

Family and Gender

The Impact of the Forces of Production-Feminist Conflict Theory

F. Engels

1. The **nuclear family** is the product of dialectical social change.
2. As **private property** and the division of labour increases, women's role and status is increasingly alienated.
3. The **privatized nuclear family** is patriarchal and bourgeois.

In the Nineteenth Century

1. . More equality between men and women
2. b. The division of labour provided more equal relations between genders
3. c. **The institutions** were less compartmentalized-school, work, family
4. d. The old were valued-gerontocracy
5. **E. Intensive interaction**, family and community less oppressive, less alienating.



Family & Capitalism

- The **forces of production** are designed around the nuclear family....
- The ideal typical nuclear family **produces and reproduces** both consumers and future producers.

Conflict Theory Ideology

- Marx and Engels-**ideas are social creations**, but the economic power of the appropriating **class gives dominance** in the **ideological** as well as the economic sphere.
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Natural Nuclear Family?

- Embedded in Natural Family are notions of gender difference including **the acceptance of male superiority**
- Capitalism provides the **NORMATIVE** foundations for family violence.....
- And for **gender inequality**...

19th vs 20th Century Family

1. **Separation** of home and work
2. **Women's work**-the domestic sphere
3. **Ideology** `The Cult of True Womanhood'
and `Cult of Domesticity=Bourgeois
Ideology-Man's home is his castle!!

Family and Industrialization:

- **1. Early Industrialization-early 19th century in Europe,**
- **Later 19th century in United States, early 20th century Canada**
- ***Family life rooted in class differences and economic survival, men, women and children in factories. Leads to Reform Movement-children in school, women in the private sphere**
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Advancing Industrialism

- 2. (Early 20th century)
- **rationalization, assembly lines, commodity fetishism.**
- **Class difference intensify, women are seen as second class citizens, women fight for the right to vote, a split between public and private, the Age of the Expert.**
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Mid 20th Century-

- **Women used as tools for industrial economy. Women's work is invisible labour: in peace-time they are “slaves of the household”, during War-time they are “productive, wage earning patriots”.
Ie. Rosie the Riveter**

Return to cult of domesticity

- **4. Post World War Two- 1950's women pushed back into the home, suburban middle class glorifies nuclear family, gives rise to Baby Boom- 1948-1963.**
- **1950s = 'The Making of the 60's'**

Post War to 1980s

- 5. Economic stability 1950 gives rise to 1960's,**
 - Introduction of the Pill, rejection of authority-governmental and parental, radical rejection of traditional nuclear family.**

- 6. 1970's Second Wave Feminism-Gloria Steinum, Suzanne Keller-sexual revolution, women in the workplace, movement for equality in the workplace, equality in wages for work of equal value.**

1990 to 2008

- **7. 1980's economic downturn, Soviet Threat give rise to**
- **The New Right, Pro-Family Movement under Reagan and Thatcher.**
- **8. 1990's Globalization leads Post-Modernism-
embrace of family diversity, acceptance of
plurality. More questions about the future of
Family.**

Stages in Family Patterns

- 1900 –1914 Domestic family
- 1914-1918 WW1 –women in factories
- 1919-1929 Return to domesticity

Mid 20thc to Now

- 1929-1939 Depression and survival
- 1945-1960 Cult of domesticity Nuclear
- 1960-1980 Second Wave Feminism
- 1980-1990 New Right vs Third Wave
Femism
- 1990-2008-Global economy.

Changes in the Family include:

1. a. **Increasing isolation** of older people
2. b. **Erosion of the instrumental** view
(productive) of the family
3. c. **More emphasis on a sentimental** that
might not be there
4. d. **Preoccupation with childrearing-** Dr.
Spock
5. E. **The transfer to outside agencies** of many
family functions

Post Modern Womanhood

- Ageism and Sexism
- Women live longer than men.
- Women's **bodies are `objectified'-**
EMPHASIZED FEMININITY..
- Women are observed more frequently in the culture than men based on their biological characteristics
- Women's stages in life tend to **be socially constructed around age** to a greater extent than a man:

Post Modern Manhood

- **Breadwinner ideology** vs. Sensitive man
- Instrumental role confused
- Towards **Hegemonic masculinity**
- Ageism and Sexism

Susan McDaniel

- According to **Susan McDaniel** “Women and Aging: A Sociological Perspective”
The **development of the field** is rooted in the 1970’s. While sociologists began to study aging in the 1940’s it took another 30 years for them to begin the focus on **double jeopardy**. Currently the emphasis has moved to **triple** and **quad jeopardy**.

The Symbolic Interactionist's View of Gender

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- Throughout **elementary school**-separated by sex..(girls line, boys line)
- **Same sex clusters**-sit together, eat together
- Playground-gendered turf..
- **Two worlds**-two identities
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Ageist and Gendered Society

- **Gender** should be conceptualized as a system of relationships rather than an **immutable and dichotomous** given.
- **Girls Social Relations**-private sphere, smaller groups friendship pairs..

Girls communities

- **Girls communities**, sub-cluster-contextual understanding of gender **relations...boundaried collectivities**
- While gender is less central to the organization and meaning of some situations, in others it is crucial.

- In “Girls and Boys Together but Mostly Apart” by Barry Thorner
- **Girls Language** (girls talk) more intense exclusive friendships, keeping and telling secrets, shifting alliances,

Some Interactionist Questions:

- a. How and when does gender enter into group formation?
- b. In a **given situation**, how is gender more or less salient or infused with particular meaning?
- c. How are these processes affected by the organization of institutions (schools, neighbourhoods, or summer camps)
- d. How are the processes affected by varied settings-**playgrounds, classrooms, waterfountain?**

Method and Sources

Barry Thorne

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1976/77 –classrooms working class elementary school in Calif. 8% Black, 12% Chicano..3 months of participant observation-naturalistic..
Sex Segregation: Daily Processes

Deliberate activity, dramatically visible...What are the situations? What are the processes?

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Gender happens/Age Happens

- Gender happens with no mention of gender
 - Implicit in the contours of friendship
 - Full of Processes** Including:
 - a. planning of activities
 - b. invitations
 - c. seeking access
 - d. saving of places
 - e. denials of entry

Gender Segregation

- When gender is explicitly provoked by teachers and by students it is usually for the purpose of separation..Gender was a physical marker in the adult organized school day Such as:
 - a. addressing **clusters of children**-girls don't do that
 - b. sorting and organizing activities
 - c. marking off territories-girls close to the school, boys further away

Notice Thornes : Symbolic Interactionist
Approach

Louise Dulude (1987)

- Wrote an excellent article “**Getting old: men in couples and women alone**”

A typical women marries a man that is older...”the marriage gradient”instead of bringing women twilight years filled with fulfillment and serenity, it brings many of them a decade of loneliness, ill **health and poverty**....

For instance, while there is still an age gap of approximately seven years between men and women, that gap is declining.

- **Unmarried women** aged 65 are three times more likely to be alone than men.
- But if they do, or if they find a younger man they still need to contend societies **double standard of ageing....**

Ageism and Sexism

- Ageism is embedded in our culture and it continues....despite the efforts of the women's movement there is a continual backlash from the media to be youthful especially for women

Girls adopt this prejudice, this ideology

- It proved that young girls continue to believe certain traditional ideologies as do young boys.
- The boys claim that **younger women are preferred** because they are more graceful, pliant, and easier to influence.

Girls internalize this prejudice....and the age factor continues through life.

The Beauty Myth

The notion the **youth is beauty** is still with us women in particular....as they enter their **30's, 40's and 50's**...each time a women lies or tries to conceal her age she is buying into this ideology. **The Double Standard of Aging**

Naomi Wolfe

- As the Naomi Wolfe article points out, the female definition of **beauty is patriarchal** and rooted, **lowers her self esteem.**

A century ago the kind of activity that would lead a women to power was classified as ugly and sick.

- She calls this the **cult of female invalidism** - social pressure demanded that leisured, educated, **middle-class women** be passive...not to impair womenhood....

Without beauty

- 1. **Without beauty** she slides into nothingness and mutilation
- 2. Rewards beauty on **outside health** i.e smoking makes you thin
- 3. Short term **beauty fixes** lasers on the face
- 4. The 50's and 60's are men's peak and women's decline
- 5. Women should **live hungry** Women's gender caused them pain. (from the beginning of history to the 1960's)

Legitimacy

- **Legitimacy** comes to us from without in a variety of ways:
 - a. **“Experts”** We accept when we hear from authorities-parents, teachers, religious leaders, or some
 - b. **Experience**-easy explanations of the reality of our own lives
 - c. **Community**-shared believes and values
 - d. **Class interest**-opposing views...
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earner.

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