

Gender and Sexuality

- Traditional Sex Roles
- Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
 - Homosexuality, social perspectives, and lesbianism
- Sexism and Gender Inequality
- Sources of Sexism
- Sources of Homophobia
- Social Policy

Gender and Sexuality

- Sex discriminations and stereotyping continue to limit the opportunities of women
- “Girl’s ghetto”-women relegated to housekeeping, retail jobs, insurance, real estate, service positions, clerks, etc...
 - 60% of working women in the U.S. employed in these kinds of jobs
- Women are three times as likely to experience disruptions in their work histories due to child rearing, child care, illness, disability and unemployment than men
- Earnings of working women still on average 20% lower than those of men

Traditional Sex Roles

- Traditional sex roles of man as rational breadwinner have led men to feel like they need to deny their emotions and be less involved with their children and families
- Traditionally, women and men were thought to be completely different, so they were treated differently by social institutions, as Betty Friedan's book identifies
- This traditional hierarchy, though seemingly outdated, still persists in social institutions, explaining differences in wage gaps and differing treatment of the sexes
- Many of the differences between men and women are learned through socialization, explaining why standards of masculinity and femininity are different in other societies

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

- **Gender identity**-a person's sexual self-image, as distinguished from physiological gender
 - Sense of maleness or femaleness typically formed by age 3
 - Society's norms teach kids appropriate gender roles
- **Sexual identity**-a sense of one's attractiveness to others and of comfort with one's body and with feelings of sexual arousal
 - Develops in childhood and adolescence
 - Includes sexual orientation (whether one identifies as heterosexual or homosexual) and sexuality (one's sexual behavior)
- Transgendered individuals can change their bodies through hormones and surgery
- Intersexual individuals include people whose genes, genitals or reproductive organs are not clearly male or female

Homosexuality

- **Homosexuality**-a sexual preference for members of one's own sex
 - Sometimes occurs as an exclusive identity
 - Sometimes only under specific circumstances (prison)
- Kinsey's studies-1948-17,000 interviews
 - Proportion of gays/lesbians in population is 10%
 - 37% of male population had physical contact with other man
- Recent studies put percentage between 1% and 4%
- Same-sex experiences are more common among women, especially teens and college-age women
- Women more able to experience same-sex experience or attraction without necessarily defining themselves as gay

Perspectives on Sexual Orientation

- Early 20th century, social scientists viewed homosexuality as a form social pathology brought about by family/community disorganization due to urbanization and industrialization
- Sigmund Freud-many homosexuals were well-adjusted and productive
 - They were on their way to developing heterosexual desires
- Alfred Kinsey-study of American males
 - Interviews of ordinary Americans, didn't seek psychiatric treatment
 - Wide gap between social norms and actual behavior
 - Conclusion-Sexual feelings toward same-sex people not deviant or abnormal
 - Hostility toward gays often a response to the severe conflict people feel

Lesbianism

- Difficult to estimate the number of lesbians because social norms make it easier to conceal female homosexuality
 - OK for women to share an apartment, not date, show affection
- Laws against homosexuality mostly concerned with the activities of males (sodomy laws)
- Social norms of society about girls describe that girls should be less aggressive, not be sexually promiscuous, sexual experiences usually begin later for females than males
- Lesbians come out at a later age than gays, and are less likely to look for one-night stands
- Prisons-relationships start as friendships that may lead to sexual relations; could continue later in life

Sexism and Gender Inequality

- **Sexism**-behaviors and beliefs that discriminate against women (or men) on the basis of gender
 - Achieved through ideological and political means
 - Common ideologies portray men as soldiers, athletic heroes, and managerial leaders and women as homemakers and spouses
- Male hegemony-persisting patterns of male dominance that perpetuate sexism
 - Domination over women
- Men still have greater access to prestige, political authority, corporate power, individual wealth, material comforts
- White males still hold 95% of the top management jobs in major U.S. corporations
- Differences exist in political power between sexes also (pg. 267)

Sexism and Employment

- Sexism most evident in the employment status of women
- Gender wage gap-difference in wages paid to male and female occupations
 - Men in primarily female occupations still make more
 - Wage discrimination illegal under Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Civil Rights Act of 1964, but discrimination still exists
 - Pg 269 shows earnings ratio differences by sexes
- Earnings of women compared to men have risen in some fields but dropped in others: Entertainment, communications finance business, retail, medical services
- Gaps even wider for minority women
 - Black women gap is 10% wider, Hispanic women 20% wider

Sexual Harassment

- **Sexual harassment**-physical and nonphysical harassment of a sexual nature, including but not limited to graphic comments on the victim's body, propositions of a sexual nature, and the threat of adverse effects on the victim's employment or livelihood for lack of submission to sexual advances
 - Creates a hostile environment
 - Less than 10% of cases of sexual harassment reported by men
- Cases of rape underreported
 - 93,000 rapes in 2003; 40,000 arrests
 - Victimization surveys show 112,000 rapes with another 76,000 attempts
- Societal norms still regard sexual teasing as normal parts of adolescence

Sources of Sexism

- **Socialization**-the process by which individuals develop into social beings
 - How we learn to behave depending on the norms of our culture
 - We are socialized by our parents, schools, friends, radio, television, movies, churches and all institutions
 - We are socialized into different social roles depending on if we are boys or girls
 - What kind of games are appropriate for boys and which are appropriate for girls?

Sources of Sexism

- Education-formal socialization
- Schools typically socialize children into traditional sex roles
 - Women continue to achieve less in math and science
 - Few women become engineers and scientists
- Numbers of women entering fields of law, medicine and academic Ph.D.s have risen dramatically
- Girls and boys start school with similar levels of skill and confidence, but by end of high school, girls trail in math and science
- Career counseling-counselors advocate traditionally female occupations for young women
 - Teacher vs. engineer

Sources of Sexism

- The Family
- The number of women who work has doubled over the past 20 years/the number of women working 2 or more jobs has quintupled
 - There are now more women challenged to balance work and family roles
- Language and the Media
- Advertising is one of the most blatant media for finding sexism
- Fewer women in the media are portrayed as working
- Sex appeal and sexual stereotypes are still used to sell many products

Sources of Sexism

- Organized Religion
- Churches and synagogues tend to reinforce women's subordinate role
- Instructions found in the Bible
- Women's most important role is procreation
- Sexual differentiation becomes a crippling defect for one sex, which no qualities of intelligence, character, or leadership can overcome
- Some churches recently have allowed women to hold leadership positions, such as Episcopalians, Presbyterians and reformed Jews
- Women still not allowed such positions in Catholic church

Sources of Sexism

- Government
- In 1919, women were barred from applying for 60% of all civil-service positions (esp. scientific or professional jobs)
 - Women were required to receive 50% of men's salaries
- The Glass Ceiling-term used to describe barriers that prevent women and minorities from advancing to management positions
 - Women concentrated in lower-level jobs or nonexecutive positions

Sources of Homophobia

- **Homophobia**-hostility, violence, or discrimination directed at people because they are homosexual, or are suspected to be homosexual
 - Common aspect of gender identity for males
 - Heterosexual masculine identity-emphasis on physical violence and power enhanced by hostility toward gay people
 - Not so much a fear of gay people, but hatred
- Recent years have shown a decrease in homophobia
- 33% of people would deny gays from being able to teach in public schools (pg. 281)
- 52% say homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle compared to 44% who say it is unacceptable

The Women's Movement

- Women's Movement was founded in 1848 in Seneca, NY attended by Elizabeth Cady Stanton
 - Was occurring at the same time as the abolitionist movement
- After the right to vote was gained in the 1920s, the Women's Movement didn't make a public resurgence until the 1960s
- Civil Rights Act of 1964-Title VII made it illegal to discriminate against women in promotion and hiring
 - Was supposed to be enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Encountered opposition in the 1970s-80s
- Feminist enlightenment of recent years has brought improved health, education, economic opportunities to women

Child-Rearing Practices

- Motherhood-ethic: idea that women are most fulfilled as mothers and children require a mother's constant attention
 - No evidence parent must be female
- Full sexual equality includes fathers sharing equally in the process of child rearing and homemaking

Methods for making parenting more compatible with work

- Parental leave is one thing that could improve ease of men and women sharing domestic tasks
 - Time off would not cause them to lose their jobs
- Part-time work would come with benefits of full-time work

Institutional Problems

- Women are far more impoverished than men
 - 500,000 women living in poverty die during childbirth each year
 - Investment in education would increase opportunities for these women
 - With more education comes the ability to make better health decisions
- Title VII forbids discrimination, but it is hindered by complicated rules, a huge backlog of cases, loopholes and lack of enthusiasm have reduced its effectiveness

Comparable Worth

- Equal pay for comparable work
- **Comparable worth**-the ideas that the pay levels of certain jobs should be adjusted so that they reflect the intrinsic value of the job; holders of jobs of comparable value would then be paid at comparable rates
- Intended to correct the imbalance in earnings caused by the fact that many women hold jobs in relatively low-paying fields
- This was implemented in Washington state in the 1980s, increasing the salaries of 35,000 employees, costing \$482 million
 - Average salary for all jobs increased by 20% by 1990
 - Gender gap in wages decreased from 20% to 5%

Unintended Consequences

- Although women are in the workforce more and have less time at home, they are still the primary caregivers and meal planners in their households
- More than 90% of women say they do most or all of the cooking and kitchen cleanup
- Less than 20% of men say they do most of the shopping for the household
- Women have greater access to the workforce now, but men haven't made the same commitment to fulfilling domestic tasks
- How should these inequalities be addressed?