

IV. Gender

A. Defining Gender and Sex

1. Kay Deaux, "Commentary: Sorry, wrong number - A reply to Gentile's call."

- Sex = used when people are selected based on Male/Female demographic characteristics

- Gender = used when making judgements about maleness (masculinity) and femaleness (femininity)

Others suggest: Sex = biologically determined characteristics

Gender = socially influenced characteristics

- can be problematic in that both suggest a causal relationship which is by no means clear

- what happens with a biologically influenced characteristic is altered by a social influence, is it gender or sex.

- Sex differences vs. Sex - Related Differences = must attempt to remove causal language from relationships that are not clearly causally related.

-Sex implies that there is a mutually exclusive dichotomy between being male and being female. It emphasizes the differences between groups However, there are individuals that don't fall clearly in one group or the other. What should they be considered, are their behaviors the result of sex or gender?

- We behave as if there are only 2 possible sexes (we talk about the opposite sex as if one were antithetical to the other). There are other genetic combinations of X and Y than XX & XY -

XO = Turner Syndrome = short, webbed neck, limited development of secondary sexual features, sterility due to underdeveloped ovaries, no menstruation, can reproduce through invitro fertilization.

XXX = Triple X (Supper Female) not physically distinguishable.

XXY = Klinefelter's Syndrome = Tall, beardless, feminine body contour, high pitched voice.

XYY = above average height, over represented in criminal populations (but crimes are no more violent than XY).

-Interference in certain hormone processes during critical stages of birth can interfere with the development of genitalia. You may genetically be male but have female genitalia. Or be genetically female, but have male genitalia.

CAH = Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasic Males (1 in 5,000-15,000 births) over production of androgens =Males with masculinized genitalia.

Usually surgically corrected and hormone treatments started and raised as a female.

AI = Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome = Male infant metabolism is insensitive to the androgens produce, has genitalia similar to female. Usually unnoticed until puberty (alerted by lack of menstruation) so raised as a female.

B. Women: The Majority Minority

- Irony = Women make up a larger percentage of the population than men

- Question - What privileges are associated with being Male?
- What are some of the problems associated with being female?

- Minority status is one of representation and power, Women are under-represented in positions

of authority and power.

- The Glass Ceiling = Women get the opportunity to advance only so far in organizations.

Micheal Moore (2001, p. 49-50).

- since 1921 only one woman has been on the ballot of the major parties for Pres or VP in a national election

- Currently only 5 women govs in 50 states

- Women hold only 13 seats in congress

- 496 of the top 500 companies are run by men

- only 4 of the top 20 universities are run by women

- 40% of all women who are divorced between the ages of 25 and 34 end up in poverty, compared with only 8% of the married women who live below the poverty line.

- Women's earnings average 76 cents for every \$1 earned by men— resulting in a lifetime earning loss of over \$650,133.

- To make the same annual salary as her male counterpart, a woman would have to work an entire year, plus an additional 4 months.

- U.S. society is still strongly Patriarchal: Men enjoy more prestige, power, & wealth than women do.

- .73/1 = women make 73 cents for every dollar 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

- 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.

C. The History of Sexism.

- Sexism as a tool of Hegemony most likely predates formal racism

- Justifying Gender Discrimination based using theories of “Inherent Sex Differences” as basis.

- Has religious underpinnings:

- Ancient Hebrew Texts define women as property

- Lot gives his daughter to the towns people of Sodom to keep them from raping his angel.

- The story of Lilith - Found in the Talmud, excluded from the Christian Bible old Testament.

- 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”

- Sandra Bem (1993) notes that the pseudo-scientific justifications for excluding females from traditionally male role and activities intensified in the mid 1800's, paralleling the rise of feminism (e.g., Susan B. Anthony, Lecretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton).

- Edward Clarke = Higher education is dangerous to a 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 noted 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.

- 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
- Benevolent vs. Hostile Sexism
 - Hostile - women are controlling, seeking special favors, complaints of discrimination and sexism are unfounded.
- Benevolent Sexism -
 - Paternalism -
 - Women need men to take care of them
 - Complimentary Gender Differentiation -
 - Women are Pure, Moral, and cultured.
 - Heterosexual Intimacy -
 - Men are not complete unless they have the love of a woman.

D. Gender Stereotypes/Schemas

- 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.
- 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 female stereotypes (self sacrifice, over-involvement with others, taking personal responsibility for relationship problems)

E. Media and Stereotypes

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 1980
 - 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. Present Study's Hypotheses

- First Goal : Address the stereotyped gender role portrayals in MTV commercials
 1. Frequency = males more frequent than females
 2. Physical Fitness = females portrayed as more fit than males
 3. Attractiveness = females portrayed as attractive more often than males
 4. Sexy Clothing = females more often presented in sexy clothing
 5. The Object of Gaze = females more often presented as the object of gaze
- Second Goal : test whether commercials for dif products have a male or female gender orientation

4. Results

1. males (54.4%) appeared more often than females. Also male only commercials were more frequent than female only
 2. women (77.4%) more likely to be portrayed as physically fit (males only 33%)
 3. women (50%) were rated as extremely attractive; males (2.2%).
 4. 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.
 5. 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.

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

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. My have the illusion of giving women control (using sex as a tool to get what you want), but gains are few and indirect and such mentality has negative consequences.
 - It is ok to rape an object. Further perpetuated by violent pornography portraying women as parts (not a full body shot, but close ups of various parts of anatomy).
 - Pornography often portrays women in submissive poses as the object of violence, yet enjoying it and submitting to it.
 - "If porn is the theory, rape is the practice"
 - Helps perpetuate the rape myth, that women who get raped actually sought it out : "She was just asking for it".