

## Ch. 10 Gender Stratification

### Gender and inequality

- Gender: Personal traits and social positions members of a society attach to being female and male
- Gender stratification: unequal distribution of wealth, power, and privilege between men and women

### Gender in a Global Perspective

- Israeli Kibbutz
  - Gender equality is one of its stated goals
  - Women and men in the kibbutzim achieved remarkable (although not complete) social equality
  - Culture defines what is feminine and what is masculine
- Mead
  - Culture is the key to gender distinctions
  - What one society defines as masculine another may see as feminine
- George Murdock
  - Some global agreement about feminine and masculine tasks
- Evaluation
  - Feminine or masculine not consistently defined
  - Gender is too variable to be a simple expression of biology

### Patriarchy and Sexism

- Matriarchy: Females dominate males
- Patriarchy: Males dominate females
- Inevitability of patriarchy: Most sociologists believe gender is socially constructed and can be changed
- Sexism: Belief that one sex or the other is innately inferior or superior
- Institutional sexism: Sexism found throughout the economy
- The costs of sexism: Sexism has a high price for both women and men

### Gender and Socialization

- Gender Roles: are attitudes and activities that a society links to each sex
- Gender
  - Affects how we think of ourselves and teaches us how to behave
  - Includes mix of feminine and masculine traits in most personalities

### Gender and the Family

- Gender messages
  - Color-coding gender
  - Traditional notions of gender identity
  - Handling of an expectations for children
    - Female: passivity and emotion
    - Male: independence and action

### Gender and Peer Groups

- Lever
  - Boys favor team sports with complex rules and velar objectives
  - Girls' sports teach interpersonal skills and the value of sharing and cooperation
- Gilligan
  - Boys reason according to abstract principles
  - Girls consider morality a matter of responsibility to others

### Gender and Schooling

- Schooling
  - Gender shapes interests and beliefs, guides areas of study, and career choices
  - Women are now well represented in many fields of study that once excluded them

## **Gender and the Mass Media**

- White males have center stage
- Minorities locked out until the early 1970s
- Women receive roles based on sex appeal
- Wolf: The "beauty myth"
  - Striving to be physically attractive to men as the key to women's happiness
  - Women should measure their worth in terms of physical appearance
  - Women should prize relationships with men attracted with their beauty

## **Working Women and Men**

- Women
  - 60% of all women work and 70% of working women work full-time
  - On average, women earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by men
  - “Pink-collar” jobs are at the lower end of the pay scale
  - “Glass ceiling”
- Men
  - Men dominate 99% of brick masons, stone masons, and heavy equipment mechanics
  - About 86% of architects and engineers, 88% of police officers, 68% of lawyers, 66% of physicians and surgeons, and 57% of corporate managers are male
  - “Comparable worth”

## **Gender**

- Education
  - Women are 57% of college students
  - Women ear 59% of college degrees
  - Med still predominate in some professional fields
- Politics
  - Women are shaping political attitudes
  - Women active in local, state politics
  - Change is also coming to highest levels of power
- Military
  - 15% of US military personnel are women, including deployed troops
  - Culture influences our views of women in the military

## **Violence against Women**

- In the 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - Men claimed the right to physically discipline their wives
- Today
  - Sexual assaults, rapes, attempted rapes, and physical assaults
  - Campus and university gender violence
  - Gender-linked violence often in the home
  - Female genital mutilation

## **Sexual Harassment**

- Comments, gestures, or physical contacts of a sexual nature that are deliberate, repeated, and unwelcome
- Causes
  - Culture encourages men to be sexually assertive and perceive women in sexual terms
  - Men occupy most positions of power
  - “Effect standard”: Hostile environment involves different perceptions of the same behavior

## **Theoretical Analysis of Gender**

- Parsons: Structural-functional analysis
  - Gender forms a complementary set of roles
  - Socialization stresses instrumental qualities for males and expressive qualities for females
  - Evaluation

- Assumes singular view of society
- Ignores personal strain and social costs of rigid gender roles
- May espouse male domination of women

#### -Symbolic-interaction analysis

- Gender involves differences in behavior
- Women are expected to be more deferential
- Gender shapes reality experience in everyday life
- Evaluation
  - Shows how gender shapes everyday experiences
  - Focuses on situational social experiences but not broad patterns of inequality

#### -Engels: Social-conflict analysis

- Capitalism strengthens male domination
- Gender involves differences in power
- Puts women in the home to free men for factory work
- Evaluation
  - Strongly critical of conventional ideas about gender
  - Minimizes the extent to which women and men live together cooperatively
  - Suggests capitalism is the basis of gender stratification

#### -Intersection theory

- Interplay of race, class, and gender, resulting in multiple dimensions of disadvantage
- Disadvantages linked to gender and race often combine to produce low social standing
- Multilayered system is disadvantage for some and privilege for others
- Evaluation
  - Women are differentially disadvantaged
  - Solutions about dealing with gender stratification not addressed

### **Feminism**

- Support of social equality for women and men, in opposition to patriarchy and sexism
- Working to increase equality
- Expansion of human choice
- Eliminate gender stratification
- Ending Sexual violence
- Promoting Sexual freedom

### **Types of Feminism**

- Opposition to feminism
  - Threat to male status and privilege
  - Resistance to feminism is strongest among women with lower levels of education