

Gender, Sex, Women & Sexual Orientation

I. Defining Sex & Gender

A. Traditional Definition

1. Sex = biological differences (genotypic and/or phenotypic)
2. Gender = psychological and social differences.

B. Problems

- Suggests a Causal Relationship that simply can not be established.
- What do we call biological processes that are altered by social processes?
- What do we call Social processes that are altered by biological processes?

C. Kay Deaux Suggests

- Sex Research = investigations comparing males and females (however identified)
- Gender Research = investigations comparing the maleness (masculinity) and femaleness (femininity) of participants.

- Acknowledges that this is arbitrary
- No more so than the definitions used previously and avoids unnecessary causal language.

II. Sex and Gender a Dichotomy?

A. Are there 2 Sexes/Genders?

B. Are they Mutually Exclusive & Exhaustive?

C. What about the cases that don't fit in either category?

- XO (Turner's Syndrome)
- XXX (Super Female)
- XXY (Klinefelter's Syndrome, considered Males with extra X)
- XYY (Super Men)
- CAH Females (Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia)
- AI Males (Androgen Insensitivity)

III. The Majority Minority

- Women make up a majority of the U.S. population (51-52%).
- Minority status is one of representation and power, Women are under-represented in positions of authority and power.
- Question:
 - What are some of the disadvantages associated with being female?
 - What privileges are associated with being Male?

A. Institutional Gender Bias

- The Glass Ceiling
- Sticky Floors
 - 84 years of women voting = 1 female VP candidate
 - 5 out of 50 Governors are Women
 - 13 of 535 Congressional Members are women
 - 6 Fortune 500 CEO's are women.
 - 2 - 30 Fortune 1000 CEO's are women
 - 13% of Upper Management Positions held by women
 - 30-35% of Middle Management Positions held by women
 - 49% of Work Force is Female
 - Women make 73 cents for every \$1 a man makes
 - even when controlling for education and length of service.
 - changes slightly from year to year, but has not significantly changed since the early 70's

B. Masculine Hegemony

- U.S. Culture is still strongly Patriarchal
 - Men enjoy more power, prestige, and wealth than women do.
 - The Glass Escalator: Men have more direct track to power and success.
- Work is Gendered
 - Males occupy all most all of the highest positions in both the public and private sector, while women tend to be concentrated in clerical, nursing, and service positions.

IV. History of Sexism

A. Sexism = justification for discrimination against women using theories of "Inherent Sex Differences."

- Sexism is a tool of Masculine Hegemony that predates racism.
 - removes half the population from competition for resources

B. Religious Justifications

- Bible: Lot offers his daughters to the town's people of Sodom to keep them from raping his angels (Genesis 19: 3-8).
- The story of Eve, she is cursed by god
 - "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing... Your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you" (Genesis 3:16)
- Ancient Hebrew Texts define women as property
 - Is a wedding ring a symbol of love or a mark of ownership.
- The story of Lilith – Adams First Wife (This is apocryphal)

C. Scientific Justification

- S. Bem - (1993) the rise of pseudo-scientific sexism, excluding females from traditionally male roles and activities, parallels the rise of feminism in the late 1800s (e.g., Susan B. Anthony, Lecretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton).
- Edward Clarke = Higher education is dangerous to women's reproductive system- takes "vital forces" away from the uterus. This view was supported by American scientists (e.g., G. S. Hall, founder of the APA).
- European Neuro-Anatomists: Report that women had smaller frontal lobes and larger Parietal lobes than men. At the time the parietal lobe was thought to be the seat of the intellect. Soon after there were several "scientific" reports that women had smaller parietal lobes than men.

D. Old Fashioned vs. Modern Sexism

- Old Fashioned Sexism
 - Women are inferior because of their sex.
- Modern Sexism
 - Women's attitudes and values are inferior
 - Denial of Continuing Discrimination
 - Antagonism toward women's demands
 - Resentment about special favors for women

E. Benevolent vs. Hostile Sexism

Hostile Sexism- women are controlling, seeking special favors, complaints of discrimination and sexism are unfounded.

Benevolent Sexism -

Paternalism -

- Women need men to take care of them
 - women and children first.
 - the culture of chivalry

Complimentary Gender Differentiation -

- Women are Pure, Moral, and cultured.

Heterosexual Intimacy –

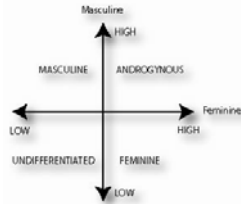
- Men are not complete unless they have the love of a woman.

V Gender Stereotypes/Schemas

A. Sandra Bem's Measure of Gender Roles

- Essentially a measure of the degree to which a person describes themselves in a gender stereotypic manner.

- [Masculine](#), [Feminine](#), [Androgynous](#), [Undifferentiated](#).



B. Gender Bias = [Feminine traits](#) are viewed negatively, in some cases even viewed as pathology.

- Tavis - Self-defeating Personality Disorder / Codependency (not real psych concept) - thinly veiled extension of female stereotypes (self sacrifice, over-involvement with others, taking personal responsibility for relationship problems).
- Gullibility vs. Interpersonal Trust

C. Nancy Signorielli, Douglas McLeod, and Elaine Healy "Gender Stereotypes in MTV Commercials: The Beat Goes On"

1. Gender Roles and TV

- for past 25 years, prime time and children's TV rarely use female voice over.
- men presented as authority figure, even for female oriented products
- women are under-represented in commercials aired during children's TV programs.
- little has changed in TV gender role portrayals since the 70's
- the female-attractive stereotype is most often forged by males (e.g., male voice-overs).

2. MTV and gender roles.

- Focus has been primarily on the content of music videos.
- women and blacks are in minority, white males appear most often and were the center of attention.
- Vincent, Davis, & Boruszkowski (1987)
 - 56% of the portrayals of women were condescending
 - Sexism was high & traditional gender roles were depicted.

• Vincent 1989

- significant increase in the number of videos depicting women as fully equal
- significant increase in the frequency of sexy or alluring clothing and nudity

Can be viewed as a process of Polarization : as women become more equal in our culture, sexist objectifying portrayals of women become more extreme.

3. Results

- Males (54.4%) appeared more often than Females. Male only commercials more frequent than Female only
- Women (77.4%) more likely to be rated as physically fit (males 33%)
- Women (50%) were rated as extremely attractive; Males (2.2%).
- Women more likely to be portrayed in sexy clothing (somewhat sexy = 24.4%, very sexy = 29.4%); 6.5% of Males were portrayed in somewhat sexy clothing.
- Women were more likely to be portrayed as the *object of another's gaze* (60%), men = 20%
- Also of the female only commercials, 75% were for personal products.

4. Bottom Line = The primary purpose of women's efforts is to "look good" and to be the object of the visual attention of others

5. Reactions

- Suggests that the route to femininity and feminine status is through looking sexy and being sexual.
- Demonstrates the process of objectification (viewing women as objects rather than people).

- They become the object of others' instrumentality, they are subjugated and ultimately powerless.
- It is "OK" to rape an object.
- Further perpetuated by violent pornography:
 - "Pornography is the theory, and rape the practice" (Robin Morgan, 1980).
 - portraying women as parts (close ups of various parts of anatomy).
 - Pornography often portrays women in submissive poses as the object of violence, "**liking it, wanting it, pleading for it, and ultimately satisfied by it**" (Schacht & Atcheson, 1993).
 - "Pornography tells lies about women. But pornography tells the truth about men" (John Stoltenberg, 1989)
- Perpetuates the Rape Myth: "She was just asking for it".