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Heterosexual Instrumentalism:
Past and Future Directions

Two distinct strands of feminist thought have emerged in the past 20 years in explaining the behaviors of rape, sexual harassment, incest, prostitution and the presentation of these found in pornography. One group of theorists construes these behaviors and pornography as violent and terroristic outcomes of male dominance, while a second group views them simply as forms of heterosexuality. Utilizing, primarily, the theoretical insights of the latter group, this article offers a conceptual definition of heterosexuality—as an eroticized, hegemonic ideology of male dominance. The literature on the above behaviors and pornography is reviewed to determine if there is support for such a conceptualization. Finding support, suggestions are made for future research and the need for a unified feminist theory of sexuality.

Feminist literature on the behaviors of rape, sexual harassment, incest, prostitution and the presentations of these found in pornography has become quintessential in explaining male dominance (Millett, 1970; Brownmiller, 1975; Herman and Hirschman, 1977; Daly, 1978; Barry, 1979; Dworkin, 1979, 1987; Rich, 1980; Shulman, 1980; Herman, 1981; Bart 1983a; MacKinnon, 1979, 1982, 1983; Russell, 1975, 1982, 1984; Jeffreys, 1985; Sheffield, 1987; Glass, 1988; Kelly, 1988; Smith, 1989). While there is general agreement among these feminists about the importance of understanding these behaviors in terms of explaining pre-existing gender inequalities, epistemologically speaking, there is also widespread disagreement about their origin. The disagreement over cause can be conceptualized into two dichotomous groups of theorists: one group views these behaviors as a product of male dominance, while a second group views these behaviors as part of the larger social practice called heterosexuality.

The first group of feminists conceptualize the behaviors of prostitution, sexual harassment, rape, incest and pornographic depictions in terms such as sexual terrorism (Sheffield, 1987) and sexual violence (Brownmiller, 1975;
In short, the first group of authors failed to recognize the higher proportion
of social structure of domestic dominance and successfully acquiring a public status.

In contrast, the second group exhibited disorientation that made it difficult to
recognize the higher proportion of social structure of domestic dominance and social status.

The second group's perspective was more important, as it highlighted the
higher proportion of social structure of domestic dominance and social status.

This perspective provides the important implications for the study of gender
and sexuality.

The gender and sexuality perspectives are important in understanding the
role of domestic dominance and social status in gender and sexuality.

The second group's perspective is important for understanding the
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In contrast, the first group's perspective is more important for understanding the
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problem is that the current system consistently fails to recognize and address the significant needs of women who are disproportionately affected by violence, poverty, and discrimination. This is particularly true for women of color, who face even greater obstacles in accessing resources and support. The position of women is also closely tied to the economic and social conditions in which they live. For example, women who are poor or working-class are more likely to experience violence and exploitation, while women who are middle-class or wealthy may have greater access to resources and support. However, even women who are in the middle class may face unique challenges, such as the gender pay gap and the lack of affordable childcare. Overall, the current system does not adequately address the needs of women, and more needs to be done to support them and ensure their well-being.
Sexual harassment also comprises psychological or emotional abuse, whether or not sexual advances are explicit. The harasser may be a superior, colleague, or client. The victim may be told to expect "special favors," or they may be denied a promotion or a raise. The harasser may also use sexual language to create a hostile work environment. Such behavior can be intimidating and can create a climate of fear and anxiety for the victim.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) provides further protections against sexual harassment. Under CEDAW, sexual harassment is defined as "any unwelcome sexual advances, communications, or other forms of sexual conduct that create a hostile work environment." The Convention also recognizes that sexual harassment can take many forms, including verbal, physical, or psychological.

In conclusion, sexual harassment is a serious problem that affects women around the world. It can have a profound impact on the lives of its victims, causing stress, anxiety, and even depression. It is important that we work together to prevent sexual harassment and create a safe and respectful workplace for all.
toward a unified femininst theory of sexuality

Believe it or not, there is a consensus among social and cognitive psychologists and others that language and context, in their role in social construction of sexuality, are crucial. These researchers believe that the language we use to describe sexuality shapes our understanding of what it means to be sexual. This perspective is not new; it has been debated for decades, but recent work in psychology and neuroscience has provided new evidence to support the idea that language can influence our sexual behavior.

The concept of "sexuality" is complex and can be defined in many different ways. For example, some researchers define sexuality as a biological and psychological process that involves attraction, desire, and behavior. Others define it as a cultural and social construct that is shaped by societal norms and expectations.

Regardless of how sexuality is defined, it is clear that language plays a significant role in shaping our understanding of it. This is because language is not just a tool for communication; it is a tool for constructing reality. When we use certain words to describe something, we are essentially creating a shared understanding of what it means. This is why it is so important for language to be inclusive and respectful of all sexual orientations and identities.

In conclusion, the language we use to describe sexuality is crucial in shaping our understanding of it. By using inclusive and respectful language, we can help to create a more accepting and understanding society for everyone. This is not only important for individual identities but also for promoting a more inclusive and equitable society as a whole.
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