years (De Vita, 2008). The question remains, if women are legally guaranteed equal pay, and if promoting women is generally recognized as good for business, why do women still earn less than men? The causes of the gender wage gap are various and complex.

The fact that many women choose to leave their jobs in order to have children is often identified as one reason for the wage gap. Proponents of this theory argue that, statistically, women earn less than men because some women do not hold paying, full-time jobs, thus dragging down women's average wages. However, most studies of the wage gap only count the earnings of women who work full-time. These studies reveal that of the women who do work full-time, those with children under the age of 18 earn 97.1% of what women who do not have children earn. On the other hand, men who have children under the age of 18 earn 122% of

what men without children earn (Compton, 2007). These statistics show that women's incomes are negatively affected by parenthood while men's incomes appear to actually benefit from it.

De Vita (2008) offers a few other explanations for the gap:

- Social norms,
- Workplace biases,
- The low expectations women may have of themselves, and
- The competing demands that work and family responsibilities place on women

"Occupational segmentation," or the gendered division of different industries and types of work, is one pervasive societal norm. Women are more likely to enter "caring, catering, and public sector" jobs, according to De Vita (2008), where wages are generally low. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to pursue jobs in high-paying industries like energy and engineering (p. 62). Additionally, men are more likely to hold managerial positions while women more frequently occupy administrative positions. One reason for this segregation may be that women are socially conditioned to gravitate towards these jobs, and lack role models for careers and jobs that are generally male dominated (De Vita, 2008). However, other research shows that in the UK men still earn higher salaries than women even when they occupy similar positions in similar industries (De Vita, 2008). Thus, it would appear that the gender wage gap is pervasive across industries.

Furthermore, according to De Vita (2008), the pay gap starts before a woman even accepts her first job. In one study of American postgraduate students, during negotiations for their first jobs, 57% of men asked for higher salaries, while only 7% of women did. As a result, on average the men's starting salaries were 7.6% higher than the women's (De Vita, 2008). Because a person's starting salary is the figure on which all of his or her future salary negotiations are based, it can have an enormous impact on his or her lifetime earnings. As De Vita (2008) demonstrates, a difference of $5,000 can result in a $300,000 difference in lifetime earnings.

How men and women approach salary negotiations may, again, be attributable to social norms and social conditioning. Men may be more confi-

dent in negotiations, and their behavior may be viewed in a positive way. Women, on the other hand, may be seen as aggressive or pushy if they try to negotiate, and their behavior may be viewed negatively (De Vita, 2008).

Additionally, women in business often don't have the same access to informal networks and decision makers that men have. Women aren't mentored as often as their male counterparts, and their access to high profile assignments is limited as well ("A Worldwide Gender Pay Gap", 2008). Globalization of the world's markets and economies has narrowed the gender pay gap, but closer examination reveals that instead of women's wages going up, men's wages are falling ("A Worldwide Gender Pay Gap," 2008).

Equal education is not proving to be as effective in leveling playing field for women wage earners as was once thought. For many years, educational deficits had been blamed for holding women's wages back over time and contributing to the wage gap. However, studies now suggest that wage gaps continue to exist regardless of a woman's educational attainment. A disturbing trend in both the UK and the US is the growing gap between men and women at the senior management level. Estimates put the gap at 27% (De Vita, 2008), and research shows that it extends through upper management levels all way to boards of directors. While it was once assumed that higher educational attainments increased earnings, in reality, as Table 1 shows, the more educated a woman is, the larger the gap between her lifetime earnings and those of her male peers (Compton, 2007).

Table 1: Life Time Earnings Gap & Level of Education

Level of education	Gender Wage Gap
High School	Men will earn $700,000 more over lifetime.
College	Men will earn $1.2 million over a lifetime
Graduate or Professional	Men will earn $2 million over a lifetime.

(Murphy & Graff, 2005)

Women today are narrowing the gap in educational attainment which has long been one of the goals of the women's movement. But looking at the issue of the wage gap, one might wonder how exactly education is

benefiting women. According to former lieutenant governor of Massachusetts Evelyn Murphy and Brandeis University's resident scholar E J Graff, "Unfair pay means all women lose. All women – rich and poor, whatever their race or color or native language – are being cheated by wage inequity" (2005, p. 3).

Reproductive Rights

Reproductive responsibilities and rights have been ongoing concerns for centuries. Throughout history, women and men have actively sought to make conscientious decisions about family planning. Today, education, contraceptives, and family planning information are among the greatest assets available to women seeking to control their reproductive systems. In the US, where safe and effective contraceptives are widely available, access to contraceptives is no longer the divisive topic it once was. Instead, the truly polarizing reproductive rights issue is abortion.

According to the New York based Center for Reproductive Rights, over 60% of the worlds population now lives in countries where at least some type of abortion is generally allowed ("A Question of Life or Death," 2007.) Estimates put the number of abortions at 49 million per year, which means that 1 in 4 pregnancies are terminated by abortion ("A Question of Life or Death," 2007). The World Health Organization gauges that of the estimated 20 million illegal abortions performed every year, some 70,000 result in the woman's death ("A Question of Life or Death," 2007). It is difficult to calculate the numbers women who suffer serious consequences from self administered, or "botched" abortions, but the number is likely significant.

Though abortions had been available and tolerated in the US throughout the nineteenth century, by the turn of the twentieth century they were illegal in all 50 US states ("The History of Women's Reproductive Rights," 2005). It wasn't until the 1973, when the Supreme Court ruled that states could not ban first trimester abortions, that women were again able seek out legal abortion options. The landmark decision, Roe v Wade (1973) is still in force today. Shortly after the ruling, federal funds were authorized through Medicare to help low-income women to pay for abortions. Almost as soon as the legislation passed, opposition arose (Kissling,& Michelman, 2008).

Feminists and others who support women's reproductive rights have been working ever since Roe to protect the gains they won through the ruling.

While many countries are making access to abortion easier, in America similar efforts have faced considerable opposition. Polls show that most Americans are ambivalent about abortion: while most support keeping abortion legal, many also support keeping some restrictions in place ("A Question of Life or Death," 2007).

Recent Legislation

The Partial Birth Abortion Act of 2003 was seen as a victory to many opponents of abortion, or pro-life advocates. The law prohibits the procedure commonly known as partial-birth abortion which is generally performed during the second trimester of pregnancy. During this type of abortion, labor is induced and the fetus is partially delivered, with its head remaining inside the uterus.

The base of the fetal skull is then punctured, and the skull's contents are suctioned out, resulting in the skull's collapse. The fetus is then entirely removed from the woman's body. It is a highly controversial type of abortion that has been variously portrayed as

- A "rarely" employed procedure that is used to abort a fetus that is likely suffer severe developmental issues if brought to term, and do so in such a way as to pose the least danger to the woman undergoing the procedure (Frantz, 2007); and,
- "A gruesome and inhumane procedure that is never medically necessary and should be prohibited" ("The Partial Birth Abortion Act of 2003," 2004, ¶3)

Three years after it passed, the Supreme Court ruling Gonzales v Carhart (2007) upheld the act. To both pro-life and pro-choice advocates the ruling may be seen as a precursor to further restrictions on abortion rights ("A Question of Life or Death," 2007).

Feminist View – Reproductive Rights

Feminists who support abortion rights now see the need to imbed the abortion debate into the larger issue of reproductive rights. Their arguments include a more holistic approach which places importance on reducing the need for abortion by supporting sex education, access to contraceptives, and other educational initiatives. It is hoped that the women's movement's

emphasis on prevention will help to win over middle ground by proposing solutions that will reduce unwanted pregnancies ("A Question of Life or Death," 2007).

Other feminist voices call for moving toward a more "European" model of women's reproductive health care that would support a wide range of services which would be covered under health insurance plans. They argue that women ought to have access to

- inexpensive contraceptives
- comprehensive prenatal care
- excellent birthing services
- paid medical leave (maternity leave or other),
- abortions, if desired

According to authors Kissling and Michaelman, the US has systematically "eviscerated" reproductive health services, leaving women struggling to maintain and control their reproductive health. The feminist perspective argues that society needs to "respect the necessity of allowing individual women to make [reproductive] choices" (Frantz, 2007).

Conclusion

The women's rights movement of the nineteenth and twentieth century has become the modern feminist movement of today. Early activists in the women's rights movement understood that many of the issues that affect women would be decided in the political arena. Thus passage of the Nineteenth Amendment laid a foundation which would insure that generations of women following the early suffragists would be able to exert political influence over issues that were of importance to them. The modern women's movement is seeking to educate and advocate on a number of important social issues including wage disparity, economic equality, and women's health issues.

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Feminist Theories of Gender Inequality

Ruth A. Wienclaw

Overview

In 21st century Western society, it is often difficult to think of women as an oppressed minority group. After all, according to the U.S. Census Bureau current population survey of March 2000, women outnumber men by a factor of 1.05 times in the United States: A small majority, indeed, but a majority nonetheless. In addition, one can see women in virtually every job and career throughout the levels of social stratification: Women are no longer relegated to the positions of wives, mothers, or secretaries, but can and do become doctors, lawyers, and nuclear physicists as well as truck drivers, welders, and factory workers. Yet despite such advances, women are significantly underrepresented in many segments of 21st century society. For example, of the 535 members of Congress, only 67 of these were women in 1999. Although women have achieved positions in other important national leadership roles (e.g. Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg becoming members of the U.S. Supreme Court; Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice becoming Secretary of State), they still are significantly underrepresented when compared to their majority status in the population. Sociologically, a minority or a subordinate group is defined by five basic properties:

- Unequal treatment;
- Common physical and cultural characteristics that distin-

guish them from the dominant group;

- Involuntary membership in the subordinate group;
- Development of a sense of solidarity;
- Intermarriage within the subgroup.

Women as a general classification fulfill virtually all of these characteristics. Women today still receive unequal treatment when compared to men.

- First, in 1999, the median income for year-round male workers was $36,476 as opposed to $26,324 in comparable jobs for female workers (Schaefer, 2002).
- Second, women share obvious physical characteristics that distinguished them from men as well as cultural characteristics that also differentiate them from men (e.g., gender roles and stereotypes).
- Third, being a woman is a result of a fact of birth rather than of voluntary membership in a class.
- Fourth, although the fight for women's rights may have been going on since time immemorial, contemporary feminism in many ways has helped women to develop a greater feeling of solidarity.
- Finally, although women do not intermarry within their class (at least in the classical sense of the term), many women believe that the institution of marriage is irrevocably linked with their subordinate position in society.

Gender Inequality

The term "gender inequality" refers to the disparities between women and men based solely on their gender rather than objective differences in skills, abilities, or other characteristics. These inequalities may be obvious (e.g., not receiving the same pay for the same job) or subtle (e.g., not being given the same subjective opportunities for advancement). There are many answers to the question of why gender inequality exists. For example, the structural functionalist view of gender is that it has a fixed role in society, with men filling instrumental roles and women filling expressive roles.

Conflict theorists, on the other hand, view women as being disadvantaged by power inequities that emanate from the social structure. Feminist theorists, however, take exception to both these views of gender inequalities. For example, one of the objections to the functionalist view is that it assumes that such sexist arrangements are functional for society. Feminist theorists differ with conflict theorists because the latter assume that all inequalities stem from the same source.

It would seem that the feminist perspective would have much to say about both gender in general and gender inequality in particular. In general, feminism is an ideology that is opposed to gender stratification and male dominance. Feminist beliefs and concomitant actions are intended to help bring justice, fairness, and equity to all women and aid in the development of a society in which women and men are equal in all areas of life. In general, feminists attempt to understand the nature of women in society in order to bring about social change that will liberate women from being an oppressed minority and bring them parity with men.

Feminist Frameworks

Liberal Feminism

However, feminism is far from being a unified perspective, and different feminists view gender inequalities as stemming from different sources depending on their assumptions. Within feminism, there are at least four distinct, major frameworks. Each of these views the issue of gender inequality from a different perspective. Liberal feminists, for example, posit that gender inequality has its origins in historical traditions that have set up barriers to the advancement of women. In addition, liberal feminism emphasizes issues such as individual rights and equal opportunity as a basis for social justice and reform. In addition, this framework assumes that the socialization of women into gender roles contributes to the inequality experienced by women in society. To bring about social change and neutralize gender inequities, feminists advocate removing barriers to the advancement of women within society and developing policies to promote equal rights for women. The liberal feminist framework has been the basis of many legal changes that have been used to bring about greater equality for women within the United States.

Socialist Feminism

A second major feminist perspective is socialist feminism. As with socialist perspectives on other aspects of culture and society, the socialist feminist perspective posits that women's oppression is a result of capitalism. According to this perspective, women are a cheap labor supply that is exploited within the capitalist system. Further, socialist feminists believe that capitalism interacts with the patriarchal system to make women less powerful both within society and as laborers. Socialist feminism is more radical than liberal feminism and critiques the liberal feminist view as being short-sighted because it does not take into account the interaction between capitalism and patriarchal systems. Social feminists believe that gender equality can only be brought about if the economic and political systems on which inequality for women are based are changed.

Radical Feminism

An even more radical view of gender inequality comes from the radical feminists. In this view, patriarchy is seen as the primary cause of the oppression of women. Gender inequality stems, according to the radical feminists, from the fact that men have control over women's bodies. As a result, violence against women (e.g., rape, sexual harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse) comprises some of the mechanisms by which men assert their power within society. Since the existing social system is dominated by men, therefore, radical feminists believe that social change in the form of gender equality cannot be accomplished through the existing social system because it is controlled by men. Although liberal feminists believe that state institutions can be reformed through political action and legislation to bring about gender equality, radical feminists argue that this cannot happen because by its very nature the current state is male.

Multiracial Feminism

The fourth branch of feminism that speaks to gender inequality is multiracial feminism. Although not in and of itself a single theoretical perspective, multiracial feminism has developed new theoretical avenues for studying race, class, and gender. Multiracial feminism grew out of the observation of some theorists that more traditional feminist theories tended to exclude women of color from their analyses, thereby making it difficult if not impossible to truly understand and articulate the experience of all women.

Multiracial feminism examines the interactive influences of gender, race, and class on various social outcomes and the way that women's and men's experiences differ. Further, multiracial feminism points out the fact that there is no such thing as a common experience for all women. Rather, women's experiences are further complicated by other variables including race and class. The multiracial feminist perspective attempts, for example, to explain why the experience of women of one race differs from the experience of women of another race within the same social class.

Table 1: Four Feminist Views of Gender Inequality

	Liberal Feminism	Socialist Feminism	Radical Feminism	Multiracial Feminism
Are the sexes essentially the same or different?	Essentially the same	Essentially the same	For most, essentially the same	Essentially the same, but not always an issue
Are they equal or hierarchically arranged?	Emphasizes equality as a goal	Emphasizes equality as a goal	Emphasizes equality as a goal	Emphasizes equality as a goal
Sources of differences, similarity, and hierarchy	Cultural, social, political, and economic institutions	Patriarchy and capitalism together	Men created patriarchy	Patriarchy, capitalism, and racism together
Acceptability of gender differences and inequality	Inequality not acceptable	Inequality not acceptable	Patriarchy not acceptable	Inequality not acceptable
Acceptability of Change	Work for equality of all individuals	Inequality must be eradicated	Patriarchy must be eradicated	Inequality must be eradicated
Means of Change	Reform of institutions, education, affirmative action	Remove patriarchy and capitalism together	Technology, legal change, individualism	Remove patriarchy, class system, and racism as interlocking systems of domination
What difference does race/ethnicity make for this framework?	Not a major issue	A major issue, but not always the main focus	Not relevant	Often supersedes gender issues
Comments and contributions	Major legislative and institutional changes	Theoretically rich; it implicitly handles women of color and third world women's issues	Intellectual cutting edge	Closely connected to ethnic activism

(adapted from Jabbra, 2008)

Applications

Evolving Manifestations of Feminism

As discussed above, feminism is not a unitary concept and there are many feminist perspectives. Jabbra (2008), for example, discusses ten separate feminist perspectives of gender inequality issues. There may be more. In fact, in some ways, although we may group feminist perspectives together under general rubrics such as liberal, socialist, radical, or multiracial, one could almost make an argument that there are as many variants of feminism as there are women pondering the role of women within their culture, society, or world. My grandmother's brand of feminism (although she

would be appalled at the appellation), for example, was being allowed to do whatever it took to work alongside her husband and ensure the smooth running of the farm on which their livelihood depended. Although for the most part this meant that she looked after hearth and home and canned the foods that her husband grew; when necessary she stepped out of this expected gender role and donned pants and worked alongside him in the field. Such, in many ways, was the nature of early 20th century feminism. By the mid- to late 20th century, however, many women were involved in a different feminist battle, demanding equal pay for equal work and even attempting to gain the same kind of respect and status that was accorded male colleagues. One of the ways women tried to do this was by "dressing for success," which meant dressing to look like slightly feminized versions of successful males: Pinstriped power suits, starched white shirts, and feminine versions of ties. Today's women, of course, are fighting their own feminist battles in their own ways.

Peters (2005) discusses the trends towards gender equality in the latter half of the 20th century. She observes that gender equality will never occur as long as only one gender strives for such a goal. Women can band together all they want and demand equality, but unless men want it as well – and it is perceived as being advantageous to them – gender equality will not occur. In principle, 21st century society has developed flexible gender roles that can encompass a wide range of variation from stay-at-home moms to stay-at-home dads, from female (or male) secretaries to female (or male) rocket scientists and fighter pilots. In the end, however, this seeming flexibility is gloss, and most individuals see women and men as being bound by their biological distinctions and concomitant behavioral tendencies. Although some fathers prefer to stay home and raise the children, this is still the exception rather than the rule. Further, it is not just the men who cling to traditional gender roles. When given the opportunity to return to work early so that their husbands can stay home and bond with the new baby, most women still prefer to stay home themselves. Further, to the chagrin of their feminist mothers, many young girls today worry not about whether or not they can achieve a position of power, but whether in doing so they will lose the boy.

Conclusion

Despite the advances that women have made over the years towards equality with men, the simple fact is that this utopian condition still has

not been achieved. Although laws have been enacted to ensure equality in the workplace and the education system continues to attempt to teach everyone that there are no inherent differences between the genders regarding intellectual capacities, most people still view women and men differently and make assumptions about gender roles and abilities based on physiological differences. For this reason, despite their greater numbers, women will continue to be treated as a minority in terms of discrimination and gender stratification for many years to come.

As opposed to some other social theorists who view gender inequality as a good thing that supports and helps maintain society, feminist theorists of all bents view gender inequality as a bad thing and work to eradicate it. However, feminist rhetoric or even legislation is unlikely to be able to do this alone. Gender equality will not become a global reality until people – both women and men – believe that it is true and act accordingly. To do this, more research needs to be done concerning the notion of gender equality not only to empirically demonstrate that there are no important non-physiological differences, but also to understand the psychological and sociological mechanisms whereby obvious differences are inappropriately extrapolated to other areas. Research is also needed to better understand the psychological mechanisms underlying social change. Gender equality by fiat will be a fleeting thing at best unless people believe that the underlying principles are true. In addition, it must be remembered that feminist views of gender inequality – despite the fact that there are many of them – are only one set of ways to look at this issue. Other perspectives yield other views, including the opinion that gender inequality is a good thing and ensures the stability of society. In the end, although the words of the old commercial tell women that "you've come a long way, baby," the truth is that as a society we still have a long way to go before we truly have gender equality.

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Gender & Morality

Marie Gould

Overview

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

Lawrence Kohlberg studied psychology at the University of Chicago, and wrote his dissertation in 1958. He was intrigued by the work of fellow theorist Jean Piaget, and sought to explore how children responded to moral issues (Crain, 1985). Piaget was a well known psychologist who focused on human cognition, which is the manner in which people think and understand. Piaget was interested in studying what people knew and how they used their knowledge to understand and operate in the world. His four stages of cognitive development described how biological maturation and social experiences helped shape a person's understanding of the world. Believing that moral reasoning was as important as moral development, Kohlberg elected to build on the foundation of Piaget's work and explore how the moral development process correlated with issues of morality and justice over a person's lifespan (Kohlberg, 1958).

Kohlberg's theory of moral development is based on his study of 72 boys who grew up in middle- and lower-class environments in the Chicago area. The boys were all either 10, 13, or 16 years of age. Kohlberg presented each boy with a series of moral dilemmas and asked him to state what the characters in each dilemma should do and why. Kohlberg (1963) provided an example of one of these scenarios:

Heinz Steals the Drug

In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid $400 for the radium and charged $4,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about $1,000 which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to see it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I am going to make money from it." So, having tried every legal means, Heinz gets desperate and considers breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife. Should Heinz steal the drug? (p. 19).

Kohlberg was not interested in whether or not the children thought Heinz ought to steal the drug. Rather, he wanted to find out the reasoning the boys used to arrive at their decisions. From these studies, he identified six distinct stages of moral development which he grouped according to the moral reasoning each employed. He later grouped these six stages into three levels.

Each level covered two stages:

Level 1 – Preconventional Morality

- Stage 1: Obedience & Punishment Orientation: Kohlberg believed that this was the earliest stage of moral development. At this stage, the child views rules to be absolute without room for compromise. A person can avoid punishment if he or she follows the rules that have been established. The child is not concerned with whether or not the decision is morally right or wrong, but rather with whether or not it will be punished.
- Stage 2: Individualism & Exchange: Kohlberg believed that individuals are able to rationalize at this stage. The child considers his or her individual needs or best interests to determine what type of action to take. Interpersonal relationships at this stage are based on the needs that others

can fulfill for the child. In essence, there is a mentality of "you do for me and I will do for you." Children at this stage have some notion of fairness, in the sense that one ought to return favors, but they see themselves as individuals rather than as members of a larger community or society.

Level 2 – Conventional Morality

- Stage 3: Good Interpersonal Relationships: At this stage, emphasis is placed on what a person needs to do in order to live up to a group's standards. Children at this stage focus on meeting the expectations of their established roles in order to be seen as a good and nice people. They feel a strong desire to fit in and make choices that will maintain good relationships. Behavior is based on intention. For example, a person can gain approval from the group for being nice and "meaning to do the right thing."
- Stage 4: Maintaining the Social Order: Kohlberg believed that this was the stage in which people started to think about how their actions are viewed in society as a whole. People in this stage are concerned with staying within the boundaries of what is considered normal behavior, and want to follow the law. Following the law can be defined as following the established rules, doing one's civic duty, and respecting authority. People at this stage focus on maintaining an orderly society.

Level 3 – Postconventional Morality

- Stage 5: Social Contract & Individual Rights: At this stage, people look to the world outside of themselves and their immediate communities or societies to make moral decisions. They take into consideration that fact that other societies in the world have different values, opinions, and beliefs. However, people at this stage also believe that most just societies protect people's basic rights and allow them some power to govern themselves. In essence, law and order are maintained while also taking into account people's diversity.
- Stage 6: Universal Principles: In the final stage, people reason similarly to those in the fifth stage: they, too, believe that

societies ought to be democratic and protect people's basic rights. However, in this stage, people also recognize that there are universal principles of justice which can override the democratic process and the need for law and order. Martin Luther King and Gandhi are good examples of this type of moral reasoning in that they challenged the laws of their societies in the name of universal principles of justice.

Further Insights

Gender & Moral Development

Much of the discussion surrounding morality and the development of moral reasoning and decision-making has stemmed from Carol Gilligan's critique of Kohlberg's theory. According to Woods (1996), "virtually all of the literature on moral development is based on the argument between these two individuals" (p. 377). At the heart of the argument is the question of whether or not the concept of morality centers exclusively on justice. This question has been studied with both empirical (Ford and Lowery, 1986; Skoe and Diessner, 1994) and nonempirical methods (Alston, 1971; Mwamwenda, 1991; Peters, 1971) and.

Gilligan began her career at Harvard University in 1967 where she taught alongside Kohlberg and Erik Erikson (Dim, 2001). While at Harvard she began working as Kohlberg's research assistant, focusing her scholarship on girls' moral development. Although she was working with one of the best scholars in the field of moral development, Gilligan began to criticize her mentor's work. Most of the flaws she saw stemmed from the fact that when females participated in Kohlberg's studies, they tended to score lower than males: the majority tested at third stage of development, while men usually tested at the fourth and fifth stages. Gilligan concluded that there were two basic flaws in Kohlberg's work:

That, by forming his moral development model on the basis of studies of primarily male subjects, Kohlberg had introduced a bias against females into his model.

That because women were socialized to value interpersonal relationships, rather an impersonal conception of justice, Kohlberg's hierarchy was,

again, biased against women, because it classified their moral values as inferior to those of men (Prose, 1990).

Gilligan laid out her criticisms of Kohlberg's theory as well as her own theory of moral development in In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development. When the book was published in 1982, Gilligan became known as the pioneer for what was called "difference feminism" or "ethics of care" theory. Essentially, her theory argues that females tend to view morality in terms of caring and responsibility, whereas males generally perceived morality in terms of justice. Neither view is superior, Gilligan believed, they are simply different.

Viewpoints

Criticisms of Gilligan's Work

Many feminists did not support Gilligan's view that moral frameworks can be distinctly masculine or feminine. One of Gilligan's critics was Christina Hoff Sommers, whose book The War Against Boys pointed out some flaws in Gilligan's work. Some of Sommers' concerns included

- that Gilligan's research did not follow proper standard protocol;
- That Gilligan's results are drawn from a small sample size
- The lack of peer review surrounding Gilligan's work; and,
- Gilligan's refusal to allow other researchers to review her raw data.

As a result of the criticisms Sommers raised, Gilligan's work is viewed as invalid in some circles of the academic community. One professor at Tufts University, Zella Luria, suggested that while Gilligan's work was intriguing, it was not substantiated (Luria, 1986). Another feminist psychologist, Naomi Weisstein, also found significant flaws. She argued that Gilligan's work was nothing more than a version of the sexist essentialism that had typified psychological views of women during the 1960s.

Regardless of the criticism, Gilligan's work hasn't yet been disproved, though it hasn't been clearly proved either. Though Walker's (1989) study found that there were no sex differences between boys and girls, Skoe and

Goodon (1993) countered that Walker's study may have lost crucial information on sex differences through the way that they grouped their research subjects. When Skoe and Goodon (1993) conducted their own study, they found that "girls tended to be more concerned with hurting others and maintaining friendships while boys worried more about leisure activities and avoiding trouble" (Skoe and Gooden, 1993, p. 154).

Conclusion

Although the controversy surrounding Kohlberg and Gilligan's work continues, some scholars believe that research on moral development ought not be guided by these two theorists alone. In reality, both theories still lack critical components. In addition, these scholars have argued that both theories have little bearing on the moral concerns that face our society today. They say that it is now time to move on, to focus on current issues. Woods (1996) wrote that scholars should move away from "whether or not there are differences between the sexes and broaden the scope of the study by moving to the next level and integrating issues such as biological, religious and cultural differences" (p. 382).

Kahn (1991) made an effort to clarify the issue by identifying the four major foundational concerns that many scholars encountered when studying the topic of moral development. He believed that these four foundation points will assist scholars with understanding the field and setting parameters on discussion (Woods, 1996).

Kahn's (1991, as cited in Woods, 1996) four foundational points are:

- Moral Definition – According to Kahn, there are two types of moral definition: consequentialist and deontological. Individuals who seek to produce the best possible outcome in moral decision making are called conseqentialists, while individuals who believe that certain actions are always prohibited or compulsory no matter what outcomes they produce are called deontologists. An example of consequentialism would be a person who commits a mercy killing, believing that it is the best thing to do for a terminally ill person, despite the laws and taboos that condemn the action. An example of deontologicalism is a judge who, lacking suffi-

cient evidence for a conviction, rules in favor of someone he or she believes is guilty because of his or her belief that one must never convict someone without sufficient evidence.

- Moral Ontogeny – Moral ontogeny is the moral development process. Kahn believed that psychologists could explain this development in four ways: endogenous examination, or "the development of morality through internal mechanisms;" exogenous explanation, or "external development such as those which might be stated by behaviorist theories;" interactionist explanations, or a combination of endogenous and exogenous explanations; and "structural interaction [which] occurs through the balancing of mental structures" (Woods, 1996, p. 376).
- Moral Variation – Moral variation describes the differences in moral thinking that one finds between people and groups. One of the main focuses of this point is understanding and accounting for these differences
- Epistemology – The study of moral development in terms of how individuals acquire knowledge of morality.

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Structural Functionalist Theories of Gender Inequality

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Overview

Gender inequality can be defined as the existence of disparities among individuals based solely on their gender rather than objective differences in skills, abilities, or other characteristics. Gender inequality may be obvious (e.g., not receiving the same pay for the same job) or subtle (e.g., not being given the same subjective opportunities for advancement). Although in the United States there are federal laws in place which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and that require equal pay for equal work regardless of one's gender, on average, men get paid more money than women in the United States even today. Women are also often victims of gender stratification, or the hierarchical organization of a society in such a way that members of one gender have more access to wealth, prestige, and power than do the members of the other gender. However, gender inequality is not an issue confined to the United States or other developed countries: It occurs in societies and cultures around the world. Gender inequality is a matter of social justice and human rights wherever it occurs. However; in many developing countries, it is even more so as women are marginalized and thought of as second class citizens. In fact, gender inequality is so important that it is included in the Millennium Development Goals developed by the United Nations. While it is known that gender inequality exists, why it exists is not completely understood. As a complex issue with many underlying determinants, there are a number of different per-

spectives on why it occurs. It is important to investigate these differing perspectives as each provides different suggestions for solving the gender inequality problem. The structural functionalist perspective is one such view which highlights some theories as to why gender inequality occurs; these are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Structural Functionalism & Gender Inequality

Structural functionalists attempt to explain the nature of social order and the relationship between the various parts (structures) in society by examining the functionality of each to determine how it contributes to the stability of society as a whole. Although theorists using other perspectives argue that gender differentiation is bad for society in general and women in particular because it keeps women from reaching their potential and contributing fully to society, from the functionalist perspective, gender differentiation contributes to the stability of a society. Gender roles, in this view, arise from the need to establish a division of labor within the family. Because of their biological role in childbirth and breastfeeding, women in virtually every culture and society around the planet have the primary responsibility for child care. Similarly, men have traditionally had the responsibilities for hunting and waging war because of their relatively greater size and strength.

Socialization

Through the socialization process, these roles are taught to succeeding generations. Although today there are other options for feeding an infant and many jobs today require brain power more than muscle power, this differentiation between gender roles has become ingrained to a great degree. Through socialization, individuals learn to differentiate between what the society regards as acceptable versus unacceptable behavior and act in a manner that is appropriate for the needs of the society. The family (and later the larger society) begins teaching gender roles almost immediately after birth. For example, most infant girls are held more gently and treated more tenderly than are infant boys. As the child grows older, both mothers and fathers usually play more roughly with little boys than with little girls. As a child, little boys are typically also allowed to roam a wider territory without permission than are little girls, and boys are typically expected to run errands earlier than are girls.

Worldview

In addition, through the socialization process, boys and girls are frequently taught different worldviews. For example, sons are typically told that "real boys don't cry" and encouraged to control their softer emotions, while girls are taught not to fight and not to show anger or aggression. Functionalists refer to these different worldviews as instrumentality and expressiveness.

Instrumentality is a worldview that includes an emphasis on tasks, a focus on long-term goals, and concern for the relationship between one's family and other social institutions. To teach this attitude, for example, boys may be taught to be goal-oriented by encouraging them to participate in team sports in which they compete and strive to win or to build models or other long-term projects where gratification is not immediate.

Expressiveness, on the other hand, is a worldview that includes a concern for maintaining harmony and emotional affairs internal to the family. Girls are typically taught to be more emotion-oriented (as opposed to emotional) than boys. For example, girls are often taught how to express their emotions and to look for and react to the emotions of others.

The socialization process of gender roles can be so subtle that when the disparity between the way they teach and treat their daughters and sons is pointed out to many parents, they often respond that the sexes are naturally different not only biologically but behaviorally as well. According to the functionalist perspective, these divergent ways of interacting with the world are mutually supportive. For example, by being expressive and maintaining a harmonious home and family life, women free men from such responsibilities thereby enabling them to go out into the world and focus on long-term tasks and goals. Similarly, by men having an instrumental outlook and interacting with the larger society, women are freed to focus on creating a harmonious home and family life. Although functionalists do not suggest that such traditional gender roles are the only way in which to bring about a stable society, they deposit that traditional roles do have this result.

Parsons & Bales

The functionalist perspective of gender roles with its view of expressive females and instrumental males is based on the work of Parsons and Bales

in traditional societies. Part of the concern of these theorists was that if both partners in a marriage worked outside the home, competition could arise and the marriage could be threatened. As a result, they did separate spheres for men and women as a way to preserve the institution of marriage which they believed was not well supported in urban, industrialized societies. Further, this theory arose during a time in which theories of social stratification assumed that the status of a woman was determined by the status of her husband. Postmodern, postindustrial society no longer accepts this assumption as a given.

Applications

The Functionalist Approach Within a 21st Century Framework

The functionalist perspective of division of labor concerned with instrumental and expressive gender roles was situated in the 1950s when such traditional roles were de rigueur. In many ways, this perspective of gender roles is a product of its time and, perhaps, less appropriate in the 21st century where girls are taught to be goal oriented and participate in sports and boys are taught that it is acceptable to express their emotions. Further, if the functionalist perspective of gender role differentiation were correct, it would be reasonable to expect that all girls and women would be interested in babies and either want to be mothers or to work with children. However, as increasing numbers of women who choose to remain single and childless shows, this is not true.

Similarly, boys and men can lack interest in hard-driving, high-powered roles as executives in the workplace, and prefer to work in more expressive endeavors and spend time with their children. If the socialist perspective were followed to its logical conclusion, such a common class of individuals would be forced into roles for which they were not well-suited, thereby negatively impacting their emotional and psychological well-being. Further, although the functionalist perspective attempts to explain the pervasiveness of traditional gender roles, it does not well explain why males should be instrumental and females should be expressive. Similarly, the functionalist perspective does not take into account other cultures in which females are instrumental and males are expressive.

Changing Family Structure & Gender Roles

Hare-Mustin (1988) underscores one of the weaknesses of the functionalist perspective of gender in her discussion of family change and gender differences. She points out that the functionalist view of gender continues to emphasize the separate roles for men and women despite the changing nature of the family in Western society over the past few decades. Traditionally, most families were patriarchal in nature with a hierarchical structure in which the husband was the head of the household. In such traditional settings, the value of women to the family was their ability to bear and nurture children; the primary value of the children was for their contribution to the family production and, eventually, as caregivers to their aging parents. Family organization was based on specialization by age and gender, predicated on the belief that different types of family members (e.g., males vs. females; young vs. old) were better suited for different kinds of work. In many ways, this specialization was self-sustaining: Men typically disliked doing traditional "women's work" (e.g., housecleaning, doing the dishes, cooking) and women disliked doing traditional "men's work" (e.g., mowing the lawn, fixing the car, paying the bills). However, with the advent of modernization, traditional gender roles began to change. With industrialization, many people sought work in offices, factories, and other organizations, and the home became no longer the center of production. As women began to become an increasingly significant part of the work force, many women found themselves in a position of either having to renegotiate gender roles or find themselves working a "second shift" as career women in the office and housewives in the home.

Developed vs. Developing Societies

Further, although the historical norms regarding the division of labor between the sexes are similar across cultures, they are based on the needs and realities of less developed societies. To a great extent, these norms are changing in more developed societies. Women are no longer confined by their biology to be physically present with an infant to feed it and ensure its survival. Not only can this task be taken on by other women (e.g., nannies, preschool teachers), but by men as well. Similarly, many of the jobs in industrial and postindustrial societies do not require the physical strength necessary in hunter-gather societies in order to successfully provide for one's family. Jobs in information and service industries today, for example,

require little more physical strength than the ability to sit up in front of a computer and rely on brain power, not physical power.

Gender Equality at Work & Home

As women earn more gender equality in the workplace, they also tend to look for more gender equality in the home as well. This attitude frequently affects the division of labor for domestic responsibilities. Many postmodern men no longer see housework as "women's work," and have no problem vacuuming the living room or doing the dishes while the wife pays the bills or finishes writing a document for work. In both cases, the jobs needed for the smooth running of the home get accomplished. Although functionalists posit that traditional gender roles are important for the stability of society, it can be argued that the stability of society depends on the tasks of the various roles being accomplished, not on who accomplishes them. As more women participate in the workforce not only in traditional support roles but in those roles that were once thought to be the sole domain of men, they find that they need different skills and attitudes than are needed for the care of hearth and home. To be a high-level executive in a major corporation, for example, does not require a woman to be expressive. Rather, it requires a goal-oriented, instrumental orientation.

Further, not every woman is married. For some, this is a choice: An increasing number of women are choosing to not get married but to focus on their careers instead. In addition, the high rate of divorce today (approximately 50 percent in the United States) means that a high number of women voluntarily or involuntarily no longer have a male to take the instrumentalist role in the household. Further, increasingly, neither group of women is tending to return to their parents to live but are instead setting up their own households as a female head. In these situations when a woman finds herself in the situation where she is responsible for both the goal-oriented tasks as well as the emotional ones, the gender role is expanded to include both expressiveness and instrumentality so that both the household tasks and the child care tasks are accomplished.

Conclusion

The functionalist perspective of gender roles with its expressive females and instrumental males is a product of its times and its assumptions. Cer-

tainly, traditional gender roles in most societies are based on a division of labor in which women stay home and attend to hearth and family while men go out (whether it be in the hunting ground, agricultural fields, or modern office) and earn a living. However, both for the sake of society and for the sake of the individual and family, it is important that gender roles be flexible so that they can be adapted to changing times of a society, different needs of a family or families, and individual variations in personality and proclivities. It can be argued that the functionalist perspective of gender roles and the concomitant gender inequality that it yields is a description rather than an explanation. Although functionalists do not necessarily imply that traditional gender role paradigms are the only – or even the best – way to ensure the stability of society, they also do not offer alternatives nor do they well consider the changing needs of the postindustrial societies of the 21st century. The functionalist perspective was good as far as it went, describing the reality of most families in the 1950s and reflecting the assumptions of stratification theorists of that time. However, the times have changed and the functionalist perspective no longer adequately describes – let alone explains – the realities of gender roles and gender inequality today. More research is needed in order to gain a better understanding of the role of gender in society today and how the changing requirements of the postindustrial age affect these roles and the stability they affect on society.

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Gender in the Classroom

Ruth A. Wienclaw

Overview

Not too long ago, little girls were expected to excel in home arts, have high verbal skills, and grow up to be wives and mothers or, if they ventured outside the expectations of their culture, to work in low-level support positions to help their male bosses succeed. Little boys, on the other hand, were told that the world was their oyster and were expected to do well in math and science and go on to become doctors, lawyers, and business leaders. The truth is, of course, that "normal" is just a point on a curve and we know today (at least intellectually) that girls can be powerful and assertive while boys can be sensitive and artistic and that nothing is wrong with either of these positions, the old gender stereotypes, or anything in between. In theory, at least, 21st century society embraces the notion that we should support every child to become the best that s/he can be and to not focus on cultural expectations, but at the interests, aptitudes, and abilities of each child as an individual.

This attitude, however, is often better expressed in theory than in application. For example, as little girls start to do better in mathematics, newspapers write articles about how little boys are falling behind in school achievement, an argument very similar to that advanced by feminists half a century ago regarding little girls. Despite the great strides that have been made over the past century, practical feminism still has great strides

to make in the real world before there is truly equity between men and women both on the job and in society. Achieving this goal will take action on many levels and in many venues. To be successful, however, it will be necessary to first achieve equity in the classroom. This is not only because the classroom is where both girls and boys learn and acquire skills necessary for later success, but because it is also in the classroom that both genders learn to either conform to gender roles and stereotypes or to break free of them and allow others to do the same.

Nature vs. Nurture

Scientists have long been divided over the relative influences and contributions of nature (i.e., heredity and constitutional factors) and nurture (i.e., sociocultural and environmental factors) in the development of an individual and the degree to which these factors affect his/her eventual personality, abilities, and other characteristics. Understanding the basics of this controversy is important to understanding how education may affect how the genders are taught and the expectations that teachers have in the classroom. For example, if the assumption is made that boys are inherently better in math and science than girls (i.e., nature), it might make sense to emphasize such subjects when teaching boys, set higher expectations for boys in these subjects, and encourage boys to go into careers that require this type of knowledge while doing the opposite for girls. However, if in general girls and boys are equally likely to excel in subjects related to math and science yet girls are found to do more poorly in these subjects at school, the conclusion might be drawn that there is something within the educational system (i.e., nurture) that is causing the score differential. Therefore, to understand gender differences in the classroom, it is first important to understand to what degree intelligence and other mental capacities are inherently equal – or not – for both genders.

General Intelligence & Gender

In general, scientists have found no gender-based differences in general intelligence between the genders. However, just as every girl is not as smart as every other girl or every boy is not as smart as every other boy, all boys and all girls do not start out with the same intellectual capacities. Rather, general intelligence and other mental traits tend to be normally distributed within the group. For example, as a group, girls tend to be better at spelling than are boys and, in fact, by the end of high school only 30 percent of boys

spell better than the average girl. In addition, girls in general tend to be gifted in verbal abilities whereas boys tend to be overrepresented in the bottom part of the normal distribution for verbal skills. Girls also tend to be more sensitive to touch, taste, and odor than boys and typically learn to talk earlier than boys and are less likely to stutter. Boys tend to outnumber girls in remedial reading classes by a ratio of three to one and are twice as likely to be underachievers as girls by the time they reach high school. Girls are slightly more likely to graduate high school than are boys, but this advantage reverses in college: Men are slightly more likely to graduate college, receive a first professional degree or an advanced degree than are women.

Social Status & Gender

There are many potential reasons for this phenomenon, including the fact that many women still choose to focus on family over career during their children's formative years. However, many sociologists also interpret this phenomenon as evidence of gender stratification – the hierarchical organization of a society in such a way that members of one gender have more access to wealth, prestige, and power than do the members of the other gender. It is important to note, however, that social stratification by gender is not exactly the same phenomenon as social stratification by race or ethnicity.

This would all be a moot point if education did not play such an important role in one's ability to make one's way in the world. Although there are notable exceptions to the rule, in industrial societies, education is frequently an important predictor of one's eventual socioeconomic status, with individuals who have earned a college degree being more likely to obtain higher paying jobs than are individuals with less education. Therefore, if one gender receives substantially different treatment in school than another gender and this differential treatment results in lower expectations or a lower quality education that makes it difficult to advance and eventually obtain higher status and income jobs, then the educational system has failed to provide equal opportunities for all.

Gender Differences in the Classroom

Hidden Curriculum

There are at least three potential reasons for the observed differences between genders in the classroom. First, conflict theorists hypothesize that

girls and boys are subtly taught from an early age that they are different not only physically but emotionally and intellectually, and that they should expect different things out of life. One of the ways this is done is through what conflict theorists refer to as the "hidden curriculum." Hidden curriculum comprises the standards of proper behavior for a society or culture that are taught within the school system. The hidden curriculum subtly reinforces behavior and attitudes that are deemed appropriate by the society or culture so that girls are reinforced for taking an interest in "feminine" pursuits such as home economics or counseling and boys are reinforced for more "masculine" pursuits such engineering and science. The hidden curriculum is an example of a nurture theory of individual differences. Whether or not there truly is a hidden curriculum being taught within the school system, many girls are academically ill-prepared to pursue careers in science, mathematics, and technical fields.

Differing Expectations & Teacher Expectancy Effect

Another way that different the genders may receive a different education within the same classroom is because teachers often may have different expectations for performance and achievement for females and males. It has been posited, for example, that based on gender stereotypes, teachers may tend to expect girls to do better in reading and writing and boys to do better in mathematics and science, setting up what is known as the teacher expectancy effect. This is a type of self-fulfilling prophecy in which the student may pick up on subtle (or not so subtle) cues from the teacher about how well s/he should be performing or what areas s/he should be interested in. For example, if a teacher thinks that girls do better in reading and writing than in math and science, the teacher may praise and encourage the girls when they do well in courses requiring verbal skills but not praise or encourage them as much when they do well in course requiring mathematics or scientific skills. Since most children tend to want to please their teachers and receive positive feedback, therefore, they will tend to work harder in the areas that they know will result in positive reinforcement from the teacher.

Applications

Mixed-Gender vs. Single-Gender Educational Settings

Canada and Pringle (1995) performed a study to examine the social construction of gender differences in classroom interactions in the five years

immediately following the transition of a former women's college to a mixed-gender institution. Their review of the research literature showed a trend for modern mixed gender education to place the girls and women at a notable disadvantage. On the other hand, the research reports that women who attend women's colleges tend to have greater self-esteem at graduation, less gender stereotyped career aspirations, are more engaged in college activities, more likely to enter certain traditionally male professions, more likely to earn higher salaries, and more likely to reach high levels of achievement in their careers after college. Further, research findings suggest that these advantages may accrue the more time one spends in an all female institution. However, not only Canada and Pringle but other researchers as well note that much of the research on the success of women's colleges in helping women to break out of gender expectations or stereotypes fails to adequately separate the effects of attending an all women's college from other factors that might also yield these results. Further, it is noted that researchers still do not understand which factors or processes confer these advantages to women. Therefore, it is impossible to amend mixed gender institutions so that they do not place women at a disadvantage.

Data were collected through observation of interactions between students and professors in the classroom. This was done during the middle of the semester, a time where most students are comfortable enough with a subject area and professor to ask questions, but not at the end of the semester when there potentially could be a disproportionate amount of interaction between students and professors due to questions about end of course requirements. The observers prearranged their visits with the professors and arrived early to the class in order to choose a seat that was peripheral to the main body of seats in the classroom but with a clear view of both the students and the professor. During the first ten minutes of the class, the observer created a diagram of the classroom and marked the positions of the professor and each student as well as the gender of each student. Following this activity, observations were conducted for the next 30 minutes of the scheduled class time.

Canada & Pringle (1995) found that the behavior of "female students and both male and female professors change depending on whether or not male students were in the classroom. The behavior of both female and male

students in coeducational classes was related to the proportion of male students" present (p. 179). Further, the gender of the professor was found to be related to classroom dynamics in a complex manner. It appeared that gender was important in coeducational classrooms in ways that it was not in female-only classrooms. The verbal behavior of female students was found to be strongly influenced by the presence of males in the classroom and gender differences were more obvious in mixed gender settings.

Conclusion

In industrialized societies, education has been shown to be positively linked with various factors including career success, salary level, and socioeconomic status. This linkage is even more likely to hold true in postindustrial societies that are primarily based upon the processing and control of information and the provision of services. Further, it is in the classroom where one learns not only the technical and professional knowledge necessary for success, but often also the social norms for interactions and gender roles and expectations. This frequently puts women at a disadvantage. On the other hand, when efforts are made to improve the education received by girls and women, it is the males that sometimes suffer. However, it should be remembered that it is not so much that we as a society need to make sure that women (or men) are given a superior education to make up for past inequities, but that any obstacles to educational parity are removed.

Unfortunately, in many cases this is easier said than done. Although females may not differ significantly on intelligence than males, in some circumstances it has been found that the genders need to be taught differently in order to get the same concept across. In addition, research has consistently shown that there are gender-based differences in academic achievement in different subject areas. Much research is still necessary to understand what factors cause gender-based differences in education and how to create an environment that will foster educational equity between the genders.

However, whether these observed differences are due to nature or nurture is far from clear. In addition, it must be remembered that just because men and women do not differ on measures of intelligence does not mean that there are not individual differences both within and between classes. The point is not so much to make sure that one gender is given a better edu-

cation, but that both genders are offered an education that is free from gender role expectations and gender stereotyping and that helps each person realize his or her potential.

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Gender & Economic Inequality

Ruth A. Wienclaw

Overview

Even in the early 21st century, women frequently do not receive the same recognition – including salary – for doing the same job a man does. In general, as shown in Table 1, women in the United States earn less income than men. The most commonly cited explanations for such statistics are sexual discrimination and glass ceilings: The differential treatment of individuals based on their sex. Although sexual discrimination can occur against either sex, in most cases in today's society it occurs against women. Sexual discrimination can be exhibited in such actions as lower wages being given to one sex for the same work performed by the other sex, discounting of the characteristics or attributes of one sex in comparison with the other, or unfair hiring or promotion policies that are biased against one sex. Although there are undoubtedly cases in which sexual discrimination does account for the differences seen in pay between women and men, it is not the only explanation.

The discrepancy in earnings data above is very interesting, particularly given the fact that there are a number of federal laws in place that require employers to not discriminate on the basis of various non-job-related characteristics, such as race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Title VII), age when one is over 40 (ADEA), or disability (ADA). In addition, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 requires that equal pay be given for equal work regardless

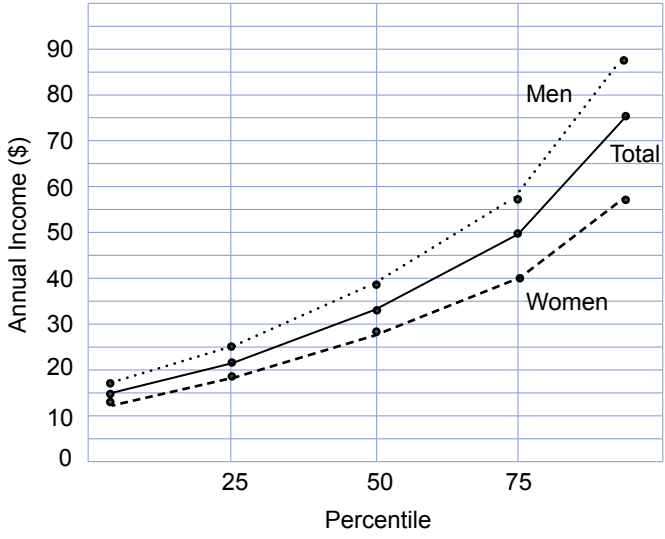
of gender. Other laws require that various types of businesses take steps for affirmative action to hire various types of people that may be underrepresented in the workplace as well as making sexual harassment in the workplace both illegal and actionable. Despite such legal safeguards that have been created and implemented in order to help ensure gender equality in the workplace and to eliminate sexual discrimination, differences still exist between the average annual income between women and men. As shown in Figure 1 below, on average, men get paid more money than women in the United States. However, this difference is minimal at the lower end of the scale (e.g., the 10th percentile shown in the figure), but more marked the higher one goes, data that are often interpreted to support the existence of glass ceilings in the United States.

Table 1: Earnings of Year-Round, Full-Time Workers by Selected Gender: 1999

Sex	Number	Percentile of earnings distribution ($)					Average earnings ($)
		10th	25th	50th (Median)	75th	90th	
All	82,966,500	$15,000	$22,000	$33,000	$50,000	$75,000	$43,000
Male	48,814,790	$16,000	$25,000	$38,000	$57,000	$87,000	$50,000
Female	34,162,710	$13,000	$19,000	$28,000	$40,000	$56,000	$33,000

(adapted from http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/censr-15.pdf)

Figure 1: Relative Earnings of Year-Round, Full-Time Workers by Gender: 1999



Factors of Inequality

Education & Domestic Responsibility

Although sexual discrimination in the workplace is certainly one explanation for these differences (and it would be difficult in good faith to make the argument that sexual discrimination does not still exist today), it is not the only possible explanation nor does it necessarily explain all the data. One explanation for the differences in pay between women and men is that men are more likely than women to attend graduate or professional schools that enable them to obtain high paying jobs and professional careers. This situation is gradually changing, but men are still more likely to have the received the training or education needed for higher-paying jobs than are women. This occurs not only on the professional level, but on lower levels as well. This may be due in part to the fact that many women today still are forced (or at least feel the need) to choose between career and home. Some of these women try to "do it all" by attempting to work full time in a job or career while still raising a family and tending to the house. Traditionally, there has been a division of labor based on gender (i.e., women have the primary responsibility for child care while men work outside the home). This division of labor arose due to the fact that the physical capacities of women (e.g., their size, shape, and strength), their psychological and psychological makeup (hypothetically), and their reproductive biology made them less fit for hunting and war than men. When women did begin to work, therefore, it was historically in support roles that did not conflict with the gender roles and stereotypes of the culture: Secretaries, sales clerks, and other jobs that did not offer women the same type of upward mobility as did "male" jobs of business owners, executives, and so forth.

Work Devaluation

Further, the type of work that women typically do is often devalued. The work that women have traditionally done in the home is often seen as support work rather than skilled labor. As a result, "women's work" (e.g., nurse, secretary, flight attendant) is often valued lower than occupations traditionally considered to be "men's work" (e.g., physician, business executive, airline pilot). Therefore, individuals in these positions are paid less for their work in part because of this devaluation. Further, some women work part-time rather than full time so that they can split their attention

between career and family. Most women take maternity leave from their job when they are close to term or have just had a baby. Some women also take time off from their careers in order to be at home to raise their children before they go to school, high school, college, or other benchmark times in their lives. Although these decisions may be good for the woman and her family they all represent significant time off from work. This means that these women do not have the same level of experience or job skills as their male counterparts (who, for the most part, did not take time off for such activities) and are, therefore, less likely to be promoted or advance as quickly in their career paths as men.

Women & Poverty

It is not only in the job market that there is economic inequality between the genders. Women have also shown to be overrepresented among those who live below the poverty line. Although a disproportionate number of the poor has always comprised women and children, more recently, the proportion of women and children among those living at or below the poverty line has been increasing. For example, in 1959, only 26 percent of heads of households were women; by 1998, however, this figure had increased to 57 percent (Schaefer, 2002). This phenomenon of increasing numbers of those living below the poverty line being women and children – referred to as the feminization of poverty – is not only national, but global as well. Within the United States, several factors have led to the feminization of poverty. These include a dramatic growth in families in which a female is the head of the household, a decline in the proportion of the elderly who are living at or below the poverty level, and continuing gender stratification with concomitant wage inequality between women and men. More than 50 percent of poor households are headed by women. These women tend to be young and without the support of an extended family that was able to help such individuals in the past. Because of the current tendency for nuclear rather than extended families, divorced women are more likely to set up their own households rather than move back in with their parents and single teenage mothers are more likely to set up their own households rather than to continue to live with their parents (Pressman, 1988).

Theories of Economic Inequality

There are a number of theoretical approaches that are used to explain economic inequality (Morris, Bernhardt, & Handcock, 1994). Accord-

ing to one perspective, economic inequality is the result of a mismatch between jobs and skills. As society moves from industrialization to post-industrialization, better paying jobs require more education and skills. As a result, those with less education or training must work in lower paying jobs. Many of these individuals tend to be minorities or women. However, there is an upside to this theory: Once those individuals in lower paying jobs acquire the skills or education necessary to better themselves, the economic inequality will decrease. A second popular theory concerning economic inequality is the polarization of skills. According to this theory, the postindustrial shift to a service-based economy will create a two-tiered labor force. In this view, the upper tier workers (i.e., those with the skills needed for the service industry) not only get the higher paying jobs, but will also have greater security and opportunities for upward socioeconomic mobility. Those without the skills, on the other hand, will become members of a growing bottom tier of workers who are qualified only for low skill jobs with concomitantly low pay and little security. Some observers believe that this polarization is caused by the very nature of postindustrial society. As advances in technology continue, these theorists believe that many of the middle range jobs will disappear because the same tasks will be able to be performed by lower skilled individuals with the aid of technology. Concomitantly, the demand for highly skilled individuals to design and develop high technology solutions will continue to grow. In this way, the workforce may become polarized into high-level jobs and low-level jobs.

Applications

Conducting Income Inequality Studies

Although understanding and reducing economic inequality between the genders is important from the viewpoints of human rights and social justice, much of the information about the causes and nature of this phenomenon are not based on empirical research. Economic inequality between the genders is not a simple relationship between gender and earnings. Other important determinants of one's economic condition include marital status, number of children, and public income transfers. In recent years, however, more attention is being paid to this important issue. Ozawa and Yoon (2003), for example, investigated gender differences in economic

well-being in the United States. The researchers investigated economic inequality using data from the years 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 of the Current Population Surveys of the United States Census Bureau. These surveys have been designed to enable investigators to analyze the economic lives of the population in the United States at the level of the household, family, or individual. The study examined the economic well-being of adults aged 18 to 64.

The Results

The results of the study indicated that not only is there a net difference between the sexes in economic well-being, but that this difference widened during the time period covered by the study (i.e., 3.9 percent difference in 1969 and a 15.0 percent difference in 1999). This is a particularly interesting finding given the fact that many people believe that economic inequality between the genders is decreasing. This finding existed in every year examined in this investigation. In addition, the findings of the study indicated that the economic well-being of women was affected by two factors: Their increasing levels of education and changes in marital status. As could be expected, higher levels of education were positively correlated with a rise in economic status. Further, this correlation was found to be greater for the relationship between these two variables for women than it was for men. Concomitantly, however, single marital status (i.e., divorced or never married) was more negatively correlated with economic well-being for women than for men. Finally, the study found that the economic well-being of women was more adversely impacted by children than was that of men.

In addition, economic status depends not only on one's earnings on the job, but on other factors as well, including ones wealth and assets. Deere & Doss (2006) examined the differences in these key variables for the sexes. Wealth and income are typically highly correlated. However, it is important to separate these two variables in order to better understand differences in economic status between the sexes. The distribution of wealth by gender is important because it is an indicator of the prevalence of economic inequality. In addition, wealth is related to both economic and political power. If women are less wealthy, they are by extension less powerful politically and less able to impact policies that will decrease economic inequality between the genders.

Conclusion

Economic inequality between the genders is a fact of life for many people today. The problem is so pervasive and so important that Goal 3 of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals is to promote gender equality and empower women. It is easy to stand back and declare that economic gender inequality is a result of sexual discrimination and glass ceilings. However, the phenomenon is more complicated than that. When looking at the economic gender gap, it must be remembered that these statistics are by nature generalized. Just because women are on average less economically well-off does not mean that all women are less well-off than all men. In addition, there are many factors that can legitimately account for observed differences in the economic well-being of women versus men. Some of these have to do with the decisions that each of the sexes makes regarding career and family. These inequalities may change as gender roles change and domestic responsibilities become more evenly split between the sexes. Another factor that contributes to the gender gap is the preparedness of women to compete for higher-paying jobs. Research has shown that as women attain the higher levels of education necessary to compete, they are more successful in the job market and that concomitantly their economic well-being rose. More research is needed to better understand the reasons for economic gender inequality so that women can be better educated about their choices between career and family and can make informed decisions. Such research can also be used to make informed policy decisions to help women become more economically successful and counteract any lingering effects of discrimination in the workplace.

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Gender & Stratification: The Effects of Social Marginalization

Sherry Thompson

Overview

A myriad of studies indicate American women do not enjoy the same opportunities to attain high status positions as do American men. This is no surprise as power, privilege, and status have most usually been rendered more available to men across time, countries, and cultures (Marini, 1990). Researchers continue to work to identify why status differences continue to exist despite various attempts at equalization. Primary contributors to this phenomenon are 1) biological differences, 2) assigned social roles, and 3) the division of labor. Researchers argue over how these three factors can be used to adequately measure status differences based on a person's sex. Many current scholars hypothesize that women's status is on the rise; women now earn a larger percent of higher education degrees, women can now be found in high-status occupations (albeit in low numbers), men are now reported to take on relatively larger portions of private realm duties (e.g., child care, house cleaning, etc.), and leaders are more careful to include both genders when speaking publicly (Chafetz, 1984; Marini, 1990; Sanday, 1973; U. S. Census Bureau, 2006). Yet, arguments remain that women are not attaining equitable opportunities for status as quickly as originally anticipated.

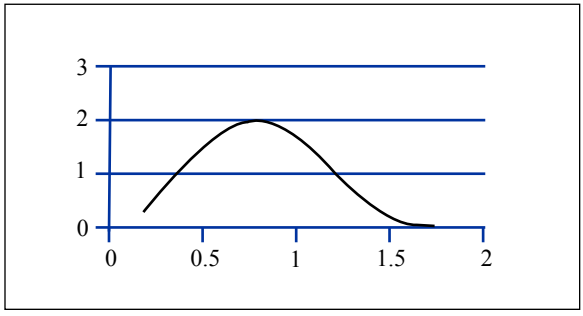
Status Attainment & Workplace Status

In seeking to explain why status appears to be an elusive goal for women, researchers have sought to understand intersections between biological

differences and gender status in the workplace (Friedl, 1975), societal structures/barriers and gender status in the workplace (Chafetz, 1984; Sanday, 1973), and the impact of how women perceive their societal roles (Gilligan, 1982). Though well-meaning, many researchers have erroneously equated status attainment to workplace status for women. This is simply another example of how researchers confound their own studies of gender stratification by attempting to shoehorn females into a male-oriented model of status attainment (Irigary, 1985). Women gain and lose status in American society in ways that are more complex than their male counterparts, due to the secondary role assigned to them within the societal structure. Their status is easily impacted by the man they marry and by how they maintain their private realm duties as they juggle their responsibilities in both the private and public realms.

The workplace cannot be deemed a reliable measure (nor a realistic indicator) of status stratification for women for several reasons (Zipp & Plutzer, 1996). First, the status of a woman's husband has a parabolic effect on whether women even enter the workforce. This means women with husbands of low socioeconomic status often lack the skills to enter the competitive workforce while women with husbands of high socioeconomic status are afforded the opportunity to decide to remain at home to pursue personal interests and rear their children. Single women and women with husbands whose socioeconomic status is somewhere in the middle of the range are those most likely to enter the workforce as viable competitors for high-status workplace positions. Figure 1 shows a graph that is parabolic (in this case the shape would be an upside-down bowl) with low numbers of women married to both high-status and low-status husbands shown as not in the competitive job market and high numbers of all women in between in the job market.

Figure 1



Second, women who are widowed or divorced may find themselves thrust back into the competitive workforce. Although they often possess high levels of training and experience which were accumulated prior to their child-bearing years, they often experience bias due to their decision to remain at home and tend to private realm duties (e.g., caring for children, keeping the household running properly, etc.) prior to the life change. Their often high levels of training and job experience are dismissed as being "old," or they are viewed as holding a low level of commitment to their public realm duties due to their years of absence from the workplace.

Third, researchers have not paid much attention to the effects of females being socialized into marginalized positions in society via exclusionary language, their experiences within organizational structures, and the behaviors of significant adults during their early adolescence. Each of these factors needs to be more fully examined to understand the gendered social stratification extant in American society. This paper will explore the latter of these three factors.

Further Insights

"One, two, buckle my shoe. Three, four, shut the door..." This popular jump-rope song is recited by young girls every day. Eerily, many girls will personally shut doors on opportunities for present and future success before they finish junior high or middle school as they are socialized to accept a marginalized societal position.

Marginalization of Young Women

Marginalization appears to be potentiated by many variables. Its roots are often deeply embedded within a society and, many times, the oppression is felt but not acknowledged as such by those who are marginalized (Friere, 1971). When considering the process of marginalization, it is important to be cognizant that the process is both ambiguous and complex.

During adolescence, girls are working to create a self-identity, a sense of hope, and their potential places in society. Adolescence is informed by the wealth of their individual childhood experiences. These foundational experiences shape many of the responses, thoughts, and actions of each girl. When marginalization is informing adolescent development, girls often

do not feel valued, included, listened to, or intelligent during the junior high/middle school experience. Some girls discover alternative paths to self-empowerment: other girls may not fare so well. Educational ambition and performance often decline by the time girls enter high school if they have not established a sense of hope, self-efficacy, and empowerment (Gariglietti, McDermott, Gingerich, & Hastings, 1997). This will impede their ability to attain high social status as adults.

However, girls should not be viewed as victims of marginalization. A victim role assumes the girls have no recourse in the situation and implies these girls must be rescued when, in fact, girls are quite capable of rescuing themselves if provided a little support. Girls first need to become cognizant of the ways in which they are marginalized and then they must choose to eradicate the marginalizing variables. They can only become empowered through consciousness of marginalizing factors coupled with personal actions and decisions (Friere, 1971).

Socialization of Girls

Three fields of influence tend to inform the ways girls are socialized to a marginalized place in society. They include:

- Attitudes appearing to have genesis inherent in the society in which she lives;
- Factors embedded in the culture of the educational system; and
- Self-limiting views or temperaments.

Attitudes Appearing to Have Genesis in the Society

Parental and societal actions and ideologies impact a girl's self image and conceptualization of her ability to succeed. Girls often look to their mothers or other women in the community as mentors. These women have the power to instill either a sense of hope and self-efficacy or despair in girls' perceptions of their abilities and societal value (Gariglietti, McDermott, Gingerich, & Hastings, 1997). Current American conceptions of gender create devaluation and inequity. Sex has been discursively constructed as a power/knowledge relation (Foucault, 1980) and is used in society to categorize people in a convenient manner. Luce Irigary (1985) posits that

sex is not even considered to be a system of binary difference; rather, it is constructed by our society as a "Logic of the Same". That is, we recognize one sex (i.e., male) and have identified attributes to define success and status based on maleness. Anything that is not male is, by default, considered to be female; uniquely feminine attributes have not been used to craft a definition of success and status for females. The fallacy in this manner of thinking is that it makes it impossible to consider femininity as something "self-determining, separate from, and independent of masculinity" (Irigary, 1985; Walkerdine as cited in Gilbert, 2001).

According to Gilbert (2001), "the source of [girls'] oppression lies, not in their biological bodies, but in the meanings that is given to those bodies: that is, in our discursive constructs of them" (p. 299). Girls should not be trained to be "substitute men" (p. 291) when sources of equity are pursued. For a girl to thrive, she must be free to create for herself a "personality consistent with women's healthy psychological development rather than one defined [only] in relation to men" (Dressel & Molson, 1996, 216).

Factors Embedded in the Educational System

Embedded in the culture of the educational system are the subtle and not-so-subtle biases exhibited by teachers and administration. Teachers are often implicated in the academic marginalization of girls. This makes intuitive sense because they represent the service delivery point within the system. Children spend several hours a day under the care and tutelage of teachers who become powerful informers to the children they teach. Children constantly watch and monitor a teacher for clues as to whether the teacher likes them, considers them to be smart, values them, and thinks they can succeed.

Intersecting with the issues of the marginalization of girls in the educational system are the boys who also attend the school. Boys have learned a range of rule-breaking strategies which allows them to gain control within the classroom context while retaining the bulk of the teacher's time and energy; thus making them the center of attention (Baxter, 2002; Sadker, 1999). Conversely, girls tend to follow the classroom rules and are often expected to help control the boys. This is often detrimental to their education as well as to their future ability to attain high social status because girls become stereotyped as less aggressive, less independent, and less am-

bitious than boys and are, thus, often viewed as incapable of pursuing or succeeding in the hard sciences and the business world (American Association of University Women, 1991).

Sadker and Sadker (1994) reported that teachers ask boys more questions than they ask girls; particularly questions involving academic content. In addition, teachers give more constructive feedback (both verbal and non-verbal) to boys than girls (Jussim & Eccles, 1992; Kelly, 1988). School becomes a place in which girls experience and struggle with the existing power differentials and learn their societal place in the periphery while the boys maintain their position on center stage.

It is a difficult task to construct meaning from the complex, ambiguous power relations that exist in a public school. Language and gender literature examine the power differential between girls and boys in three ways:

- Deficient—girls' talk is less powerful than boys' talk;
- Different—girls' talk differs stylistically and is undervalued as compared to boys' talk; and
- Girls are often silenced by the more dominant, aggressive boys' talk (Coates, 1995; Swann, 1992; Swann & Graddol, 1988).

Baxter (2002) conducted research which substantiated claims that girls are less valued, less confident, and less effective than boys as speakers in public school settings. She posits that girls are set into powerful subject positions in the classroom (i.e., girls are socialized to be more collaborative, good listeners, and supportive in public discourse) while rendered powerless in the same instance by socialization that encourages them to follow rules regarding hand raising and not interrupting (whereas the boys are not corrected for speaking out of turn or interrupting the girls). Girls, during discourse in the classroom, are subjected to a stream of interruptions, guffaws, and distractions from many of the boys in the classroom. These distractions do not allow the girls the ability to develop an articulated point of view in a sustained way. This appears to lend to the development of a lowered self-concept, a loss of hope, a personal view that

they are less capable, and an inability to perceive themselves in high-status positions based on their own merits (Baxter, 2002).

Self-limiting Views or Temperaments

Prior research also suggests girls tend to attribute success to external factors (e.g., luck) and failure to internal factors (e.g., lack of ability). For example, when questioned about difficulties in understanding curriculum concepts, girls reasoned that they were "just not smart enough" to do well in mathematics and science (American Association of University Women, 1991; Kerr, 1996; Reis, 1991), thus negating their likelihood to pursue further knowledge and/or future careers in these areas.

Self-confidence helps children take risks that may result in failure. Failure is an important part of the risk-taking that is inherent in the learning process (Behn, 2003). Students need to be confident enough to incorporate instances of failure into their learning experience while maintaining learning momentum. Petry's study suggests many girls have not developed the requisite self-confidence due to their perceived lack of ability in the academic setting which has often been reinforced in their educational environment (as cited in Wimer, Ridenour, Thomas, & Place, 2001, p. 86).

These are only a few of the factors that, when braided together, work to create the social marginalization that can impede girls' ability to attain high status positions in their futures. Young girls must also navigate ideological beliefs of religious institutions, the media, and peers as they work toward personal empowerment. They must come to terms with societal attitudes which tend to objectify them in sexual ways while denigrating or ignoring their manifest intelligence. Young girls often appear to allow themselves to be excluded from opportunities for success despite their demonstrated ability to succeed academically.

Status attainment for females is very different from that of males. Although it has been studied for the past two decades, it is still not clearly understood how marital status, the socioeconomic status of a female's significant other, lessons in marginalization during adolescence, and actual educational and workplace attainments work to establish the parameters within which a woman can attain and maintain societal status as an adult.

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Political Inequality

Ruth A. Wienclaw

Overview

The 2008 American presidential election is an interesting one for several reasons: It is the first time in years that the race does not include a sitting presidential or vice presidential incumbent running for president; balances of power between the political parties in the White House versus Congress are also of interest; and perhaps most intriguing, the presidential candidate in one major political party is an African American and the vice presidential candidate in the other major political party is a woman. Regardless of the election's outcome, a member of one of these two minority groups will hold a position within the highest elected office in the country.

Looking at things from a gender perspective, it is necessary to note that it was not long ago that women in this country did not even have the right to vote, let alone run for office. Although individual states extended the right to vote to women earlier, women in the United States did not win the national right to vote until 1920 with the ratification of the nineteenth amendment to the constitution, which states that "[t]he right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation." Since that time, of course, women have made great strides forward in the political arena not only registering their opinions through their votes, but also by banding together

to form political blocs that encourage change or by running for and being elected to political office themselves. Yet, as shown in Table 1, the share of parliamentary seats held by women across the globe remains low.

Table 1: Women's Share of Parliamentary Seats in 146 Countries, 1998

Region	Number of countries included in analysis	Number of countries with greater than 30% women in parliamentary body	Percent of countries with greater than 30% women in parliamentary body
Sub-Saharan Africa	39	0	0%
Middle East and North Africa	14	0	0%
Asia and the Pacific	21	0	0%
Latin America and the Caribbean	31	0	0%
Eastern Europe	17	0	0%
Scandinavia	5	4	80% (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden)
Western Europe and Anglo Countries	18	1	.06% (Netherlands)

(adapted from Kenworthy & Malami, 1999)

Making Strides

Similarly, research performed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union has found that women represent only 18 percent of legislators at a national level around the world (2008). Although such statistics may appear at first glance to be discouraging, women have actually made significant progress toward political equality over the past few decades. For example, in 2003, women won 48.8 percent of the seats in the lower house of Rwanda's national legislative body (Hughes, 2007-8). Recently, women have also been elected as heads of state in Finland, Liberia, and Chile and as the heads of government in Germany, Jamaica, and South Korea (Gomes, 2007). The presidency of the European Union is currently headed by a woman and the Speaker of the House of Representatives in the United States is also a woman.

Factors Influencing Female Political Success

Political Factors

The literature posits a number of types of factors that may affect the probability of a woman gaining election to a parliamentary body. The first of these comprises political factors.

Studies indicate that women are generally more successful in electoral politics in situations where voters choose among party lists and multimember districts rather than in situations in which there are individual candidates and single member districts. In general, political parties are more likely to nominate women candidates (and voters are more likely to vote for them) if women are only a part of the candidates on the party's ticket. It has been found, for example, that many voters vote for a party ticket whether or not some of the individuals on that ticket are women, rather than voting for individual candidates.

Further, research indicates that the structure of the electoral system is important for the election of women candidates. For example, there are differences between "the party lists/multimember districts system of balloting and the proportional representation method of seat allocation, whereby each party wins a number of seats in proportion to" its share of the votes cast in the election and the way in which they are perceived by voters (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999, p. 238). As the number of seats in the

district becomes smaller, the identity of the individual candidates becomes increasingly important to the voters and, therefore, to the party.

In addition, the partisan composition of the legislature may also affect the number of women that win seats. More liberal parties typically express greater commitment to reducing gender inequality than do more conservative parties. As a result, liberal parties tend to nominate more women candidates than do conservative parties; therefore, it can be expected that the larger the share of seats held by liberal politicians within the legislature, the greater the proportion of women among those seats.

Another political factor that can affect the proportion of women elected to the legislature is women's voting rights. Statistics indicate that the longer women have had the right to vote within the country, the greater the percentage of women to vote in the elections.

Socioeconomic Factors

A second set of factors that are important determinants of women's chances of gaining election to the legislature are socioeconomic factors. The progress of women within the political arena is typically correlated with the progress of women in other arenas.

One important area that appears to be related to women's political progress is their educational progress. Typically, individuals who are able to be successfully elected to the legislature bring with them educational credentials (e.g., law school, business school). Therefore, it has been theorized that furthering the education of women may be an important factor in this expanding the number of women who are qualified and motivated to run for office, and are, therefore, more likely to win election. In addition, voter participation and education tend to be strongly correlated. Therefore, many theorists believe that as women continue to attain higher educational levels, they will concomitantly turn out in greater numbers to vote, which could mean the election of more women to office.

Another socioeconomic factor that has been found to be correlated with women's participation as candidates within the electoral process is their activity as part of the labor force. For example, it has been found that women who work outside the home are more likely to be active participants

in politics. This can be due to a number of factors. For example, women who are active members of the labor force tend to gain confidence and other skills necessary to be successful in politics. Further, working outside the home could help women obtain funds to help them launch a political campaign. In addition, participating in the labor force affords women the opportunity to network with other individuals who can help them launch and run a successful political campaign. Many theorists believe that as women's participation in the labor force rises, they will turn out in greater numbers to vote and also be more likely to run for office. However, the mere fact of women participating in the labor force is not necessarily sufficient to improve the probability of women running for and winning elected office. For the most part, elected officials typically come from professional fields like law, education, journalism, and business. Such individuals tend to be better educated, better public speakers, and knowledgeable in both the law and the political system.

Another socioeconomic factor that can affect the participation of women in the political process is size and strength of the women's movement within that country. Such organizations not only provide women candidates with a support network to help them win elections, but also can provide women candidates with political and financial resources to help them get elected.

In addition, another social economic factor that has been suggested to promote gender equality in the political arena is the economic development of the country. It has been suggested that the more wealthy a country is, the less likely it is that its politics will be preoccupied with economic concerns. As a result, both the political parties and the voters may be more likely to consider other factors, such as gender equality in the election of political officials.

Cultural Factors

In addition to political and socioeconomic factors, the likelihood of success of women in the political arena can also be affected by cultural factors. Simply stated, societies that tend to affirm, promote, or believe in equal political, economic, social, and civil rights for all people tend to be more likely than other societies to promote and foster the active participation of women as candidates and elected officials within the political system. For example, women's willingness to run for political office tends to be higher

in European and North American countries than in other areas of the world (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999). The similarities of these cultures and the differences between them and cultures in other areas of the world has been theorized as one of the reasons for the success of women in politics in these regions.

Applications

Benefits of Women's Political Participation

Although increasing women's participation in politics, particularly in the role of legislators and other elected officials, is an admirable goal and one that should help bring greater equality for women, it is not the only way in which equality for women can be achieved. Short of revolution, it is unlikely that women would have even received the right to vote if they had not been given it by men. One might wonder, therefore, why achieving greater political equality for women is an important goal. Hughes (2008) points out that greater political equality for women is important for several reasons. First, women often focus on the creation and passing of different kinds of legislation than do men. In particular, women are more prone to focus on issues of sexual discrimination and harassment, maternity leave, reproductive rights, and female health care that would otherwise not receive as much attention. Further, the presence of women in important political positions also gives them more visibility and helps men better understand that women are capable of important political and nonpolitical positions as well as help women improve their self esteem and give them higher aspirations. The participation of women as candidates in the electoral process has also been hypothesized by some observers to encourage the participation of women in the voting process. Despite these benefits for women in particular and society in general, women are not only often underrepresented in political office, but also not empowered or unmotivated to participate in the political process through voting. For some, voting is considered a matter of human rights and social justice. Unfortunately, because of their culturally imposed gender roles, women have often been marginalized and their contributions to society devalued.

United Nations Millennium Development Goals

Goal 3 of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals is to promote gender equality and empower women. In some countries, quota systems

have been set up to mandate the proportion of women that are to be elected to legislative office under the assumption that electing women who will pay more attention to women's issues into office will result in greater gender equality. For example, four out of the five major political parties in Germany have voluntarily adopted gender quotas that have helped increase the number of women in the Bundestag to comprise nearly one-third of its membership (Xydias, 2007-8). However, Schild (2000) rightly points out that even when government institutions take steps to reduce discrimination and to open opportunities for women, official strategies – as necessary as they are – do not necessarily translate into true social justice for women on a grass roots level. The political goal of achieving gender equality often becomes a technical task (e.g., creation of laws that prohibit discrimination) rather than one of true social justice for women.

Gender inequality is a situation experienced not only in countries that are still undergoing economic development, but occurs in developed countries as well. Rather than representing real underlying differences in abilities, the inequality of women typically has to do with the gender roles dictated to them by their cultures. For example, women are more likely to perform tasks within the home than are men in many cultures, and are also less likely to receive the type of education necessary to allow them to acquire paid employment that will help them to improve their socioeconomic status than are men. Across the globe, women are slowly becoming more able to participate in paid, non-agricultural employment in areas such as southern and western Asia and Oceania where women have historically had the lowest levels of participation in the labor market. However, in other regions (e.g., northern Africa), progress in this area is virtually non-existant. Despite such advances, however, women tend to be more likely to be unpaid for their labors than men not only within the home but also as unpaid family agricultural workers. Because of this fact, women tend to have less access to social protection or job security. Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals is designed to help in this matter by ensuring that by the year 2015 all children – girls as well as boys – will be able to complete a full course of primary education. Social observers and theorists believe that these situations can be improved through the election of women to political office (United Nations, 2007).

Conclusion

From an egalitarian point of view, the participation of women in the political process – not only as enfranchised citizens but also as candidates and elected officials – is in and of itself an important goal. In addition, from a social justice point of view, the participation of women in the political process is likely to help advance the state of women's issues and gender equality. Although progress is being made in this area, however, there is still a long way to go before women are considered more than a novelty in the political structures of many countries. More research is needed to better understand how best to support women in gaining gender equality in this important arena.

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Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Gender

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Overview

Traditionally, at least in Western society, gender – or the psychological, social, cultural, and behavioral characteristics associated with being female or male – was thought by many individuals to be an unalterable result of one's sex. Males, therefore, being the bigger and stronger of the sexes, were taught that they had a biological imperative not only to propagate the species, but to protect it. As a result, boys were taught from an early age to be aggressive, independent, dominant, and achieving. Women, on the other hand, were thought to be limited by their reproductive biology, in particular the constraints placed on them (or believed to be placed on them) by menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth, and lactation. As a result, girls were taught from an early age to be nurturing, sensitive, emotional, and passive. There were exceptions to this rule, of course, such as women who out of necessity or inclination eschewed home and family and made their way in the world. However, such examples were typically looked on as aberrations –exceptions that proved the rule rather than broke it.

Cultural Gender Perspectives

Then came Margaret Mead and her research with the native peoples of New Guinea. Her work set the notion of the biological imperative for gender stereotypes on its ear. In the Tchambuli culture of New Guinea, gender roles for women include doing the fishing and manufacturing as

well as controlling the power and economic life of the community. The Tchambuli women also take the lead in initiating quartering behavior as well as sexual relations. On the other hand, Tchambuli men are dependent, flirtatious, and concerned with their appearance, often adorning themselves with flowers and jewelry. In addition, men's interests revolve around such activities as art, games, and theatrics (Coon, 2001). If gender roles were completely biologically determined, the wide variation between American and Tchambuli gender roles would not be possible because the biology is the same in both cultures. As a result of this and other evidence, most social scientists reached the conclusion that culture and socialization also play a part in gender role acquisition.

Not all cross-cultural gender role differences are quite as glaring as the comparison between traditional Western culture and the Tchambuli, however. Chuang and Cheng (1994), for example, performed a cross-cultural study to examine differences in gender role attitudes between Chinese and American students. Specifically, the researchers were interested in whether or not these were gender differences in attitudes towards women and gender roles and whether or not they were cultural differences in these attitudes. Subjects in the study came from a predominantly white State University in North Carolina and from the national University in Taiwan. The subjects were given a set of survey instruments (translated into Chinese for the Chinese subjects) that examined attitudes towards women, marital roles, social interaction, male preference (for female subjects only), and expressivity (for male subjects only). Consistent with previous work in this area, the researchers found that all female subjects in both cultures desire to be more equal whereas males' desire is to continue to play a dominant role in society. The study also found that the Chinese subjects tended to be more conservative than the American subjects and that the Chinese women preferred masculine, dominant males more strongly than did their American counterparts.

Generational & Ethnic Gender Perspectives

International boundaries are not the only types of parameters that define cultures. Frequently even within a society, differing generations can have their own cultures. To this end, Franco, Sabattini, and Crosby (2004) explore the associations among gender-related ideologies, values, and behaviors and Latino and White families in the United States. The objectives of the

study included examining the correspondence among attitudes, values, and behaviors from two different ethnic groups and to determine whether or not daughters perceive that their mothers and fathers differ in their gender-based ideology and commitments to gender roles. Subjects were given a survey instrument that asked them to report on their perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' ideologies, values and behaviors. Other standard instruments were used to measure perceived gender role ideology, perceived personal values, perceived commitment to roles, and perceived behaviors of the parents. The results of the study indicated that Latinas were more likely than white respondents to indicate that they believe that their parents had traditional gender roles. Similarly, Latinas also believe that their parents exhibit a more traditional division of household labor. However, Latina participants did not differ significantly from white participants in their perceptions of the amount of time that their mother spent on parenting, although white participants did believe that their father spent more time parenting than did Latino participants.

The Effects of Time on Gender Perspectives

Not only do gender roles differ across international, ethnic, and generational lines, they can also change and evolve within a society. As any student of history (or student forced to read history) knows, cultures change over time. For example, although some of the architecture remains in the 21st century, the culture of first century Rome differs greatly from the culture of 21st century Rome. If, as assumed by many theorists, gender role is largely a product of socialization and culture, it would be reasonable to assume that gender roles also will evolve to support these changes. Marini (1990) traces some of the changes between gender roles and the evolution of society from hunter-gatherers to industrialization. Prior to industrialization, the structures of work and family in societies were closely integrated. In such societies, large families were an economic asset because more children meant more workers within the family to plant, cultivate, and harvest. As a result, the reproductive role and productive work of mothers was valued in such societies. However, with the trend toward urbanization, gender roles also shifted. With increased population density, women were no longer required to participate in crafts and increasing specialization moved such activities away from the home and to the workshop. As society continued to evolve and agricultural activities improved with greater dependence on

tools and animals, women's participation was no longer as necessary for the success of the family farm. As a result, women shifted their focus to less economically visible activities, primarily within the home. With the onset of industrialization, this all changed again, as institutions outside the family became the centers of economic focus and workers left the home for employment. Because protective labor legislation limited the employment of children, they became dependent on adults and needed adults as caretakers. Combined with the fact that there was little demand for women's labor outside the home, this led to a greater degree of differentiation of labor within the role, which was absorbed into the gender roles.

Applications

Difficulties in Gathering Data

Gathering data in the social sciences can be a difficult task at best. This is due in part to the fact that although one can in many cases observe and even quantify data regarding an individual's behavior, just knowing what the end behavior is does not explain why the individual behaves that way. For the most part, social scientists are interested in why behavior occurs so that they can better understand the underlying processes that resulted in that behavior and be better able to explain and predict future behavior. For example, suppose that two people are window shopping on a lazy summer afternoon and the one person turns to the other asks if s/he would be interested in getting an ice cream. The second person politely demurs, and the two continue their leisurely stroll. As social scientists observing this interaction, all we know for certain is that the second person refused to get an ice cream. What we do not know is why that person refused. We could, for example, interpret this response to mean that the second person was not hungry at that time. However, a host of alternative explanations are also available. The person might not like ice cream, be lactose intolerant, be on a diet, not have sufficient funds on hand to purchase an ice cream cone at that moment, need to go home soon and not have time to enjoy an ice cream cone, be afraid that the mid-afternoon snack might spoil his/her dinner, or be saving money for another purchase that s/he wants more. The list of possible explanations is seemingly endless. Therefore, as social scientists, it would be difficult for us to draw any conclusions or make any generalizations based on this single event. Even if we observed the behavior multiple times in similar situations, we still would not now

why the person refused to get an ice cream. Although we might be able to predict that the person would refuse to get an ice cream in a similar situation in the future, we would not now why this was true. Therefore, we would not be able to explain the individual's behavior. However, the goal of social science research is not only to predict behavior, but to explain it as well. For this reason, social scientists develop psychometric instruments that attempt to gather data or make measurements of the attitudes, behaviors, and other intangible mental factors that result in the observed behavior.

Gathering psychometric data about people's attitudes and opinions can be an even more complex task than gathering behavioral data. It is often difficult for us to articulate our own reasons for doing something, a fact that makes developing questions on a psychometric measurement instrument as difficult. Further, attitudes and opinions can be complex. Going back to the example of the ice cream, we might ask the person who refused whether or not s/he likes ice cream on a scale of 1 to 5. However, that question alone might not tell us whether the person only likes some flavors (which that particular ice cream parlor did not carry). Therefore, we would need to think through what we were really trying to ask, and develop a list of questions that the person could answer regarding the extent to which s/he likes ice cream. Further, different people might have different reasons for the same action. For example, although Person A might only like one flavor of ice cream and Person B might only like another. Person C, however, might all flavors of ice cream but not like the mouth feel of the brand sold at that particular store. To understand the whys of the refusal, therefore, we would have to take such layers of thinking into account. If we were performing our research in a cross-cultural situation, we would experience the further complicating factors such as language and cultural norms and expectations. For example, if we asked a person in Palermo whether or not s/he liked ice cream, we might receive a blank stare because in Italy people are more familiar with gelato, a similar frozen dessert. If we asked a New Guinea tribesperson the same question, s/he might have no idea what a frozen dessert in general was, let alone ice cream in particular.

The Importance of Cross-Cultural Research Tools

Gathering cross-cultural information about ice cream, of course, is much less difficult than gathering cross-cultural information about gender roles

and stereotypes. Many researchers have written about the problems attendant on the performance of cross-cultural research regarding gender. There are a number of steps that can be taken in order to help design a psychometric instrument that will be useful in all cultures in which it is used. First, psychometric instruments intended to be used in cross-cultural settings should be designed with this in mind. In addition, such instruments need to be tested for reliability (the degree to which a data collection or assessment instrument consistently measures a characteristic or attribute) and validity (the degree to which a survey or other data collection instrument measures what it purports to measure) within all settings that they will be used. As discussed above, one cannot simply assume that a measurement instrumented designed based on the assumptions of one culture will validly collect data within a different cultural setting. To do this, it is important to have the input of someone who understands the culture (and language, if appropriate) well so that concepts can be expressed in such a way that the data truly measure what the researcher is interested in studying. Further, before an existing instrument that has been developed and validated in a single culture is assumed to be valid in another cultural situation, it must be first validated in that situation.

Conclusion

When one has spent one's entire life within a single culture, it is easy to believe that every culture has the same norms and expectations for behavior. This applies not only to the behaviors expected of everyone within a polite society, but also to the gender roles and stereotypes to which the sexes are expected to conform. However, social science research has found that far from being a biological imperative, gender roles and stereotypes are to a great extent a function of socialization and are culturally bound. Further, cross-cultural differences in gender roles are not only defined by international boundaries, but by cultural differences between generations and even ethnicities within a single society. Even within a single culture and generation, social roles can no longer be assumed to be stable: Many researchers have found that gender roles evolve over time, often moving toward more flexibility, adaptability, and androgyny.

Global Gender Knowledge

The cross-cultural aspects of gender roles and stereotypes is much more than an issue for idle contemplation by social scientists, however. There is a practical aspect to this area of study as well. As modern society becomes more and more global in nature and businesses need to learn to survive in cultures around the world, it is important to be able to understand and accommodate the gender role expectations of other societies without losing one's own identity. For example, some Asian countries expect women to be subservient and men to be dominant, and many Muslim counties expect women to wear a hijab and be under the protection of a male. In order to be successful in working with people of such cultures, members of Western societies need to understand these cultural assumptions. This does not necessarily mean that the Western individual needs to change to meet the same assumptions, but they must take them into account. Doing so can be a complex and diplomatic process that can only be successful if the gender role assumptions are known and understood.

The fact that there are differences in gender roles and stereotypes between cultures and that these roles and stereotypes may change over time raises a number of interesting issues. First, what is the purpose of gender roles within a culture? To some extent, gender roles must have originally developed in order to support the biological functions of the sexes and to ensure the continuation of the species. However, as societies evolve from being hunter-gatherers to being agrarian, preindustrial, industrial, and postindustrial, is the evolution of gender roles a necessity for the stability of society? Can a society tolerate multiple gender role paradigms (e.g., traditional male/female breakouts versus postmodern androgynous roles), or is it important for society that subcultures (e.g., ethnicities, religions) support the evolution of gender roles as well? At least within American society, there is still much heterogeneity of gender roles. In some quarters, only the traditional gender roles of nurturing, emotional female and aggressive, dominant male will suffice. In other quarters, however, anything goes and the belief is that each individual should be free to express his/her gender in whatever way the individual feels is appropriate. Social scientists are still pondering these and other questions about gender roles. Before they can be answered, however, much more research needs to be done.

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Terms & Concepts

1963 Equal Pay Act: Prohibits employers from offering unequal pay to employees on the basis of sex.

Androgyny: The presence of both feminine and masculine characteristics or traits as traditionally classified in one individual.

Bestiality: Bestiality is a term used to describe a sexual act (kissing, petting, intercourse) between a human and an animal.

Bias: A research bias occurs when some members of the overall population are more likely to be included in the research than others. The best way to avoid bias is to use a random sample of the population.

Biosocial Theory: Any theory in the behavioral or social sciences which posits that behavior is the result of a complex interaction between biological and social forces.

Bipolar Scale: A bipolar rating scale is structured in such a way as to have a transitional midpoint between two extremes. In the case where a preference is indicated, each extreme would indicate a distinct preference, while the midpoint can signify either indifference to both or preference to each. In a bipolar scale, the definition of the midpoint has the potential to impact the meaning of other points as well.

Capitalism: An economic system in which the means of production and distribution are privately owned (i.e., not owned by the government or

state) either individually or corporately (i.e., by a group of individuals) and operated for profit. In capitalism, investments, distribution, income, production, and pricing are determined by a free market economy.

Class: A group of people or stratum within society that shares a similar level of wealth and income and that have access to the same resources, power, and perceived social worth. Social class is the stratum of the group within the society. (See also: social stratification)

Cognitive Development: How the thought process is constructed during a person's life span, starting with childhood and going into adulthood.

Cognitive Developmental Theory: Cognitive developmental theories of gender socialization emphasize the active role of the child in gender construction, and the developmental changes in children that allow them to conceptualize gender differently over time.

Committee for Research in Problems of Sex (CRPS): The Committee was established in 1922 within the National Research Council's Division of Medical Sciences with the cooperation of the Bureau of Social Hygiene and support from the Rockefeller Foundation. Its central purpose was the investigation of human sexuality in the context of morphology, physiology, and psychology. Due to the support of the committee, a great deal of new data on various aspects of human sexuality was accumulated. The Committee was discharged in 1963.

Conflict Perspective: An approach to analyzing social behavior that is based on the assumption that social behavior is best explained and understood in terms of conflict or tension between competing groups.

Control Ratio: The amount of power one has to limit other people's realization of their goals or to escape external limitations of one's own goals as compared to the amount of power to which one is subject to real and potential goal limitations by others (Hickman & Piquero, 2001).

Correlation: The degree to which two events or variables are consistently related. Correlation may be positive (i.e., as the value of one variable increases the value of the other variable increases), negative (i.e., as the value of one variable increases the value of the other variable decreases), or zero (i.e., the values of the two variables are unrelated). Correlation does not imply causation.

Cross-Cultural: In the social sciences, cross-cultural refers to any methodological approach or research study that is used to better understand how specific social behaviors are practiced in different cultures.

Cultural Product: A cultural product is an idea, value, belief, artifact, or social institution that is created within a society and which becomes accepted as something

Culture: A complex system of meaning and behavior that is socially transmitted and that defines a common way of life for a group or society. Culture includes the totality of behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and other products of human work and thought of the society or group.

Defiance: Deviant acts that reject societal norms in an effort to avoid the infliction of serious harms (e.g., political protest, vandalism, etc.) without providing apparent benefits to the actor (Hickman & Piquero, 2001).

Detrimental: Causing injury or damage.

Deviance: Any action or activity that differs from accepted social standards or what society deems to be normal (Webster's New World College Dictionary, 2001)

Discourse: Language/speech used in a way which organizes knowledge, ideas, and experiences into a formal and orderly expression of thought on a subject.

Doing Gender: A theoretical perspective on gender which posits that gender is a construct that is interpreted by members of a society through the ongoing social interactions that individuals have with each other.

Dyad: A group with only two members (e.g., husband and wife; father and child).

Economic Development: The sustainable increase in living standards for a nation, region, or society. More than mere economic growth (i.e., a rise in output), economic development is sustainable and positively impacts the well-being of all members of the group through such things as increased per capita income, education, health, and environmental protection. Economic development is progressive in nature and positively impacts the socioeconomic structure of a society.

Empowerment: To have the power to retain one's own agency and free will.

Equitable: Dealing fairly and equally with all concerned. Not to be confused with equal.

Ethics of Care: Gilligan's contention that women have traditionally been taught a different kind of moral outlook that emphasizes community, caring, and relationships.

Ethnicity: A social construct used to describe a relatively large group of people that shares a common and distinctive culture such as common history, language, religion, norms, practices, and customs. Although members of an ethnic group may be biologically related, ethnicity is not the same as race.

Exploitation: The exploiter uses others or other organizations to coerce, manipulate, or extract property from others – creating personal benefit while disregarding the desires or well being of the exploited (Hickman & Piquero, 2001).

Expressiveness: A worldview that includes a concern for maintaining harmony and emotional affairs internal to the family.

Feminism: An ideology that is opposed to gender stratification and male dominance. Feminist beliefs and concomitant actions are intended to help bring justice, fairness, and equity to all women and aid in the development of a society in which women and men are equal in all areas of life.

Feminist Social Constructionists: Feminist Social Constructionists examine how women's roles in society are created by the interplay of social forces and institutions. They say that because gender roles are socially created, they can be changed.

Functionalism: A theoretical framework used in sociology that attempts to explain the nature of social order and the relationship between the various parts (structures) in society as well as their contribution to the stability of the society by examining the functionality of each to determine how it contributes to the stability of society as a whole. Also referred to as structural functionalism.

Gender: Psychological, social, cultural, and behavioral characteristics associated with being female or male. Gender is defined by one's gender identity and learned gender role.

Gender Identity: The recognition that one is either male or female based on both biological and psychosocial considerations, and the internalization of this gender concept into one's self-identity.

Gender Inequality: Disparities among individuals based solely on their gender rather than objective differences in skills, abilities, or other characteristics. Gender inequalities may be obvious (e.g., not receiving the same pay for the same job) or subtle (e.g., not being given the same subjective opportunities for advancement).

Gender Pay Gap: The disparity in wages paid to men and women irrespective of the fact that they may hold similar jobs or perform similar work.

Gender Role: Separate patterns of personality traits, mannerisms, interests, attitudes, and behaviors that are regarded as "male" and "female" by one's culture. Gender role is largely a product of the way in which one was raised and may not be in conformance with one's gender identity.

Gender Role Self-Concept: An individual's sense of self as related to gender roles, attributes, and behavior.

Gender Schemas: Gender schemas are cognitive structures that allow children to organize information efficiently, and maintain stability and predictability. Gender schema theory, proposed by Sandra Bem, is considered a cognitive developmental theory of gender socialization. Bem believes that gender schemas are androcentric and polarized.

Gender Segregation: One of the most consistent findings in gender socialization research is that children, beginning by age three, choose to play with same-sex peers. The self-selected segregation is not influenced by adults, occurs in different cultures, lasts until adolescence, and is accompanied by rigid definitions of gender appropriate behavior and roles.

Gender Stereotype: A culturally defined pattern of expected attitudes and behavior that are considered appropriate for one gender but not the other. Gender stereotypes tend to be simplistic and based not on the characteris

tics or aptitudes of the individual, but on over generalized perceptions of one gender or the other.

Gender Stratification: The hierarchical organization of a society in such a way that members of one gender have more access to wealth, prestige, and power than do the members of the other gender.

Glass Ceiling: A theoretical societal barrier that prevents able and ambitious individuals from advancing to positions of power and prestige within their job or career path. The glass ceiling can be experienced by individuals because of their race, ethnicity or gender.

Hermaphrodism: A condition of ambiguous sexual identity. A hermaphrodite is an individual who possesses both female and male sex organs.

Hidden Curriculum: The standards of proper behavior for a society or culture that are taught within the school system. The hidden curriculum is not part of the articulated curricula for schools, but is taught subtly through the reinforcement of behavior and attitudes that are deemed appropriate by the society or culture.

Homosexual: The term homosexual refers to sexual behavior with or attraction to people of the same sex.

Human Rights Movement: An international movement that promotes the cause of human rights throughout the globe. According to Article 1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood" (United Nations, 2009).

Human Sexuality: Human sexuality refers to the various physical, psychological, intellectual and emotional ways in which people experience and express themselves as sexual beings, the awareness and expression of themselves as male or female, and the capacity they have for erotic experiences and responses.

Hypothesize: To make a tentative assumption in order to draw out and test its logical or empirical consequences.

Identity: A sense of self often developed in relation to others.

Ideology: The integrated assertions, theories, and goals that create the general belief system for a group of people.

Industrialization: The use of mechanization to produce the economic goods and services within a society. Historically, industrialization is a society's transition between farm production and manufacturing production. Industrialization is associated with factory production, division of labor, and the concentration of industries and populations within certain geographical areas and concomitant urbanization.

Information Technology: The use of computers, communications networks, and knowledge in the creation, storage, and dispersal of data and information. Information technology comprises a wide range of items and abilities for use in the creation, storage, and distribution of information.

Instrumentality: A worldview that includes an emphasis on tasks, a focus on long-term goals, and concern for the relationship between one's family and other social institutions.

Interactional Styles: Interactional styles are ways that individuals employ their body and language when engaging in conversation with someone else.

Interpersonal Role Conflict: Conflict that arises from the competing roles performed simultaneously by a single person.

Intersexual: Intersexual is a term coined to describe individuals who are born with both male and female genitalia.

Intrapersonal Role Conflict: Conflict that may exist between people, seen often in work settings, regarding the expectations associated with different roles.

Justice: Universal principles of fairness.

Kohlberg, Lawrence: A development psychologist famous for his research on moral education, reasoning, and development. He identified six stages of moral development.

Linguistic Strategies: Linguistic strategies refer to the ways that individuals employ language in conversation. Examples include interruption, using silence, and topic raising.

Marginalization: To relegate a person or subgroup to the outer edge of the group (i.e., margin) by demonstrating through word or action that the person or subgroup is less important and less powerful than the rest of the group.

Marked Words: In linguistics, many words are said to have a basic, neutral form and a marked form. Although forms can be marked phonetically, phonologically, morphologically, syntactically or semantically, in this context, marked is used to described how words are changed to reflect male and female forms.

Moral Development: The process through which children are taught to display proper attitudes and behavior to other individuals in society, especially as they relate to social and cultural norms as wells as rules and laws.

Moral Relativity: The idea that moral and ethical propositions are neither objective nor universal. Rather, morality is dependent upon factors such as social, cultural, historical and personal context.

Normal Distribution: A continuous distribution that is symmetrical about its mean and asymptotic to the horizontal axis. The area under the normal distribution is 1. The normal distribution is actually a family of curves and describes many characteristics observable in the natural world. The normal distribution is also called the Gaussian distribution or the normal curve of errors.

Norms: Shared rules, customs, and guidelines that govern society and define how people should behave in the company of others.

Occupational Segmentation: The gendered division of different industries and types of work.

Operationalize: To define abstract concepts in concrete ways to that they can be more easily measured.

Oppression: Empowering or privileging one group at the expense of another; subordinate

Parental Socialization: According to those who study gender from an individualist perspective, parents are the primary source of gender socialization. Research on parents as socialization agents is mixed, however, with some research demonstrating differential treatment of male and female

children – especially with respect to choice of toys, games, and activities – and some research demonstrating similar treatment of male and female children – especially with respect to nurturance, warmth, and disciplinary practices.

Patriarchy: A social system (e.g., society or group) in which the male is the head of the family, descent is traced through the father's side of the family, and men have power over women.

Pedophile: The term pedophile refers to a person who either has acted on intense sexual urges towards children, or experiences recurrent sexual urges towards and fantasies about children that cause distress or interpersonal difficulty.

Peer Group Socialization: Some researchers study gender as a product of social interactions. Rather than viewing socialization as a hierarchical, top-down process - as when parents influence children – they study socialization as a dialogical process of mutual influence between peers. Indeed, because of the gender-segregated nature of children's play, same-sex peers are often the primary source of information for children about what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior for boys and girls.

Physical Abuse: A physical behavior that is violent toward another person (e.g., assault, battery, inappropriate restraint).

Piaget, Jean: Developmental psychologist known for his studies of children, theory of cognitive development and epistemological view called "genetic epistemology."

Postindustrial: The nature of a society whose economy is no longer dependent on the manufacture of goods (i.e., industrial), but is primarily based upon the processing and control of information and the provision of services.

Poverty Line: The minimum annual income necessary for an adequate standard of living. The poverty line is determined by the government and differs from country to country. According to the United States Census Bureau, the poverty line for individuals in the U.S. is $10,590.00 and for a household of two adults and two children is $21,027.00. This figure in the United Sates is based on income before taxes and does not including capital gains or noncash benefits such as public housing, Medicaid, or food

stamps. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. Globally, the poverty line is typically considered to be approximately $1.02 per person per day. However, this figure varies depending on the country and its level of economic development. Also referred to as the poverty threshold (http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld/thresh07.html).

Predation: Deviant acts that include direct physical violence, manipulation or acquisition of property that provide apparent benefits to the actor. Predation includes harms against both self and others (Hickman & Piquero, 2001).

Psychoanalytic Theory: Psychoanalytic theory, founded by Freud, emphasizes the unconscious processes that influence gender identity. According to psychoanalytic theorists, gender identity development is a more difficult process for boys because they must separate from their primary identification with the mother. Boys learn to define maleness as the negation of the feminine.

Psychometrics: The science and process of mental measurement. The science of psychometrics comprises both the theory of mental measurement as well as the methodology for adequately and accurately capturing and individual's intangible attitude or opinion.

Reinforcement: An act, process, circumstance, or condition that increases the probability of a person repeating a response.

Roe v Wade: A 1973 US Supreme Court case which resulted in the ruling that states cannot ban first trimester abortions.

Role Models: Individuals who serve as a model for a behavior or social role.

Roles: The actions associated with a person's status.

Sample/Sampling: For research purposes, a sample is a subset of the population to be studied. Because overall populations are generally too large to study, a sample of the population is used. A random sample, considered the best way to avoid bias, is one in which any individual member of the total population has the same probability of being selected as any other member of the population.

Self-Efficacy: One's personal belief regarding one's level of capability and ability to influence situational outcomes (Bandura, 1994).

Self-Fulfilling Prophecy: A situation in which one's belief or expectation sets up a condition where the belief or expectation is met. For example, a student who thinks that s/he will not do well on an examination even if s/he studies will not study and, therefore, not do well on the examination.

Sex: The biological aspects of being either female or male. Genetically, females are identified by having two X chromosomes and males by having an X and a Y chromosome. In addition, sex can typically be determined from either primary or secondary sexual characteristics. Primary sexual characteristics comprise the female or male reproductive organs (i.e., the vagina, ovaries, and uterus for females and the penis, testes, and scrotum for males). Secondary sexual characteristics comprise the superficial differences between the sexes that occur with puberty (e.g., breast development, hip broadening for women and facial hair and voice deepening for men).

Sexual Abuse: The violation or exploitation of another person by sexual means. For adults, sexual abuse includes all non-consensual sexual contact. Sexual abuse can arise in relationships of trust (e.g., between a caregiver and the person being cared for).

Sexual Discrimination: The differential treatment of individuals based on their sex. Although sexual discrimination can occur against either sex, in most cases in today's society it occurs against women. Sexual discrimination can be exhibited in such actions as lower wages being given to one sex for the same work being performed by the other sex, discounting of the characteristics or attributes of one sex in comparison with the other, or unfair hiring or promotion policies that are biased against one sex.

Social Change: The significant alteration of a society or culture over time. Social change involves social behavior patterns, interactions, institutions, and stratification systems as well as elements of culture including norms and values.

Social Construct: Any phenomenon that is invented (i.e., constructed) by a culture or society. Social constructs exist because the members of a society behave as if it exists rather than because of the availability of criteria that are necessarily obvious to an objective outside observer. Race and ethnicity

are both examples of social constructs. (Also.worth. Social stratification is a system of structured social inequality.

Socialization: The process by which individuals learn to differentiate between what the society regards as acceptable versus unacceptable behavior and act in a manner that is appropriate for the needs of the society.

Societal Structure: A social framework used to divide groups into a hierarchical order. This order is imposed on all of society and its dominant groups' beliefs are expected to be adopted by all of the lesser groups within the order.

Society: A distinct group of people who live within the same territory, share a common culture and way of life, and are relatively independent from people outside the group. Society includes systems of social interactions that govern both cultural and social organization.

Socioeconomic Status (SES): The position of an individual or group on the two vectors of social and economic status and their combination. Factors contributing to socioeconomic status include (but are not limited to) income, type and prestige of occupation, place of residence, and educational attainment.

Sociology: The scientific study of human social behavior, human association, and the results of social activities.

Status: A socially established position within a society or other social structure that carries with it a recognized level of prestige.

Stereotype: A set of generalized expectations and beliefs about the qualities, abilities, and other characteristics of a given group of people who belong to an identifiable social group or category (e.g., race, gender, ethnicity). Although stereotypes can be useful in making simplified and expedited short-term judgments, they tend to be exaggerated and negative, do not take into account individual differences, and are difficult to change. As a result, the application of stereotypes in the long-term may be counterproductive. Stereotypes tend to be shared and be widely held by the members of a group.

Stratification: A division or arrangement into layers of classes, castes, or social groups.

Subject: A participant in a research study or experiment whose responses are observed, recorded, and analyzed.

Survey: (a) A data collection instrument used to acquire information on the opinions, attitudes, or reactions of people; (b) a research study in which members of a selected sample are asked questions concerning their opinions, attitudes, or reactions are gathered using a survey instrument or questionnaire for purposes of scientific analysis; typically the results of this analysis are used to extrapolate the findings from the sample to the underlying population; (c) to conduct a survey on a sample.

Taxonomy: Taxonomy is the practice and science of classification. Taxonomies involved the divisions of kinds of things into units, referred to as taxa that are arranged into a hierarchical structure so that they may be studied.

Teacher Expectancy Effect: The impact of a teacher's expectations of a student's performance or achievement on the actual performance or achievement of that student. The teacher expectancy effect is a type of self-fulfilling prophecy.

Telework: A situation in which an employee works outside the traditional office or workplace – typically at home or on travel. Transmission of data, documents, and communication occurs via telecommunications or network technology. Also referred to as telecommuting.

Twin Study: A research study in which the subjects comprise pairs of twins. The object of twin studies is to try to better understand the relative contributions of heredity and environment on behavior, traits, and other attributes of interest. Twin studies often involve the use of pairs of twins some of whom have been reared together in the same situation (so that environment remains relatively stable) and some of whom who have been reared apart in different situations (so that environmental factors vary significantly).

Values: Intangible qualities or beliefs accepted and endorsed by a given society.

Variable: An object in a research study that can have more than one value. Independent variables are stimuli that are manipulated in order to determine their effect on the dependent variables (response). Extraneous variables are variables that affect the response but that are not related to the question under investigation in the study.

Wage Gap: See gender pay gap.

Woman's Suffrage: A social movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which sought to secure voting rights for women. It resulted in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

Worldview: Broad framework of ideas and beliefs used by an individual, class, or culture to interpret the data received from the world and determine the appropriate way of interacting with the world.

Contributors

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