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Global Women's Issues and Knowledge

Edited by
Cheris Kramarae and
Dale Spender

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Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender

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Introduction

The preservation of women's knowledge and experience—in terms of the body, the community, work, the environment, and history—is vital to women's visibility and empowerment in the future. This international encyclopedia of women began when Phyllis Hall at Pergamon Press, our original publisher, recognized the importance of recording such knowledge and experience.

When Phyllis invited us to serve as general editors of the encyclopedia, we knew that we were being offered a significant opportunity. We shared her vision of an encyclopedia that would address the concerns of women and the theory and practice of feminism around the world, and we decided to develop a reference work that would be an accessible, trustworthy resource not only for scholars, professionals, and activists but for the general reader everywhere.

The Development Process

To understand what the *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women* is, and how it works, our readers may find it helpful to know something about how it was planned and put together.

In preparing a women's encyclopedia, we did not have many guides or precedents. We began to plan the framework in February 1990, with a small meeting of academics and activists at the University of Oregon, where Cheris Kramarae was acting director of the Center for the Study of Women in Society. These initial planners—from England, the Philippines, India, Canada, Australia, and the United States—had an abundance of ideas, and Charlotte Bunch of our editorial board helped us schematize them so that we could visualize various possibilities for content and organization.

Of course, there were limits to the scope of the project. The encyclopedia would be published in English in four volumes. In addition to the two general editors, it would have about a dozen topic editors who would consider what specific articles to include. At the outset, we decided—though not without regrets—that a work of this size could not include essays on individual women: such entries would have required something combining the features of an encyclopedia and a dictionary of biography, and would have filled many more volumes. Accordingly, we agreed to focus on ideas and actions, a format that still allowed us to include information about numerous individuals. We also agreed not to have overall entries on specific countries, but rather to cover certain topic areas region by region.

Determining the categories of topics was a considerable challenge, since any such division is difficult and to some extent arbitrary. We realized that, whatever scheme we chose, we would need to watch for ideas and issues that might fall into the cracks—we needed to ensure that subjects such as psychology, psychoanalysis, sociology, sports, and anthropology, along with new and expanding areas of study, would be adequately presented. Eventually, we decided on thirteen thematic categories; they are not exhaustive, and some overlapping has been inevitable, but we feel that they represent the broad coverage we wanted:

1. Arts and literature
2. Culture and communication
3. Ecology and the environment
4. Economy and development
5. Education
6. Health, reproduction, and sexuality
7. History and philosophy of feminism
8. Households and families
9. Politics and the state
10. Religion and spirituality
11. Science and technology
12. Violence and peace
13. Women's studies

These topic areas were created only for developmental purposes; in the final encyclopedia, the articles would be in alphabetical order across topics.

We then found our specialist topic editors to oversee each category. The topic editors were invited to a second meeting, in November 1990, at the University of Illinois, where Cheris was teaching in the Speech Communicarion Department and Women's Studies Program. They brought outlines for their sections, which were discussed and revised through collective efforts. As early as this meeting, we began to consider the relationships between specific topics—an important aspect of a truly integrated multidisciplinary reference work. Throughout the production of the encyclopedia, special care has been taken to highlight the links between topics through cross-references that will lead users to comparative articles, such as entries about different regions and related topics of interest.

The Publishing Process

In the years since those first two meetings, our encyclopedia project has had a long publishing history. Before it arrived at Routledge in New York, not only its publishing house but also its in-house editorial staff had changed more than once, with the files moving from the United States to the United Kingdom and back again. Throughout the project, however, we have always been fortunate in working with staff members who had a passion for the encyclopedia and were determined to see it through to publication.

We have also—not surprisingly, considering the long-term nature of the project—seen some changes in topic editors, and among the individual contributors. Yet the initial plan, devised in our early conferences and meetings, has remained basically intact. The perseverance and dedication of the topic editors and contributors have been amazing—a testament, we hope, to the worth of the project.

The Articles and Contributors

The articles in the *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women* were written by authors from many disciplines, languages, and cultures. All the contributors were asked to keep in mind the needs of users. Most readers, we assumed, would look for an introduction to the issues involved in any topic, a basic understanding as well as directions to further and more specialized sources of information. In general, each author was asked to survey the topic rather than adopt a specialist's position, although some exceptions were made when a brief article could not, as a practical matter, discuss a multiplicity of views, and when, occasionally, a specific view was the point of an article. Overall, the articles are designed to be accessible and useful for a wide range of readers, including advanced high school students, undergraduate and graduate students, scholars from many disciplines (such as women's studies and related fields), and professionals working on women's issues at the local or international level.

While our goal was to focus on real issues and ideas rather than on academic theories, we have included some theoretical articles. Some of these, necessarily, are written at a higher level, but we believe that they will still be of interest, and use, to most if not all readers. Our authors were also reminded that the readers would come from many different countries and cultural backgrounds, and that the language and examples in each article should therefore be broadly accessible.

The International Focus

We offer an international perspective in at least three ways. First, the authors themselves are international—writers from around the world have contributed articles in every topic area. Networks of women scholars and activists around the globe have enabled us to find expert writers from as many as 70 countries; in particular, international conferences such as the International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women were excellent settings for finding extraordinary writers, many of whom had never before been published in English. Second, as noted above, we cover many subjects region by region, encompassing diverse cultural traditions. Third, we have included numerous "case studies," articles that focus on a specific aspect of a larger topic; and typically, this specific focus is regional.

We would have liked to work with even more international writers and to include even more international topics, but there were, understandably, practical constraints: we encountered some problems related to communication channels, political conflicts, migration, censorship, or economics. For some topics, data and expert writers seemed to be unavailable; occasionally, too, we simply lost touch with a writer. We believe, however, that the international coverage here is more far-reaching than in any other single reference work focusing on women's issues.

The Updating Process

Because any encyclopedia takes a long time to publish, updating becomes an important issue. In our case, social and political developments have affected women around the world; women's movements have evolved, becoming stronger in some places and being threatened in others; ongoing scholarship and research have cast new light on some ideas; new debates have taken center stage; new trends have emerged. To take just two examples, radical feminism has, for many women, given way to postmodern feminism and beyond; and women's studies as a discipline has seen significant changes (in some ways, the development of the encyclopedia has mirrored the development of women's studies). As a result, many of the original articles in the encyclopedia have been revised or rewritten, and many new articles have been added. Throughout the production process, we have tried to ensure that topics of current interest were represented. In this effort, we drew on the expertise of younger feminists, scholars in emerging fields, and librarians—particularly those from the Women's Studies Section of the American Library Association's Association of College and Research Libraries. We invited authors to write new articles about technology, cyberculture, sexuality, lesbian studies, transgender, queer theory, postmodernism, postcolonialism, girl studies, and ethics, to name a few subjects; and we have integrated older and newer material through cross-referencing. The encyclopedia now represents more than three decades of worldwide scholarship—especially, though not exclusively, feminist scholarship—in numerous fields of knowledge.

The Representation of Values

As we worked on this encyclopedia, we have been very much aware of what has been called the politics of legitimacy. At any time, in a given society or culture, certain groups are privileged, and it is such groups that often decide what is valid and what knowledge counts. Systems of values change over time, but in the last few centuries, at least, women have seldom been included among the "knowledge makers." This exclusion of women has been increasingly challenged in recent decades: we have witnessed the emergence of a plurality of truths, partly as a result of feminist interventions. Traditionally, encyclopedia articles have tended to be—or to be presented as—"value-free"; but feminist scholarship often acknowledges the "politics of the personal," or the political importance of women's personal experience, and takes an interest in transforming the theory, practice, and purpose of social institutions. Many of the entries in this encyclopedia of women offer "values" in this sense, and we believe the reader will enjoy and learn from the cultural exchange that they represent.

We realize that the *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women* does not, and could not, contain everything that might have been included, but we also believe that the encyclopedia contains much more about women's scholarship—and a wider exploration of its variety, richness, and range—than can be found in any other international reference work. We wish our readers well, and we hope that what we have accomplished here may inspire some to make their own contributions to the field of global women's issues and knowledge.

Acknowledgments

The *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women* has been a major task involving more than a thousand people: authors, editors, advisers, and others. We thank everyone involved, beginning with the members of our editorial board (listed on page ii), our contributors (pages xxv–li), and the project staff (page liii).

A number of people worked with the editorial board in important supporting roles. Our special thanks to Cheris Kramarae's project assistants, Elizabeth A. Kissling and Aki Uchida; and to Dale Spender's project assistant, Georgina Hampson. Anna Hodson and Robin Mann of Wisbech, England, served as acting topic editors for arts and literature. Robert Sloane and Diane Tipps worked with Angharad Valdiva on culture and communications—Robert as editorial assisant and Diane as secretary. Sharon McDuell of London, England, was an acting topic editor for ecology and the environment. Cora Baldock, the topic editor for economy and development, worked continually and closely with the Murdoch Encyclopedia Collective. Susie O'Brien was the second topic editor for education. Jo Sanson was an assistant to Joan Mencher, the topic editor for households and families.

We have also received help from hundreds of others—including people in universities, women's organizations, and libraries—in many countries. Here, we mention a few of those who contributed time and knowledge to the process of creating this encyclopedia.

During the earlier stages of the project, several people were involved in planning and editorial work, including Joan Burks, Clair Chaventré, Caroline Cornish, Bonnie Thornton Dill, Clare Grist, Elise Hansen, Sue Henley, Jackie Jones, Candida Lacey, Robert Miranda, Cathy Peppers, Marilyn Plowman, Wei Chi Poon, Susan Richards, Ann Russo, Carolyn Royston, Sari Schnitzlein, Lynne Spender, and Mary Walstrom.

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Cheris Kramarae
Dale Spender

Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women

Global Women's Issues and Knowledge

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A

ABILITY

Ability is a broad concept but has been associated mainly with intellectual ability in the western world. (As *dis*ability, it has been linked with physical as well as intellectual handicap.) According to a feminist analysis, because of the traditional need for males to be seen as leaders—and for their achievement to be justified, or based on merit—the management of intellectual ability has played a critical role in the relationship between the sexes.

In most societies, it has been necessary for men to be seen as smarter than women, and this has required specific forms of social organization. Assertions that women should not be as able as men have led to the construction of systems and beliefs implying that women could not be as competent as their male counterparts. This has been particularly the case for women of color (Robinson, 1998).

For example, by denying females access to education, it has been possible to portray women as silly and thereby to explain the supposedly superior ability of males (Mackinnon, 1997). Basically all societies have at some stage restricted women's education (women account for two-thirds of the world's illiterate, according to the United Nations' statistics for the year 2000), but the Taliban in Afghanistan appear to be the only current regime that expressly forbids both education and occupations to women.

Throughout history, various explanations have been put forward for women's supposed inability: some had a religious basis; others have been associated with physical attributes, such as reproductive issues or brain size. In the nineteenth centuty, there were those who insisted that women should not be allowed to exercise their intellectual ability because it would interfere with their reproductive health. Arguments that women had less ability because their brains were smaller were soon discredited when it was established that, in relation to body size, the female brain is bigger than that of the male (Kern, 1996; Schiebinger, 1989). But theories about reproductive influences, brain size, and hormones are still sometimes used.

In western societies where the campaign for equal rights has been under way for more than a century, girls are now better able to demonstrate their ability; they are generally staying on longer at school, and more girls than boys are entering colleges and universities. However, this comes at a time when the credentials of formal education are increasingly being challenged, and women remain under-represented at the higher levels as students, school principals, and academics.

Where girls have been able to enter educational institutions, their performance often has been systematically distorted so that it would not pose a challenge to males. This has been the case where girls have been restricted to a specific sphere, such as domestic training. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), one of the early champions of equal educational opportunity, criticized the system that educated boys for the world, and girls to please men (1978).

Other examples include particularly prestigious academic areas in which the ability of girls is held to be inferior, such as mathematics, engineering, or computer science. Although women were considered numerically able in the eighteenth century (Schiebinger, 1989), when mathematics was not held to be centrally important, the belief that women were unable to do mathematics took hold in many minds during the twentieth century. In some societies

(Singapore, Malaysia, and India), women are seen as able in relation to computer science and information technology, whereas in the western world the number of women in these fields is decreasing.

Tests, too, have been weighted in favor of males. IQ tests, Scholastic Aptitude Tests in the United States, the English "Eleven Plus" exams, and other forms of public examination have been exposed as biased (Castro and Garcia, 1975; Mensh and Mensh, 1991).

Outside the educational sphere, social organization also has decreed—across many cultures—that "strong-minded women" are unattractive to males. For this reason, women themselves have been urged to "hide their brains" and to disguise their ability. In more subtle ways, women's codes of behavior and conversation often construct men as being smarter and better informed. Women may be advised to ask questions (so that males will look knowledgeable), to defer to men's opinions, and to refrain from criticizing men in public (Spender, 1980).

It was this phenomenon that the English writer Virginia Woolf was describing when she wrote of women serving "all these centuries as looking glasses, possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of men at twice their natural size" (Woolf, 1928). This practice has sometimes been regarded as collusion by those who insist on the right of women to exercise their full ability and to be given credit for their achievements (Jeffrey and Basu, 1996).

With the advent of the information revolution, there are signs in some countries that women might be freer to realize their full potential, as creative and intellectual ability is increasingly valued because it is a source of wealth (Spender, 2001).

Disability

The term *disability* has been used to indicate physical as well as intellectual handicaps. It is often considered a limiting term that needs to be challenged. Disability can suggest deficiency and can be used to justify many forms of discrimination. To counter the negative meanings of disability, the term "ableism" has been suggested, with the term "differently abled" indicating that there is a wide range of abilities among human beings.

An equitable social policy would encourage the full development of the ability of every individual, including the use of practices and devices ranging from large-print books and voice-activated software to physical facilities that allow access for all to the built environment.

The information revolution also continues to provide new opportunities for the differently abled to engage in learning and working on computers.

See Also

DISABILITY AND FEMINISM; DISABILITY: ELITE BODY; EDUCATION: ACHIEVEMENT; EDUCATION: GENDER EQUITY; EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

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ABORTION

Globally, an estimated forty to fifty million induced abortions are performed each year. Additionally, unknown numbers of women attempt to abort but are unsuccessful. Although most abortions are performed under safe conditions, about fifteen million clandestine abortions take place annually in countries where the procedure is highly restricted or prohibited; this adds greatly to the physical dangers to women, and to the social costs (Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1994).

Throughout history, women have resorted to abortion to terminate unwanted or mistimed pregnancies. Anthropologists have documented a variety of abortion methods, including heavy massage of the uterus, insertion of a stick or another object into the vagina, and ingestion of herbs (Devereux, 1975). These methods are still practiced in both developed (or "northern") countries and developing ("southern" or third world) countries, most often where safe abortions performed by health professionals are either illegal or inaccessible.

World Abortion Politics

All governments place some legal restrictions on access to abortions. In 1994, abortion was outlawed in sixteen countries, including Chile, Ireland, the Philippines, Egypt, Mauritius, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic. (Of these sixteen, however, only Chile forbade abortion under all circumstances. In the other fifteen, in theory a woman could be granted permission to have an abortion to save her own life.) Most countries—173 in 1994—permit abortions at least in cases where the woman's life is in danger. Forty-one countries, representing 38 percent of the world's population, permit abortion "on request," although all still place some restrictions on the procedure, such as length of pregnancy or ability to pay (United Nations, 1994).

In the 1950s, abortion was severely restricted in most regions of the world, except for some European countries, the Soviet Union, and Japan. After independence, many former colonies retained strict antiabortion laws that had been imposed by their colonizers. Laws permitting abortion only to save a woman's life still prevail in most of Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Arab world (Cook, 1989; Dixon-Mueller, 1990).

In the 1980s and 1990s, abortion laws in both developed and developing nations were liberalized, in recognition of the impact on women's health of abortions carried out under unsafe conditions. Since 1988, five European countries, six countries of the former Eastern bloc, and five developing countries have made their abortion laws less restrictive (Henshaw, 1994). Countries with the least restrictive abortion laws include Cuba, Canada, the United States, many republics of the former Soviet Union, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Tunisia, and Turkey.

Concurrent with the trend toward legalization, however, a number of powerful religious groups, together with an increasingly vocal right-to-life movement, originating in the United States and spreading to the former Soviet Union and eastern bloc, Australia, and many developing countries, seeks to outlaw all abortions. Some are also opposed to the use of contraception.

Abortion Procedures

First-trimester abortions are typically carried out through vacuum aspiration, a five- to ten-minute procedure in which the cervix is dilated and the product of conception (the conceptus), along with the material lining the uterus, is extracted by suction. During the 1970s and 1980s, methods of nonsurgical medical abortion were developed, among them RU 486 (mifepristone, followed by one dose of a prostaglandin) and quinacrine (a more controversial method, the safety of which has not been fully established, despite its use in some developing countries). Administered orally, vaginally, or intramuscularly, these drugs cause the uterus to contract and expel its contents, in a manner similar to miscarriage.

Abortions after the first trimester often require dilation and evacuation of the uterus with the use of a sharp instrument (a curette) for scraping the uterine lining. Late-term abortions often involve inducing labor. The amniotic fluid is removed from the uterus through a needle, after which a medication (prostaglandin, urea, saline solution, or a combination) is injected into the uterus to induce contractions; a few hours later, labor occurs and the fetus is expelled.

For early procedures—pregnancies up to six or eight weeks—manual vacuum aspirations (MVA) can be used safely in health clinics and in primary health centers, when administered by trained health workers such as nurses with obstetric-gynecological training, midwives, paramedics, or physicians. MVA can also be provided on an outpatient basis at very low cost (Rosenfield, 1992).

Many women turn to abortion as a method of family planning because they do not have access to reliable methods of contraception; they find the available methods inconvenient or suffer from side effects or contraceptive failure; or they feel powerless to use a contraceptive method in their sexual relationships. For a variety of reasons, abortion also may be the method that best meets a woman's needs at a particular time in her life. Many women's health advocates suggest that the ideological division between "family planning" and "abortion" no longer makes sense. Seeking to build holistic systems for reproductive health care, women's health advocates call for safe abortion to be a part of a comprehensive program of sexual and reproductive health services accessible to all women (Dixon-Mueller, 1993).

The Toll of Unsafe Abortions

Unsafe abortion is recognized as a global problem with enormous impact on women's health and lives, particularly in poorer, less developed countries where abortion is also the most legally restricted. Mortality rates for unsafe abortions—those that are self-induced or clandestine because laws and politics restrict women's access to safe, legal services—are far higher than for legal abortions carried out by trained health professionals in sanitary conditions. Under unsafe conditions, mortality rates range between 15 and 300 deaths per 100,000 abortions performed (Royston and Armstrong, 1989), as opposed to the mortality rate of 1.4 deaths per 100,000 abortions carried out under safe conditions. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that more than 100,000 women die each year from unsafe abortions. Because these deaths are generally underreported, the true figure may be much higher.

As a result of unsafe abortions, even higher numbers of women experience chronic or severe health problems, infections of the reproductive tract, infertility, and severe physical or emotional trauma. Women also may feel depressed, powerless, and alone after the procedure, especially if denied compassionate counseling, legal sanction, and—in most cases—any form of postprocedure pain management. Poor, young, and less-educated women suffer the most from restrictive abortion laws, and they suffer the most in poor countries.

The United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in September 1994, defined unsafe abortion as "a major public health concern" in an agreement signed by 184 nations. Although no specific recommendations were made for removing legal restrictions against abortion, the Programme of Action urged governments and nongovernmental organizations to "strengthen their commitment to women's health" and "to deal with the health impact of unsafe abortion."

Of additional concern to health officials are the costs of treating women who have incomplete or botched abortions. Such treatment is an overwhelming and often unsuccessful task, as well as a significant drain on the medical resources of already overburdened health systems (Germain, 1989).

Women's Health in the Balance

Despite the increasing legality of abortion, women's health and lives are still threatened. Many governments install, as gatekeeping mechanisms, requirements that impede women seeking abortions, such as a mandatory waiting period; filing of police reports or other legal documents; proof of rape, incest, physical disability, or mental distress; or evidence of fetal impairment. Disparities exist in access to abortion, with poor and rural populations having greatly reduced access to services. In the United States, for example, 83 percenr of counties have no abortion provider (National Abortion Federation, 1991), and the federal government does not pay for abortion for poor women. In India and Zambia, abortion is legal, but millions of women each year still resort to clandestine abortions when and where services are not available (McLaurin et al., 1991). China and India, the world's two most populous nations, have fairly liberal abortion laws. The cultural preference for sons is so great in these countries, however, that many women seek abortions following amniocentesis if they learn that the fetus is female.

Feminists and the international women's health movement have, since the 1970s, made access to safe abortion services a central issue of rights, equity, and reproductive health, and support a woman's right to choose an abortion on medical, moral, or ethical grounds.

See Also

CONTRACEPTION; FAMILY PLANNING; FETUS; MATERNAL HEALTH AND MORBIDITY; THE PILL; PRO-CHOICE MOVEMENT; REPRODUCTION: OVERVIEW; REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH; REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS; REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

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Martha MacDonald

ABSTINENCE, SEXUAL

See CELIBACY: RELIGIOUS; CELIBACY: SECULAR; and VIRGINITY.

ABUSE

Abuse—a term often linked with violence against women or children—is one of several terms, along with *violence* and *battering,* that gained widespread use in the latter half of the twentieth century. These terms can be used interchangeably. They may be linked with other words, such as *syndrome, family,* and *marital,* to develop conceptual meaning, or they may be defined differently.

Recognizing an Issue

The term *abuse* may be restricted to children and *violence* to adults in order to make theoretical distinctions useful to professional responses (Stark and Flitcraft, 1996). Using different terms can be helpful in differentiating the relevance of coercion and control; for children, these are an aspect of childhood development, whereas for adults they are the antithesis of independence and autonomy. These differences are reflected in interventions for adults and those for children—protective services for children, contrasted with support, advocacy, and empowerment for independent adults. Battering can be seen as a process, the "dynamics of partner assaults as a pattern of coercive control" encompassing a range of behaviors to "hurt, intimidate, coerce, isolate, control, or humiliate a partner" (Stark and Flitcraft, 1996: 161).

Using different terms can also be a way of confirming differential responses based on a distinction between appropriate interventions in the private and the public domain. For example, *domestic violence* is a policing term for violence against women from men known to them, usually husbands, cohabitees, or boyfriends. It defines the location of a call for assistance and implies a lesser response than would result from public violence. In policing, the term *domestic violence* can be used to distinguish between criminal (that is, violent) and noncriminal behavior. Another term used to describe the location of a type of abuse is *harassment,* which began as a descriptor for workplace abuse encompassing both violent crime and noncriminal acts.

However defined, abusive experiences challenge theory, policy, and practice in relation to the family and social life more generally. The recognition of abuse calls into question the view of the heterosexual family as a haven of warmth and caring and as invariably a social good. Abuse also raises issues about the separation between public and private life and, most important, about gender and gender relations. Gender differences are a factor not only in who does what to whom, but also in how abusive acts are interpreted and understood by women, men, and children of both sexes.

In this article, in keeping with much of the literature, *abuse, violence, battering,* and *harassment* will be used interchangeably in relation to a wide range of behaviors. These varying forms of abuse take place in families consisting of adult partners with and without dependent children and between acquaintances, friends, workplace colleagues, and strangers. This discussion will include the issues of the abuse of men and of women as abusers.

Rediscovering Child Abuse

The rediscovery of the extent of violence against children began in the early 1960s, when unexplained injury to children was identified through radiology (Kempe et al., 1962). Although forms of harm to infants and children, such as serious physical neglect and infanticide, were part of the knowledge of professional practice, X rays found multiple fractures, both old and new, in children from birth onward that could not be explained away as accidental. The recognition of extreme physical violence, initially called battering, deliberately inflicted by adults responsible for the care of infants and older children spread quickly and began to have an influence on medical and other services. Because this abuse was taking place primarily within families, new ways of understanding family dynamics and life had to be developed. But the recognition of physical abuse was only the beginning.

Sexual abuse of children, along with physical abuse and neglect, was understood to be a social problem in the nineteenth century, but this knowledge was contested, particularly by theoretical developments in psychoanalysis. Over the early years of the twentieth century, knowledge of child sexual abuse as a major social problem became so restricted that, as with physical abuse, we can speak of its subsequent rediscovery. In 1980 the publication of *The Best Kept Secret* by Florence Rush launched an attack on Freud for his belief that claims by women in therapy that they had been sexually abused as children were fantasies, not reality. At the same time, women began to publish experiential accounts challenging this view (for example, Armstrong, 1978) along with exposures of the sexual abuse of women patients by male therapists.

Initially Freud thought that childhood experiences of rape and other sexual acts by fathers were reality, but his medical colleagues disagreed. Male therapists, comfortable with the belief that women fantasize sexual experiences with their fathers, developed a theory that such fantasies were merely an aspect of child development. This type of theoretical battle continues today through the debate over "false memory syndrome," the view that women falsely recall experiences of abuse by their fathers. Further, false memories are said to be encouraged by the therapeutic process, a view that challenges psychoanalysis and related therapies in a new way. These views serve to deny not only the reality of sexual abuse of girls by adult males but also the long-term detrimental emotional harm that can follow children of both sexes into adulthood.

Prevalence of Child Abuse

Both professionals and society in general resisted the recognition of sexual abuse of girls by fathers and other male relatives more strongly than that of the extreme physical abuse of boys and girls. Once such abuse could no longer be denied, the sexual abuse of boys was raised as an issue. (Similarly, when resistance to recognition of the abuse of women by their male partners ceased to be tenable, men were said to be physically victimized as well.) The scale of the problems, the gender of abusers and victims, and other characteristics increasingly came to be recognized as areas for study.

As with all forms of violence, the precise number of abusers and victims cannot be known with absolute certainty, but surveys and studies of varying sizes have established that both physical abuse and sexual abuse of girls and boys are substantial problems. Even adjusting for methodologies, the general finding is that girls are more likely to be sexually abused than boys. Men in and around the family, such as uncles or grandfathers, may abuse only girls, although in some families men sexually abuse children of both sexes. Studies suggest that approximately three times as many girls as boys are sexually abused. Children are also abused in residential and other institutions, such as day schools and youth groups, in which adults occupy a position of leadership and trust. Abuse by strangers is comparatively rare.

Sexual abuse can happen at any age from birth onward but is likely to begin before and cease at adolescence. Research with sex offenders has increased understanding of the ways in which men approach and use children and how they keep children from telling others about the abuse. Some children may be physically injured through adult male penetration, but a child may be required to engage in activities that leave no physical damage, such as masturbation and oral sex. Children are silenced through various strategies, such as threats of harm and even death, or warnings that no one will believe them, that they will be severely punished, or that their mothers will die if they are told.

Women also may abuse children, but sexual abuse is almost entirely undertaken by men. In the United Kingdom, for example, 98 percent of the prosecutions for sexual abuse are of men. Although criminal prosecution, given its rarity, is not a complete measure of the proportion of male or female abusers of children, it is a major indicator. There are also qualitative differences. Women who sexually abuse may do so alone, or they may be in a couple or part of a group with male members and may be abused themselves by these men. Because the number of women who sexually abuse children is so small relative to men, these women are truly deviant. With men, deviance is a more difficult argument to make.

The term *pedophile* could be applied to any man who seeks sexual encounters with children, but it is used primarily to refer to strangers—that is, to men who operate in same-sex groups to abuse children, particularly boys, or who operate alone seeking out single mothers with children of the "right" age. Abusive rings can be established through the Internet, can involve men from different nations, and can include child pornography. On rare occasions a very limited number of these may be apprehended and prosecuted and the images seized, but the children whose bodies were used to make them are unlikely to be found. An extreme case of police, judicial, and governmental incompetence and corruption took place in the 1990s in Belgium, when four abducted and sexually abused young girls died of starvation in locked cellars. Public outrage is nor sufficient to curtail widespread child abuse within or around or outside the family; abusers are often socially well connected and highly manipulative men rather than loners or similar outsiders.

With physical and emotional abuse, the proportion of male abusers decreases to approximately 50 percent of all cases. This percentage increases, however, when the proportion of men who abuse is compared only with women abusers living with men. Men are more likely to commit major assaults and homicide. As with sexual abuse, women's abuse of both boy and girl children may be undertaken alone or in conjunction with a male partner and, more rarely, with other relatives or people. Here too, the abuser may be abused herself.

How Agencies Respond to Child Abuse

Definitions of child abuse change over time. Is physical chastisement with whips and other instruments necessary to achieve an obedient, well-brought-up child? Does sexual abuse harm girls? The answers to these questions determine how society responds. Since the turn of the twentieth century, a growing social consensus that extreme physical abuse is unacceptable has emerged, and the forensic evidence produced by radiology began to give child abuse a greater profile in policing and the criminal justice system as well as with regard to health. The acknowledgment of sexual abuse of children as social problem came later and is now an integral part of police work in the western world.

Police forces may have specialist units to investigate child abuse, including taking video statements from children old enough to speak about their experiences. Court procedures may be altered so that children can give evidence behind a screen or by video or be located in another room while giving evidence and during cross-examination. These strategies are adopted to ensure that children do not have to see their abuser and receive nonverbal messages from an intimately known abuser or experience the terror of their abuser's being in such close proximity. However, even with these protective measures, successful prosecutions are far from easy to obtain. Another strategy adopted by women and men is to seek the prosecution of their abusers once they are adults. In some cases police will interview accused men, and if they admit guilt, they will be prosecuted. If they do not, it is likely that collaborative evidence will no longer be available; the exception is when the abuse took place in a residential establishment, where hundreds of former pupils or children's home residents may be interviewed and successful prosecutions ensue.

Other agencies also are involved. Social work, with its statutory responsibility for child protection, may maintain child-abuse registers. Because this area of work is multidisciplinary, formal procedures for working together may be in place. Many agencies may be involved, but key players are the police and the health and social service systems. Schools, too, may have an information-gathering and -reporting system, which may be formally organized so that the suspicions of a classroom teacher are reported to the appropriate supervisor and thence to other agencies as required. (An example of how agencies collaborate on child protection cases is provided by the U.K. Department of Health and Social Service document *Working Together*.) Compliance with mandatory reporting systems may vary, as may the quality of the work that flows from it.

Only in the 1990s did the connections between abuse of children and abuse of women begin to be widely recognized. It is estimated that when mothers are abused, at least 50 percent of the children may be as well. This abuse can be both physical and sexual. If witnessing and knowing about the abuse of one's mother is understood as psychologically abusive, then almost all children in these families are being adversely affected. However, translating this recognition into professional practice in civil law, criminal justice, and social and welfare work is just beginning. For example, civil court proceedings to decide on custody or residence of children or access to them often present a major problem for abused mothers and children. Access to children by abusive male partners can be granted not only when women deem it to be unsafe for themselves and the children, but even when the children express the wish not to see their father again. These decisions have led to repeated abuse and even homicide.

Rediscovering the Abuse of Women

The rediscovery of violence against women by men known to them was separate from the recognition of child abuse. It was initiated independently in the United Kingdom and in the Netherlands by politically active women and led to the setting up of the first shelrers for abused women and their children in 1971. The experiences of women, though varied, had commonalities (Dobash and Dobash, 1979). Women described physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuses and social isolation from family and friends. The major focus continues to be on physical violence, while the least visible form of harm is sexual abuse. Marital rape is recognized as a crime in some countries, but prosecutions are very rare and usually involve some additional form of abuse. Controlling behavior and the exercise of power characterize the experiences of women with abusive male partners.

As with child abuse, these behaviors were well known in the nineteenth century, but by the mid–twentieth century they were no longer common knowledge. The nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century advocates of civil rights for women—including the right to property and earnings; the right to divorce; the right to access, care, control, and guardianship of their children; and the right to vote—argued that these rights would ensure better treatment of women by their husbands, as the latter would have more respect for their wives. Although the extension of civil rights has not eliminated the abuse of wives or even reduced it to an insignificant problem, it has broadened the legal protection offered to women, even if this protection is not always enforced.

All forms of violence can be devastating, but many women say that emotional or psychological abuse—which can reduce and destroy self-esteem and a sense of self-worth, thereby restricting personal independence and autonomy—is the worst. Abused women are often severely depressed, overwhelmed by feelings of hopelessness that greatly reduce their ability to cope with everyday tasks. They may begin to believe that they are totally incompetent and even feel grateful to have an abusive partner. Extreme abuse over a long period of time can be described as a form of torture or brainwashing that reduces the individual to full compliance with her torturer.

Abusive men are likely to minimize and deny the harm caused by their behavior. Men often deny that they are violent, even when they have killed. They also excuse and justify their abuse, partly because their social position is superior and the exercise of power and control over women and children is a "right" emanating from being a man. As Jeff Hearn explains, violence both demonstrates that one is a man and symbolically shows that one is a man (1998). Not all men are equally violent, or even violent at all, but the connection between violence and masculinity is everywhere. When interviewed, men usually describe their violence in terms of specific incidents, mirroring the approach taken by the criminal justice system.

These responses suggest a complex relationship between heterosexuality as a system of social relations and abusive behavior by men. Heterosexuality is the major social context in which gender-differentiated and sexually violent relationships involving women and children occur. The dominance of men can be eroticized both in behavior and in representations, such as pornography, but in men's accounts of their violence, sexual abuse is rarely mentioned. Individual negotiation and resistance to eroticized violence are possible but difficult for both men and women, given the connections between violence, the erotic, and masculine and feminine ideals and expectations.

Prevalence

Abusive behavior by men known ro them is a common feature of family life for many women. The number of attacks (incidence) always exceeds the number of those who are victimized (prevalence). In terms of abuse or assault, the home is the least safe place for women. For both women and children the conclusion is this: the closer the relationship, the greater the danger. Family-based violence or abuse is characterized by repetition, and over time it may increase in severity and frequency. Studies in western countries show that one-quarter to one-third of women will experience domestic violence at some time in their lives, and some women will be abused over many years (for example, see Haskell and Randall, 1993). In the United States each year, 1.5 million women seek medical attention for injuries related to abuse, but only 27 out of every 1,000 women are new cases previously unknown to the medical facility (Stark and Flitcraft, 1996). In approximately 50 percent of homicides of women, the perpetrators are husbands or cohabitees. Men, too, suffer injury from women, even death, but death is relatively rare and often occurs as male violence escalates. Men are more likely to experience violent abuse from male strangers and acquaintances.

The group of women who suffer the most domestic abuse are those in prostitution. Studies suggest that prostitution, at a minimum, doubles the risk of domestic violence. A prostitute's boyfriend or partner is often a pimp who may use coercion to ensure that women and girls continue to bring in the money he wants. Increases in heroin and crack addiction have made it even harder for women to abandon prostitution and hence even more difficult for them to end the violence by leaving abusive men. Other forms of violence, from acquaintances and strangers, are also greatly increased for women in prostitution.

Prostitution also entails abuse of children, as both girls and boys frequently enter prostitution before the age of 18. Children may flee sexual abuse at home or at group care facilities only to be quickly picked up by men who, in exchange for sex, offer accommodation, food, and sometimes money. Pimps not only are able to recognize vulnerable children but are on the lookout for them, and they also can be successful in recruiting girls from stable homes. Prosecution of pimps is infrequent, although an awareness of the need to prosecute is increasing.

This form of sexual exploitation of vulnerable girls and women is greatly extended with war, civil unrest, and economic disintegration, when criminal gangs of men move women, children, and anything that sellers and buyers want—such as illegal weapons, nuclear materials, and drugs—between one country and another. Women who arrive as illegal immigrants may be forced to surrender their passports and other documenrs, their earnings, and their personal freedom. Women and girls who do not speak the language of the receiving country find it even more difficult to escape conditions of bondage. Women have been seized from refugee camps and exported against their will. Europe has many examples of such abuse of women and children since the economic collapse of the Soviet Union and the wars in the former Yugoslavia. Other parts of the world experience similar forms of sexual exploitation and violations of human rights.

How Agencies Respond to the Abuse of Women

Recognition of and initial responses to the abuse of women came from nongovernmental agencies, through services organized by women for women. The aim was to offer women and their children a safe place to live with other women who shared similar experiences. In these safe havens, women were empowered by a decrease in self-blame through new knowledge that came from living with other women with similar experiences. Volunteers and paid staffs assisted women with legal, housing, income maintenance, and other problems, and, as funds increased, so did play groups and other services for children.

Statutory agencies, such as criminal justice, health, social, and welfare services, have been slow to respond to violence against women; as a result, men have continued to receive social and institutional support for their violent, abusive behaviors. But actions at a local level have focused on the development of agency policy to provide guidelines for intervention. In the United Kingdom, for example, central government policy statements and good-practice guidelines promoted the extension of these developments. Proactive responses that assist women and convey to men the message that their abusive behavior toward women is unacceptable are beginning to develop in an uneven way within and between agencies. For example, an operational model of policing that responds to repeat victimization with increasing interventions is a new crime-prevention approach that could be adapted by other statutory agencies (Hanmer, Griffiths, and Jerwood, 1999).

Multiagency or partnership work in response to the abuse of women is at an earlier stage of development than that adopted for child abuse. Domestic violence forums offer a meeting point for all agencies and the possibility of joint work. Internationally recognized approaches combine prosecutions of other mandated outcomes for the perpetrators.

Although the response from government varies in different western countries, funding for refuges or shelters is increasingly seen as a state responsibility, whether organized at local or higher levels. Within nation-states, statutory agencies differ in the extent of their proactive responses, but progress is gathering pace.

From National to International Responses

Recognition of the problem includes activities undertaken by multinational groups, such as the European Union and the Council of Europe, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the United Nations. For example, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Beijing Platform of Action, as well as the appointment of a UN Rapporteur on Violence, have the potential to increase visibility and interventions in nation-states where the abuse of women and children continues to have a low profile. The aim is to establish policy and practice to protect and empower women and children.

These international responses are the result of an understanding of violence and abuse as a violation of human rights. Abuse of women and children now incorporates war; the sexual exploitation, trafficking, and forced migration of refugees; rape as a militarized political policy; forced pregnancy; slavery; and cultural and literal genocide through the use of mass weapons of destruction such as nuclear testing, as well as through famine and disease that are consequences of war (Lentin, 1997). These human rights abuses occur throughout the world, often aided and abetted by the actions of the West in supplying weapons, military training, and active support for military dictators. Women and children are always the losers; in a war, the safest place to be is usually in the armed forces, even when they are engaged in combat.

In conclusion, *abuse* can be seen as an overworked term or as a word to open a door to a new understanding of gender dynamics and, beyond that, to a new understanding of what needs to change to render the widespread use of *abuse* obsolete.

See Also

BATTERY; DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; INCEST; PORNOGRAPHY AND VIOLENCE; PROSTITUTION; RAPE; SEXUAL VIOLENCE; TRAFFICKING; VIOLENCE, *all entries*

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ACHIEVEMENT

See ABILITY and EDUCATION: ACHIEVEMENT.

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

See AIDS AND HIV.

ACTIVISM

Activism is a broad concept. Whereas *activism* refers primarily to political actions, the boundaries of what counts as political cannot be narrowly drawn, because, in a feminist view, the personal is also political. Thus, activism as we define it encompasses all collective efforts to change power relations at all levels, from the interpersonal to the international.

Women's activism is not new. The Greek play *Lysistrata* portrayed women collectively attempting to change the balance of power in their relationships with men several millennia ago. At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was already a strongly developed international women's movement challenging the subordination of women (Rupp, 1998). Women's current activism takes place within a context of struggles for gender equality and other political and economic goals, across a range of international and nationally based organizations, and includes ongoing efforts to establish constructive discussions between privileged and disadvantaged women about the nature of women's needs (see, for example, Booth, 1998; Moghadam, 2000).

Within activism, we differentiate between women's movements and feminism (see also Ferree et al., 1999). By *women's movements* we mean the work of women who are motivated *as women* to work on issues that they view as particularly important, such as environmental protection, health, deindustrialization, poverty, gender equality, or peace. By definition, women's movements involve a collective mobilization of women as social and political actors. These movements address women as women or sometimes as mothers, and organizations are typically by and for women alone.

We define *feminism* by its focus on changes in women's social status in three critical dimensions: access to economic resources, power to affect decisions in the community as a whole, and autonomy in relation to personal life choices. Feminist movements have changing gender relationships as their goal; they specifically aim to empower women and to change social arrangements that unequally benefit men. Feminist groups—that is, those that are concerned with gender relations as a target of social and political change—are but one part of the women's movement.

Women's activism encompasses both women's movements and feminism but also can be found in other mobilizations for political change that neither specifically appeal to gender as a basis for mobilization nor set out to challenge gender relations as a goal. Labor movements, movements of national liberation, and environmental movements are examples of such other contexts.

Within women's movements there are multiple types of activist organizations. We classify these into three broad categories. First, *autonomous women's organizations* are groups that exist independent of state support and play no official role in state decision making. These may or may not be feminist. Many autonomous activist groups are small, local, informal, and nonhierarchical in structure, but this is not necessarily the case (Miles, 1996). Among the autonomous feminist organizations active at the turn of the twenty-first century are an increasing number that are international in scope—that is, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that draw their membership and define their goals beyond the boundaries of individual nation-states. Autonomous women's NGOs such as Developmental Alternatives for Women in a New Era (DAWN) and the International Women's Tribune Center focus on developing and supporting grassroots activism.

Second, *state feminism* refers to mobilization within and through formal government organizations charged with attending to women's interests, such as the Women's

Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor (Stetson and Mazur, 1995). State feminism includes mobilization within international quasi-governmental organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union. State feminists also are sometimes called "femocrats," a term coined to describe the Australian experience but widely picked up because it so appropriately describes the situation around the world (Eisenstein, 1996). Femocrats are women in official positions within the state whose formal responsibilities include representing women as a distinctive constituency and responding to women's particular needs. They often head women's ministries in parliamentary systems, such as in Germany or France, and administer a variety of programs specifically designed for women.

Third, *unobtrusive mobilization within institutions* refers to the process through which women have come together inside other associations, organizations, and social movements. Katzenstein (1998) describes how activists working with the U.S. military and within the Catholic church challenged the practices and discourses of these powerful hierarchical institutions, using a variety of strategies from lawsuits to conferences. Unobtrusive mobilization also can happen in less well institutionalized groups, such as social movements. Activists challenge gender relations within the movement's organizations and struggle to put gender equality on the agenda of the movement's concerns. In nationalist movements, unobrrusive mobilization by feminists can lead to activists' becoming state feminists if the movement succeeds in coming to power.

Organizational Issues for Activists

Although social movements are more than the organizations to which they give rise, organizations are among the most enduring and powerful resources that activists have to produce long-term change. Organizations allow the transmission of information and material resources across generations, and allow the movement to institutionalize its ideas in practices that can financed and taught in larger numbers than could be done by individuals working separately. Organizational structure has long been a concern for activists, who debate the merits of more bureaucratic or collectivist forms, consider the risks of co-optation that come from working inside larger groups, and deal with problems of authority and hierarchy (Ferree and Martin, 1995). New issues for women activists are emerging as women's movements generally, and feminist organizations in particular, grow in number and scope around the world (Alvarez, 1997).

First, the wide networks of women activists that are being built are bringing feminist perspectives to a great variety of issues, hence diffusing the movement. As women activists become unobtrusively mobilized in a variety of associations and movements, feminist perspectives and gender interests come to be seen as relevant to more and more issues. This diffused activism has the potential to challenge gender relations very broadly, but activists on specific issues run the risk of losing sight of the connections between specific issues. Building and maintaining cross-issue networks in their particular countries and regions is one strategy that women activists have used to integrate diverse concerns. The development of issue-specific activist groups in a variety of countries and regions has been accompanied by efforts to link them into *international issue advocacy networks* (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Second, the expansion of networking and diffusion into state institutions has contributed to making activism more professionalized. Women's activism often takes the form of building or working in formal NGOs rather than in informal, face-to-face groups. As they have become more professional in form, activist organizations also have acquired more resources and expertise and are more likely to be consulted by authorities and officials. Activists with specialized expertise also have built up alternative institutions for providing services, from rape counseling to job training. The risk of co-optation into the welfare state, however, is not trivial when activists affiliated with women's organizations lobby to influence state policy making and compete for resources.

Third, the expansion and professionalization of activist networks has increased feminist influence on where and how resources are channeled. In postcolonial nations, international aid has particularly gone under the rubric of "capacity building" (Grindle, 1997). Capacity-building initiatives have brought substantial new funding for women's activism, but there are also costs associated with such sponsored growth. Rivalries over who will be funded, implicit pressure to accept wesrern priorities, and a tendency to favor organizations that are more formalized and can be held more accountable to the donors are all likely results.

Feminists worry that these developments may change grassroots women into recipients of services from the movement rather than active participants in its ongoing development. This transformation of grassroots women into mere beneficiaries of services is sometimes called *clientelism,* because it defines the service providers rather than the recipients as those who best understand the clients' needs and interests. By contrast, feminists generally believe that grassroots women should be defining their own needs and speaking out in their own cause. Such *empowerment* means much more than access to the formal institutions of politics, because self-determination is significant in many aspects of civil society (Kabeer, 1999; Karl, 1995).

In sum, activist organizations have grown in number and scope, and feminists have unobtrusively mobilized in governments, foundations, and community organizations worldwide. More diverse in activities, more professionalized in form, and more targeted to international decision-making bodies, women activists have had a discernible influence on the discourses used and policies adopted regarding gender issues around the world. Activists strive to channel resources from non-gender-specific sources to women, and they insist on empowerment through local initiative and grassroots consciousness raising to avoid reducing women to mere recipients of benefits.

For all these successes, there are still multiple challenges ahead. Informal networks are less easily institutionalized, less permanent, and lacking in any structure for ensuring democratic accountability to those whom they claim to represent. In addition, the "NGO-ized" form of organization, directed at lobbying a national or international decision makers, tends to marginalize the less skilled and less affluent. Women's activism is not only about gaining access and influence in political structures (that is, femocracy). It is also about reenvisioning civil society and changing gender relations in ways that will challenge the division between state and society, public and private, politics and personal life.

See Also

FEMINISM: OVERVIEW; FEMOCRAT; NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS); POLITICAL PARTICIPATION; POLITICS AND THE STATE: OVERVIEW; WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: MODERN INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

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ADDICTION

See DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE.

ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence—which is largely a twentieth-century western "invention" that originated mainly in the United States and the United Kingdom—is now considered a chronological period of accelerated cognitive, emotional, and physical growth. The outcome of these changes is sexual and psychological maturity. This period is thought to begin around age 12 and end when the individual gains independence, usually between ages 18 and 20. The actual end of this period depends on many factors, including cultural expectations, individual physical maturation, and emotional development. The changes that occur during adolescence can be difficult and confusing for the adolescent as well as the family and society.

The most visible change for the adolescent is puberty. This is the period during which there is rapid physical growth as well as sexual maturation. Young women will experience menarche—first menstruation—during early puberty. In the United States the average age of menarche is about 12.45 years; in Europe it is about 13 years. The onset of menses may occur as early as 10 years or as late as 15.5 years and still be considered normal. Menarche, however, is only part of the gradual process of puberty. Both boys and girls experience a powerful rush of hormones from the endocrine glands—testosterone for boys and estradiol for girls. Estradiol is necessary for breast, uterine, and skeletal development. The concentration of this hormone increases eightfold during puberty (Lerner and Foch, 1987).

This is the period during which young people see their bodies change virtually overnight. Many young women develop a new and heightened awareness of their bodies during adolescence. Many also may begin to experience problems such as eating disorders, depression, alcohol and drug use, and sexual experimentation during this time (Santrock, 1997). These issues have been thought to be more common among earlier-maturing girls. However, early maturation is thought to benefit girls in some ways, in that they demonstrate more independence and greater popularity. Young women experience the rapid physical changes and growth spurts of puberty, on average, two years before young men; in fact, many young women have completed this portion of puberty before their male peers have even begun.

Cognitive changes also occur during adolescence. Adolescents begin to display "formal operational" thought, a developmental phase suggested by Jean Piaget, which occurs around age 12. This type of thinking is more logical, organized, abstract, and idealistic than younger children's thinking. Adolescents also become more interested in and capable of introspection and social cognition. Given these changes, many adolescents appear to become self-absorbed as they begin to engage in hypothetical and abstract reasoning about themselves and their lives. They may perceive the world around them subjectively, which can cause problems with others for adolescents who harbor a belief that "no one"—certainly not a parent—could understand them. This tendency is often referred to as adolescent egocentrism. Some theorists attribute many of the reckless behaviors of adolescents, including drug and alcohol use, excessive speed while driving, and in some cases suicidal thoughts, to their egocentrism (Elkind, 1978). Unfortunately, adolescents often act on their own feelings in harmful ways. Suicide accounts for about 12 percent of the mortality rate among adolescents and young adults, and in the United States the incidence of suicide in this age group tripled between 1952 and 1992 (Center for Disease Control, 1995). The changes in adolescent cognition also necessitate changes in the manner in which adolescents are educated. Young women, at this time, may respond better to more abstract than to concrete methods of instruction.

Conflict, conformity, and changes in identity can mark the social and emotional development of adolescence, and the young person addresses two critical questions: what one does in the face of conflict and how one can live with others.

The conflict between a young woman and her family that often occurs in early adolescence may play an important role in her continuing individual development, as well as in her understanding of who she is in relation to others. These conflicts and their resolutions allow the young woman to separate her unfolding sense of *self* from her sense of *herself in relation to her family.* Sometimes the conflict is particularly intense and stressful. This type of prolonged conflict has been shown to be associated with a number of problems of adolescence, such as juvenile delinquency, dropping out of school, drug abuse, running away, and cult membership (Brook et al., 1990). Peer group conformity (peer pressure) also occurs during the early stages of adolescence. For young women, "being in relationship to others" is a crucial part of their development. This interest in identifying with others allows for the development of social consciousness, social skills, and feelings of inclusion. The developmental theorist Erik Erikson has noted that adolescence is in the fifth stage of the life cycle, "identity versus identity confusion." Together with the development of formal operational thinking, this period is marked by experimentation with a number of roles and identities from adolescents' own imagination or the world around them. As the adolescent girl successfully integrates these identities and manages the stress surrounding conflicting identities, she is able to develop a new and unique core sense of self, involving awareness of such things as career direction, basic values, and sexual orientation. Although this sense of self will change over the life span, at this stage it allows the adolescent to begin her movement toward adult maturity.

See Also

EATING DISORDERS; GIRL STUDIES; GIRLS' SUBCULTURES; INITIATION RITES; MENARCHE; MENSTRUATION; SEXUALITY: ADOLESCENT SEXUALITY; SUICIDE

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ADOPTION

Adoption establishes a permanent legal relationship between a parent and a non–biologically related child. The adoptive parent or parents assume all the responsibilities associated with parenthood, and the child has no remaining legal link with the biological mother or father. Adoption may occur between a child and a family member (such as a grandmother or a stepfather) or between a child and a completely unrelated adult. In the United States, for example, adoption is more likely to occur between a child and a family member than between a child and a stranger (Hollinger, 1999). Although typically there are age limits on who can be adopted, these age limits are not universal.

Adoption has a long history. It is mentioned in the Code of Hammurabi and in Hindu Sanskrit texts, and it was practiced in ancient Rome, where it was generally used to perpetuate a male familial line. Adoption was also traditional in many societies in Africa and Oceania, and in indigenous American Indian societies. The Muslim personal law Shariyat does not mention adoption, although it occurs among Muslims in many countries.

Adoption of an unrelated child is of fairly recent origin under common law (legal systems based on English law). England did not enact a general adoption law until 1926; in the United States, adoption in its modern form dates back only to the mid-nineteenth century (Hollinger, 1999). Nineteenth-century adoption statutes often specified that courts must consider the suitability of the adoptive parents as well as whether the adoption was suitable for the child; they were also designed to ensure that the biological parents would be involved in the adoption process. Although these early statutes provided that the adoptive family would substitute for the biological family, they still frequently expressed a preference for blood relationships. For example, a child was allowed to inherit from the biological parents but was precluded from inheriting from relatives of the adoptive parents because they were "strangers to the adoption."

Today, adoption laws vary somewhat between countries. In the United States, for instance, contemporary law emphasizes the complete substitution of the adoptive family for the biological family. A child becomes available for adoption when the biological parents voluntarily decide to give up their parental rights or when those rights are terminated involuntarily. The adoption may occur through an agency, or it may be a private adoption arranged directly between the biological and adoptive parents, frequently with the help of a lawyer. The adoptive parents must receive a court order that confers on them the status of parenthood. In the United States, the adoptee receives a new birth certificate that lists the adoptive parents as the parents and also lists the child's new name. In other countries, adoption does not necessarily lead to a new birth certificate.

Traditionally, adoption has meant that the adoptee and the biological parents have no further contact, but under some contemporary adoption laws—as in the United States—the biological parents may continue to see their child pursuant to an open adoption, or adoption-with-contact, arrangement. This change in adoption practice is a response both to the needs of adopted children and to requests by birth mothers (Appell, 1998; Carp, 1999). Moreover, although adoption records have typically been sealed and unavailable for review, this too is changing. In New South Wales (Australia), England, Wales, and some parts of the United States, adoptees now have access to their original birth certificates.

In addition to legally recognized adoption, numerous informal adoptions occur outside the legal system, without formal recognition of the new relationship. In the African-American community, for instance, informal adoption has a long history (Perry, 1998). The practice of fostering in Oceania is another example. In the United States, foster care refers to the temporary placement of children in a substitute family; although the foster family may ultimately seek to adopt the child, the child also may be returned to the biological family.

Given that the adoptive family was supposed to look like a typical family, it has been difficult for single women or lesbian couples to adopt children. The traditionally preferred adoptive placement has been with a married heterosexual couple (Hollinger, 1999). This is beginning to change. Single parents are becoming eligible for adoption, and practices that prevented lesbians from becoming adoptive parents are changing as well. Even the partners of lesbian women are becoming increasingly able to adopt through several different strategies. Where one partner has adopted a child, the other partner may seek a "second-parent" adoption to enable her to exercise parental rights (Goldenberg, 2000). Such adoptions have been recognized in several countries, including the United States and Israel. Another alternative is available to relatively few couples: where one partner is pregnant with an egg from the other parent, the other partner can seek a prebirth ruling that she will also be the child's legal parent.

Some parents adopt children from other countries, leading to adoptive relationships that are interracial, intercultural, and interreligious. A number of international treaties and conventions, such as the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, govern various substantive and procedural aspects of international adoptions. Nonetheless, each country develops its own adoption policies.

Some feminists have claimed that international adoption allows more privileged adopting women to exploit less advantaged birth mothers from other countries by removing the children without giving the mothers any help (Perry, 1998). On the other hand, adoptive mothers are providing a home for children who might otherwise grow up under marginal conditions in an institution. Adoptive mothers have also spoken of their overwhelming love for their adopted children and their construction as mothers (Bartholet, 1992; Lacey, 1998). Moreover, adoptive parents have stressed that they will attempt to respect their children's original backgrounds.

During the mid-twentieth century in the United States, a birth mother was frequently told that adoption would be best for the child and that she herself would be able to forget the child completely and go on with her life (Cahn and Singer, 1999; Solinger, 1992). Increasingly, however, birth mothers have begun to speak out about their pain in not knowing their children and about the connection that they continue to feel to these children (Cahn and Singer, 1999). Although a few birth mothers, particularly victims of rape, have spoken about the significance of keeping the past private, the overwhelming majority of birth mothers have welcomed the opportunity to have contact with their children.

Adoptees have become increasingly vocal about their need to know about their biological origins (Lifton, 1994). Adoptees' desire to search for their biological relatives develops from many different sources and may include both physical and psychological motives.

Public attitudes toward adoption vary. In a recent study in the United States, most of the participants were extremely accepting of adoption. On the other hand, only two-thirds of the respondents believed that it was highly likely that an adoptee would love the adoptive parents as much as the biological parents (Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1997).

Ultimately, adoption is one of several methods for creating a new family. Adoption practices have changed significantly over the past several decades as we gain improved understanding of how adoption affects birth parents, adoptive parents, and adoptees.

See Also

ADOPTION: MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES; FOSTERING: CASE STUDY—OCEANIA; STEPFAMILIES

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Naomi Cahn

ADOPTION: Mental Health Issues

As a legal process confirming an adult as the parent of a child, adoption is routine in western nations. It provides homes for children who might otherwise be raised in foster care or in group homes. It is seen as a way of handling unwanted pregnancy and as a way of creating a family for others: both infertile and fertile couples, including gay and lesbian couples, as well as individuals who opt to become single parents. In developing countries, adoption may be a formal legal process, though this is rare. It is more commonly an informal obligation, often assumed by a relative or community member, to care for a child whose parents have died or are unable or unwilling to raise the child themselves.

Defining adoption by these parameters alone, however, trivializes and ignores the psychological impact that separating a child from his or her birth mother will have on all members of the "adoption triad"—a term used to refer to adoptees, birth parents, and adoptive parents. Adoption can have a profound effect on all three members of the triad: the adopted child, the adoptive mother, and the birth mother.

Adoption is not merely a social and legal reaction to a problem that then disappears when papers are signed and the adoption is finalized. It raises issues of mental health that have particularly strong consequences for the women of the adoption triad. It is not only a formal procedure but a delicate, long-term process that will have lifelong effects on the well-being of the child, the birth mother, and the adopting family.

Many factors positively influence the integration of an adopted child into a family: early adoption, a stable adopting family, the readiness of parent and child to create an enduring and trusting attachment, a sense of a "good fit" between parent and child, and an openness in the family toward the issue of adoption itself. When adopted children have special needs, the families often require additional support. Financial and medical assistance may be critical to ensuring a stable family environment, and supportive group networks may also help adopting parents work with the needs of their child. Interracial and international adoptions require creating an environment in which a child's dual heritage can flourish and a healthy sense of identity is maximized.

In regions of the world where legal adoption is rare, the role of the adopting family is often filled by siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, or grandparents of the birth mother. When possible, adoption is a family and community responsibility. In countries where adoption is considered primarily a legal bond between parent and child, the adopting family usually does not know the birth mother. The psychological effects of legal adoption can be serious and are often overlooked. When close kinship adoptions are not possible, many complex issues arise.

As Brodzinsky, Schechter, and Henig (1990) state, "Professionals and lay people have had trouble accepting the possibility that the solution itself could at times be a problem." This may explain the dearth of research on the psychological ramifications of formal adoption for the adoption triad. Little empirical work has been done to evaluate the impact of adoption on the development of adopted children, the effect of relinquishment on birth mothers, or the difficult issues faced by adoptive parents. However, those studies that have been done, based on casework and clinical observations, suggest that the severance inherent in adoption can create long-term complications and difficulties for the triad.

Much is at stake. There is a birth mother who may have opted to relinquish a child; there is an adoptive mother who may be childless; and there is an adoptee who has lost a connection to his or her roots and birth mother.

The psychological effect is perhaps most easily identifiable, and most profound, on adoptees cut off from their original family and relatives. With little knowledge of their origins, adoptees are encouraged to deny a significant aspect of themselves and to resign themselves to a sense of permanent loss. This can ultimately lead to low self-esteem, academic difficulties, and a range of rebellious activities known as "acting-out" behaviors, such as aggression, stealing, lying, hyperactivity, oppositional behavior, and truancy. Where legal adoption is common, studies suggest that these behaviors account for the high ratio of adoptees in counseling as teenagers—which, for instance, some professionals say is as much as 40 percent in the United States, although adoptees represent only 2 percent of the American population. Only recently has legal adoption been seriously considered a causal agent for the difficulties these adolescents experience.

To consider legal adoption itself as a contributor to the behavioral problems of an adopted child is difficult, because pointing an accusatory finger at legal adoption would seem to blame the adoptive mother. This places her in an especially difficult position because, as a mother, she is expected to be a parent to her child in a supportive and responsive home, yet she is blamed for the child's behavior. One study suggests that adoptive parents may create relationships and expectations that can affect adopted children and increase their likelihood of exhibiting problem behavior (Verhulst, 1992). Yet questions remain whether adoptive parents can truly be at fault for the myriad behavioral problems that seem prevalent among some adolescent adoptees. One must still ask whether the original severance and subsequent avoidance of adoption issues may be powerful enough in themselves to generate mental health problems for adoptees. Also, in many parts of the world girls, being less valued, are more likely than boys to be relinquished for adoption—a unique and formidable rejection whose ramifications will continue into adulthood. Certainly, numerous contributing factors may exist in any given case. To ignore the effect of relinquishment on the adoptee, however, is to exclude examination of the most profound event of adoptees' lives: their mothers' having given them away.

This severance of a child from the birth mother affects the adoptive mother as well. Frequently, adoption laws allow for little or no information to be shared with the adoptive family other than vague physical descriptions. Hence, an adoptive mother is often parenting "blind." Cut off from any contact with the biological family, and uninformed about her adoptive child's background, including the health of the birth mother and her condition during pregnancy, the adoptive mother can face enormous uncertainty and confusion. Responsible yet uninformed, she often blames herself for issues beyond her control.

The birth mother is, in many ways, the most vulnerable member of the adoption triad. The psychological consequences of relinquishing her child may not be evident for many years. The vast majority of birth mothers are encouraged to "bury" forever the events of pregnancy and birth and the subsequent loss of their children, to ignore their grief, and to keep these events secret from others, even spouses and children. In many cases, birth mothers put a child up for adoption under stressful circumstances or because they are told to do so. Only decades later may the effects of the denial and avoidance of this loss begin to surface. Again, little empirical research has been performed on the psychological impact of adoption on birth mothers. What data do exist are anecdotal, from clinical observation and casework.

Adoption is an important institution and will always be necessary and often desirable. Equally necessary, however, to allow healthier lives for all, is evaluation of the circumstances in which adoption takes place.

See Also

ADOPTION; FAMILY PLANNING; FAMILY STRUCTURES; MOTHERHOOD; PARENTHOOD; STEPFAMILIES

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ADULT EDUCATION

See EDUCATION: ADULT AND CONTINUING.

ADULTERY

Adultery refers to sexual relations outside a union of marriage, although legal and cultural definitions of what constitutes an act of adultery are as varied as legal and cultural definitions of marriage itself. Any definition of adultery must be sensitive to cross-cultural variation in rights of access to sexual reproduction, including rights to children, as well as to variation in rights of access to sexuality. Theories of adultery contend with the fact of its common practice even in the face of widespread cultural norms and social sanctions against it.

Fisher (1992) argues that although cross-cultural rates of adultery are high for both sexes, the evolutionary benefits of adultery differ for men and women. For men, adultery increases the likelihood of passing on their genetic material to future generations. For women, adultery is less a reproductive than an economic strategy for guaranteeing multiple sources of aid and protection for themselves and their children. But for both sexes, she claims, "it is the millennia of sneaking off with lovers—and the genetic payoffs these dalliances accrued—that have produced the propensity for adultery around the world today" (1992: 97). Fisher also claims that intense feelings of guilt and jealousy concerning extramarital affairs are another universal experience related to genetic inheritance, although Leacock's quotations from the Montagnais-Naskapi seem to refute this (see her contribution in Etienne and Leacock, 1980: 28). Atkinson and Errington's discussion of adultery among the Wana shows how discourse on jealousy can vary considerably cross-culturally:

> In explaining why a wife would be jealous of her husband's lover, one woman explained that to seduce an unmarried woman, a married man disparages his own wife. He tells his lover that his wife is lazy, weak, and will not work for his mother. He proceeds to praise his would-be lover for her strength and industry.... Similarly, women will divorce men who are shiftless workers. Wana talk about marriage brings out the point that both spouses are expected to be hard-working contributors to their productive unit. (Atkinson and Errington, 1990: 68)

Although adultery may be a human universal, it has often been stigmatized and subject to legal sanctions, but the degree of stigmatization and sanctions varies historically and cross-culturally. Suzanne Frayser's (1985) cross-cultural survey found that 74 percent of 58 cultures punished adultery to some degree:

> In 83 percent of 48 societies, both partners receive penalties for adultery; in 40 percent of them men and women get the same degree of chastisement; in 31 percent of them the man's punishment is more severe than that of his female lover. No society tolerates a female's dalliances while punishing males; and significantly more cultures have restrictions on women than on men. (Cited in Fisher, 1992: 321)

Strong sanctions against adultery, where they occur, tend to be more dire for women than for men and extend to differing definitions of adultery for men and women. A married woman's pursuit of sexual relations outside her marriage is automatically considered adultery, whereas a married man is defined as adulterous only if he has sex with another man's wife. Vogel's study (1992) of European legislation against adultery in the nineteenth century locates the source of this double standard in notions of wives and children as the property of males—notions that underlie legal and religious codes regarding marriage. Islamic law is an extreme example of a legal code with such a double standard based on patriarchal notions of family and property. In countries where civil legal codes rely on Islamic law, women who commit adultery are subject to public beatings or stoning, whereas sanctions against men are serious only if a man has "violated" another man's wife (see Sahebjam, 1994, for a recent case study in Iran).

Cross-culturally, the degree of differentiation in sanctions against acts of adultery for men and women is an indicator of the degree of sexual inequality in a particular society. Where women have access to political decision making and control important economic resources, women's status is higher, divorce is easier for women to obtain, and sanctions against women's adultery are relatively mild. The studies in Etienne and Leacock (1980) collectively argue that a concomitant of western imperialism and colonization has been a global decline in women's status in most societies, including increased regulation of women's sexuality and increased sanctions against women's adultery.

Perhaps ironically, the adulterous affair as symbolic of autonomy and freedom from harsh societal mores is an important trope in western literature. An early example is a novel by Kate Chopin (1851–1904), *The Awakening,* which explores the notion of adultery for a married woman as a path to freedom and self-discovery. But her heroine's ultimately self-destructive fate reminds us of Foucault's point (1978: 41) about western psychological interpretations of social sanctions against adultery beginning in the nineteenth century. In the West, the act of adultery may now more often be viewed as pathological rather than illegal or sinful, but it is still heavily stigmatized, especially for women.

See Also

DIVORCE; FAMILY: RELIGIOUS AND LEGAL SYSTEMS, *specific regions;* MARRIAGE: REGIONAL TRADITIONS AND PRACTICES; MISTRESS; SEX AND CULTURE; SPIRITUALITY: SEXUALITY

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ADVERTISING

Advertising, a ubiquitous feature of the mass media, is a key institution of socialization in advanced and emerging industrialized societies. Fueled by the perennial struggle to market goods and services in a multimedia environment, advertising images increasingly pervade everyday life in these societies, bombarding individuals with snapshots of what they supposedly lack and what they need to acquire to fill the void. This "lack" typically has more to do with lifestyles, looks, and aspirations associated with products by advertisers than with the inherent qualities of the products themselves. The ability of advertising not only to reflect but also to mold social meanings is central to the study of gender and advertising.

According to this study, almost from its inception mass advertising has played a role in perpetuating particular definitions—often stereotypes—of gender roles and gender relationships. Throughout the history of advertising, detailed definitions of the perfect female—her beauty, her societal roles, and her sexuality—have occupied a central place. These messages, selling everything from cosmetics to cars to beverages, prescribe how women should look and be looked at, how they should feel, and how they should act. In short, these messages prescribe particular gender identities for women. They also prescribe how men should relate to women. Advertising has been criticized for appropriating hard-fought gains of the women's movement (and of other marginalized groups) and assigning them to products. In the process of appropriation, the political gains are depoliticized and divorced from the contexts within which they were produced. An often-cited example is the ad campaign for Virginia Slims cigarettes, which associated women's liberation with addiction and ideals of thinness.

Perspectives

An interdisciplinary interest in gender and advertising has emerged rapidly over the past 25 to 30 years. Academic fields such as communication, journalism, sociology, anthropology, literature, film studies, and women's studies have offered analyses of the relationship between gender and advertising in various cultural contexts. This body of research includes a wide variety of perspectives, theoretical assumptions, and methodologies from both the humanities and the social sciences.

Serious scholarship on gender and advertising flourished in the 1970s—though some influential work, such as Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) came earlier—as a response to the women's movement and to the increased numbers of female researchers in higher education. Scholars in departments of journalism, mass communication, and marketing produced content analyses of sex-role stereotyping found in print advertising and on television. "Sex-roles research," which remains popular today, uncovered major inequalities in the representations of males and females in advertising. Often, women's roles are stereotyped in ads—either women's place is in the home or women are decorative sex objects; women do not make "important" decisions or do important things; women are dependent on men's protection; advertising gives a false picture of women's real lives. More recent sex-roles research has found that the status of women, especially in the workforce, has increased dramatically in ads, although it is still lower than men's. But as images of working women have become more prevalent, so too have images of women in decorative capacities.

The early flourishing of sex-roles research coincided with the publication of Erving Goffman's influential work *Gender Advertisements* (1976). Guided by his symbolic interactionist orientation toward human communication, Goffman's approach differed from sex-roles research primarily in the questions asked. Goffman was less concerned with the accuracy of the represenration of larger society in advertising than with its function in society, its social effects, and its ability to communicate to people. Goffman found rhat advertising presents us with consistent and familiar "gender displays" such as male and female adults in parent–child interaction patterns; women positioned spatially lower than males in advertising photographs; men executing or overseeing action or giving instruction; women as the passive objects of action by males; and women in positions of body canting (the bending of body parts).

Since *Gender Advertisements,* many scholars have expanded on the concept of gender display, examining how and what these rituals communicate to viewers when seen repeatedly. Two additional gender displays have been identified and are central to this body of work. The first is "body cropping," the photographic technique of the "dismemberment" of the female body in ads. Women's bodies are often dismembered and treated as separate parts, perpetuating the notion that a woman's body is not connected to her mind or emotions. Feminist scholars suggest that this type of objectification dehumanizes women for the viewer. When body parts are presented as objects among the other products being advertised, women viewers are positioned to see the female body as a collection of individual parts in need of change or improvement. Male viewers are encouraged to focus on female body parts as fetishes, assessing a woman's worth by breast size, hip curvature, thigh firmness, and so on. Feminist scholars have linked this type of objectification to a general climate of violence against women. They argue that seeing a person as an object helps legitimize committing violence against her.

The second gender display relates to a dichotomy between "male as society" and "female as nature." In ads, men are presented as the active participants in the public domain of work and culture, while women occupy a presence outside the public sphere, in either the domestic world of home and children or the sphere of leisure. Men are often positioned in culturally specific and purposive poses and attire—working, conversing on the telephone, or conveying a commanding stare. Men are shown as the consumers of the objects being advertised. Women are often positioned in decorative poses lacking any sense of action or purpose. In ads, women are shown not as the consumer but as the passive object of consumption.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, research on gender and advertising grew in volume and in sophistication. Key to this process has been the application of more critical theoretical approaches. Drawing on semiotics, structuralism, poststructuralism, and psychoanalysis, many feminist scholars examine advertisements as texts, inscribed with the dominant codes and ideologies shared by viewers in the larger culture. The concern here is less with analyzing the content of advertising than it is with the *meanings* people make of advertising as a "system of cultural messages."

A primary focus of this work has been to "deconstruct" the seemingly natural attachment of female sexuality to commodities in advertising. John Berger (1972) suggests that this naturalized relationship between female sexuality and commodities has become a "cultural way of seeing," at least in western societies. He explains that the rise to prominence of the female nude in European oil painting depicts a turning point whereby women's bodies became the object of the "male gaze." Although gazing on nakedness was taboo, gazing on "the nude" became a respectable practice, belonging to high-art aesthetics. The painters and spectators of nudes were almost always men, and the persons treated as the objects of the gaze were almost always women. The acceptable way of viewing women today has its roots in this historical arrangement. Women and men are depicted differently in advertising and across media. The "ideal spectator" is assumed to be male, and the image of the woman is designed to flatter *him.* Women as well as men are trained in this cultural way of seeing. This perspective contends that women grow up watching themselves being looked at. A woman assesses her appearance, and consequently her worth, through prescriptions defined by men as the producers of art, ads, television programs, films, music, videos, and so on. Advertising encourages women to view themselves as objects to be improved on for the male "other," rather than viewing themselves as the subjects of their own femaleness.

Many feminist writers have expressed a growing discomfort with the limiting nature of the male gaze and concepts of split consciousness, especially when examining female "pleasures" in looking. These scholars contend that although the conventions of the male gaze in visual images *are* dominant ways of seeing, it is wrong to theorize that female viewing is an activity dictated solely by the male gaze. Instead, women have developed their own ways of looking that should not always be reduced to these strict categories.

Theories about the conspiratorial partnership of "beauty culture," promoted through advertising, and the codes of the male gaze are under scrutiny as closed theoretical systems. Recent scholarship has brought into question feminism's ongoing attack on "beauty culture" as a major source of women's oppression. This critique is based on the following assertions. First, advertising images, especially viewed in a global context, do not present one standard of beauty at any one time. Second, women are active, not passive, audience members, who produce meaning when viewing advertising images. Therefore, they bring their own experiences of age, class, ethnicity, social status, sexual preference, and so on to every reading.

Also brought into question is the traditional feminist stance that women should be allowed the freedom to experience their "natural" selves as beautiful without artificial beauty products or adornments. This begs the question, What is natural? In many different cultures and at all times (most of them preceding the age of advertising), women have decorated and groomed themselves. This type of decoration and adornment historically has signaled the sociability of human beings and the placement of individuals in a social hierarchy. This critique suggests that advertising and beauty culture should not be blamed for women's oppression but should instead be seen as one ground where the issues of what is beautiful, natural, and appropriate are played out—through either adherence, negotiation, or opposition/subversion by women.

Societal Influences

Feminist scholars in particular have addressed how the consistent objectification of the female body in advertising and across media produces harmful effects in the everyday lives of women and in female–male relationships. According to Rosalind Coward (1985), females' obsession with outward appearance and body shape has traditionally been attributed to innate female narcissism. However, Coward contends it is not a sense of "self-love" that drives women to obsess over their appearance but a kind of "self-hate," continually perpetuated by images of idealized femininity produced by advertisers. This self-hate manifests itself in a sense of anxiety and urgency stemming from the knowledge that appearance is probably the most crucial way in which men form opinions about the worth of women. Therefore, feelings about appearance and self-image easily mingle with feelings about security and comfort. Absorption into the world of one's own image can be seen as a means of cultural survival, a bid for acceptance.

Conforming to ideal femininity in this culture involves constantly focusing on the body as a site of improvement and as an object of judgment—preparing it, painting it, trimming it, exercising it, feeding it, and even starving it. All this can be seen as self-imposed "discipline." The feminist communication scholar Carole Spitzack (1990) explored the roots of this willingness to impose discipline on the body. As long as women are the objects of the inspecting gaze of male power, men are imbued with the power to gather information about a woman through inspection (as in the assessing stare or whistle) without any obligation to communicate with her. Further, in many western cultures, discourses of "women's health" are directly associated with a thin body, and discourses of "disease" are often associated with "weight" or fat. These complementary discourses work with other institutions and practices to encourage self-correction and therefore "liberation" for women—liberation from the "disease" of fat and "control" over one's health and beauty.

The anxiety that women feel over the difference between the body they see promoted in advertising (and throughout media) and the body they live in can often lead to types of self-surveillance and extreme discipline that fall outside societal parameters of health or even beauty. In the United States, among particular segments of the population, these pressures are considered prominent contributors to the onset of eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa (self-starvation) and bulimia (bingeing and purging). Reports by anorexics have revealed that, for many, their illness is the logical conclusion of the unreasonable expectation suggested by the fashion, cosmetics, and fitness industries that one can never be too thin and that fat equals failure.

The preceding points deal directly with women's encounters with messages that prescribe an often oppressive ideal female beauty, as well as women's attempts to emulate that ideal. Women of color and members of other "marginalized" groups face more complex issues. In advanced and emerging industrialized societies, the cultural "gaze" is not only male but also white. Most women of color grow up not seeing themselves reflected in mainstream advertising, which has deemed them unworthy of representation. In media theory, this type of underrepresentation has been called "symbolic annihilation." Until recently, women of color appeared in advertising only if they were "fine-featured" and light-skinned, resembling the European standard of beauty. For women of color who are viewers, striving to achieve idealized femininity entails not only adjusting or refining one's body but also rejecting one's identity and certain physical characteristics altogether. To resist this artificial standard is always to "stand apart" from beauty as defined by society.

Therefore, although women of color are sometimes represented in advertising, there is still little diversity within the "acceptable" stereotypes of women of color in mainstream ads. However, in the United States, at least, some innovators are improving the representation of black women in advertising. These include *Essence* magazine and the Burrell advertising agency. *Essence,* now considered a standard newsstand publication, has broadened the spectrum of beauty prescriptions for its readers, depicting many skin colors, body shapes, and ethnic fashions and hairstyles, and offering articles and editorials that address black women's experiences. The Burrell advertising agency is credited with bringing positive minority images to mainstream commercial advertising for products such as Crest toothpaste and McDonald's.

On the other hand, the same kinds of breakthroughs in representation have not occurred for Hispanics, Native Americans, or other minority groups, especially in advertising originating in the United States. Moreover, although gay men and lesbians are prominent in the fashion and entertainment industries, representation of homosexual relationships is rarely made explicit in mainstream advertising, where these minorities suffer from "symbolic invisibility."

Empirical research has found that two groups—children and adolescents—are particularly vulnerable to the messages in advertising, including sex-role stereotyping, symbolic invisibility, and cultural ways of seeing. Research on children and television shows that children under age 6 are less likely than older children to be able to distinguish commercials from programs or to distinguish fantasy from reality.This is also the age at which some of the most fundamental learning of social roles and rules takes place. Advertising presents children with conventionalized and often stereotyped views of gender roles and relationships. The effects these messages have on children depend on their exposure to other institutions of socialization (for example, the family, preschool, or books). Adolescents are vulnerable to advertising messages for several reasons: they are prime targets of many advertisements in magazines and on television; they are new and inexperienced consumers; and they are developing their self-concept and self-esteem.

Adolescence is a time when individuals try to gain independence from the institutions that have guided their behavior up to that point, such as family, teachers, and religious leaders. Peer pressure is heightened during this time as teens take their cues on fashion, language, and behaviors, including purchasing behaviors, from same-aged opinion leaders and from the media. Advertising produces a type of mass-mediated peer pressure, giving teens prescriptions for what to buy and how to behave.

Advertising mediates the relationship between people and goods in advanced and emerging industrialized societies. For women, this process of mediation involves a complex set of issues, often pitting women against ideal images of themselves. Advertising is fertile ground for the study of gender relationships in these cultures because it is the precise point where patriarchy, capitalism, and consumerism converge. It is also the point where women are confronted daily with idealized images of who and what they should be.

See Also

ADVERTISING INDUSTRY; IMAGES OF WOMEN: OVERVIEW; MEDIA: OVERVIEW.

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ADVERTISING INDUSTRY

In Adam Smith's market model, advertising played a minor and strictly informational role in capitalist economies, whether within the economy of the nation-state or the global economy, integrating nations and guaranteeing their wealth. Smith's focus on buyers and sellers elided power differentials based on gender, class, and imperialism. Whereas male capitalists paid low wages to workers in England, capitalists structured wages so that English men made more than women, women more than children, and children more than male workers in India. For Karl Marx, the power differential was crucial; for Smith, the power of buyers was such that their demands would drive markets to create so much wealrh that everyone would eventually benefit. Modern appropriations of Smith's model prefer to examine consumer-based markets, avoiding the power differenrial between capitalist and consumer and erasing the domestic division of labor rhar makes women into household purchasing agents. When modern advertisers buy consumers—that is, audiences—from commercial media, the highest price is paid for young males regardless of the woman's role as her household's primary buyer.

Smith assumed that advertising was insignificant, in the belief that buyers' demands drove markets; therefore, buyers needed no images to create desires for products they demanded. Historically, the volatility of demand-driven markets encouraged capitalists to rebuild them as more controllable supply-driven markets. In those markets, a few sellers (oligopolists) set the range of products to be offered to buyers. Because products were substantively similar, each oligopolist needed to differentiate its product from its rivals' and to motivate buyers to purchase its product. Noninformational advertising solved both problems by creating an image that differentiated the product and associated it with powerful emotions.

Particularly interesting are associations with love or lust—emotions that capitalism treats as irrational, irresistible, and heterosexual. By evoking such themess, advertising symbolizes a dominant ideology regarding gender and sexuality. When ads rely on nonsexual love, they tap a yearning for social harmony and make products the key to bringing us together. Togetherness ranges from the dyadic (AT&T's "reach out and touch someone") to the universal (Coca-Cola's "I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony"), but the associative logic remains: buy this and belong. Such advertising locates social problems in individual failures and then resolves those problems through consumption. Loneliness is eradicated by AT&T; world peace means Coca-Cola. This overlooks economic structures that foster sociopolitical conflicts—including westernized economies' overconsumption of raw materials and manufactured goods—and reinforce inequities between developing, westernizing, and westernized nations. Such ads present consumption and capitalism as solutions for global problems fostered by capitalism.

Other ads trade on lust, offering the product as a means to sexual fulfillment and desirability. Advertisements' representations of lust typically objectify women in two ways. To male viewers, the ads associate the acquisition of the product with acquisition of a woman. To female viewers, the ads identify a specific body type and associate it with the product as the key to desirability. Although this symbolism may seem to exploit females and males equally, advertisers' willingness to pay more for male audiences than female audiences means that such ads are primarily aimed at men. Because advertisers pay more for male audiences, commercial media define the audience as male. While women constitute 52 percent of the population and purchase most goods regardless of ultimate user, advertisers and commercial media treat the female audience as a niche market. International advertising repeats this process through the "new" global economy, in which the collapse of the so-called second world (including the nations of the former Soviet bloc, the former Yugoslavia, and Albania) has been interpreted by commercial media as the triumph of consumer-based capitalism.

In that global economy, the corporate division of international labor sharpens class divisions within the developing, westernizing, and western economies. For advertisers, this has meant intensifying the circulation of emotionally loaded ads, expanding operations, and aiming those operations at households whose disposable income, consumerist outlook, and proximity to global retailing make them part of a global consumerist caste.

The emergence of that subpopulation internationalized but also narrowed the focus of advertisers, retailers, and media conglomerates. The narrowing is reflected by advertisers' willingness to pay more for "upscale" than "downscale" consumers, even when class status and income are irrelevant to affording the product. As advertisers pay more for upscale audiences, the media shift their focus from mass audiences to "class" audiences. Although the raison d'être of commercial media remains the delivery of millions of potential buyers to advertisers, media outlets now target households that are above a nation's average income, and they target those households around the globe. This shift results from economic and social changes beginning in the 1970s and continuing today.

One significant source of change was a conjunction of second-wave feminism and economic recessions in the 1970s. In western economies, feminists struggled for and secured greater access to education and professional employment. Recessions in those economies, starting in 1975, pushed more middle-class women into the workforce, even as feminists won legal battles for greater opportunities. In the 1980s, monetarism stabilized the recessionary cycle by refocusing industrial economies on international finance, transferring revenues from working people to financial elites, and exporting industrial operations to developing nations, particularly those in southeast Asia. The upsurge of neoconservative ideology in western nations further sharpened internal class divisions by dissolving welfare states and also concentrating economic control in transnational corporations.

By the 1990s, advertisers no longer assumed that the consumerist caste resided primarily in western nations or that impoverished populations lived mainly in developing nations. Advertisers focused on global subpopulations able to sustain ritualized brand loyalty, and made impulse buying routine. This shifted their interest to media charging access fees (cable, film, Internet, and so on). Advertisers still differentiated consumers by gender and class—paying more for "upscale" men than "upscale" women—but now hunted for them globally. With capitalist power differentials based on sex, class, and imperialism entrenched across the entire world, advertisers perpetuated the associative logic that naturalizes capitalism and objectifies women on a truly global basis. Dependent on advertisers for revenue, media distributed advertisers' symbolism internationally, defining women as second-class consumers.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, advertising agencies, media corporations, and advertisers undertook another round of conglomeration and acquisition. This has concentrated industrial control in a steadily diminishing number of increasingly powerful companies. Conglomerates like AOL–Time Warner and Disney integrate Internet, film, television, print, and other media to provide advertisers with "one-stop shopping." For advertising agencies, this has left global and national markets dominated by three "mega-agencies": Omnicom Group (U.S.), Interpublic Group (U.S.), and WPP Group (U.K.). As media conglomerations and vertically integrated advertising agencies buy and sell audiences, they remain focused on middle-class men as the global audience for media.

In first-world nations, twenty-first-century economic conditions continue to make paid employment necessary for most middle-class women and crucial for most working-class women. As a result, more college-educated women work in media corporations and advertising agencies than in the past. Institutional sexism nevertheless persists in these companies, where few women rise above the "glass ceiling" and those few who do rarely shed the corporate socialization that makes them exceptions to the rule of second-class status for women as employees, audiences, and buyers. Where cable channels and Web sites for men are characterized as targeting "the audience," similar services for women are treated as niche media cable channels. All this suggests that objectified representations of women in advertisements, news, and entertainment will remain the norm.

See Also

ADVERTISING; CAPITALISM; COMMUNICATIONS: OVERVIEW; CULTURE: WOMEN AS CONSUMERS OF CULTURE; FASHION; GLOBALIZATION; HOUSEHOLDS: DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION; MEDIA: OVERVIEW

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AESTHETICS: Feminist

The making of art and the experience of art are often held to be gendered in a significant way. This must be taken into account, it is argued, if we are to understand art fully. Feminist aesthetics is not a way of evaluating art or our experience of art; rather, it examines and questions aesthetic theory and attitudes concerning gender.

Although feminist work in literary criticism, film theory, and art history is well esrablished, feminist aesthetics is a relatively young discipline, dating from the early 1990s. Because of its relatively recent beginnings, feminist aesthetics is still a discipline without a canon. In fact, several writers resist the idea that feminist aesthetics should have a canon at all, since they believe that work in this field necessarily needs to develop as women artists and theorists do themselves. Moreover, since it draws upon several brands of feminism and feminist work in other disciplines, feminist aesthetics is rarely concerned to respect disciplinary boundaries. Further, one of its primary tasks is to broaden our concept of what counts as art—and enable the discipline to include more varied perspectives of artists, art appreciators, and the wider contexts in which art develops.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that feminist aesthetics does not claim that women necessarily produce different kinds of art from men, or that women necessarily have different experiences of art from men. Not only is there no clear distinction between women's art and men's art; there is also no clear similarity among all women's art.

Again, the *experience* is what feminist aesthetics is concerned with. That is, the different kinds of art men and women produce are less significant than the recognition that they will have fundamentally different kinds of experiences in response to art because of the way society influences gender. By starting with the assumption that art and the way we experience it are fundamentally gendered, feminist aesthetics acknowledges the different kinds of experiences art can produce, and hence can take more varied kinds of experiences into account. There is no assumption that the differences are necessarily essential; but because of the way in which society influences gender and our resulting experiences seen through gender, the experience of art, be it made by males or by females, is likely to influence men and women in different ways.

Almost all feminist scholarship challenges the view that there can be a generic perceiver. Awareness of gender informs the content of perception itself so that what is perceived and how it is perceived depend on whether the perceiver occupies a more or less privileged social and political position. Feminist aesthetics assumes that art is not and should not be gender-neutral, and it begins by recognizing how art and artists are privileged and affected by gender. Since art and art history are gendered, there is no universal, ideal, disinterested spectator. Standard aesthetic theory oppresses women by assuming a gender-neutral, disinterested ideal spectator who in fact embodies a privileged, white male perspective. Understanding that gender influences the viewer and accounting for the varied spectators that we do have are not the same. Understanding the varied perspectives and experiences is one of the main objectives of feminist aesthetics. Thus it goes beyond the acknowledgment that gender matters to show *how* it matters and to show how different women create and experience art.

Feminist aesrhetics offers not merely a critique of traditional aesthetics but alternatives to the critique as well. First, traditional formalist theory defines art in terms of formal characteristics and formal principles. It strives to be able to define art exclusively in these terms. According to this view, aesthetics is always moving toward a definition that will ultimately, always, come up short. Feminist theory, on the other hand, seeks to describe rather than define art and thus is able to take account of its changing nature and can incorporate different contexts and meanings.

Second, formalism gives priority to products of artistic endeavors that are viewed disinterestedly—and gives priority to the view that art objects should be viewed disinterestedly. Conversely, feminist aesthetics emphasizes the connection between art and life. Feminist aesthetics consists not only of objects in their contexts but also of performances (performance art), environments (gardens or architecture), and other interactive productions viewed within their contexts.

Although feminist aesthetics begins with the recognition that gender matters in art, the study of feminist aesthetics should not be confused with the study of feminist art history or feminist art criticism, each of which also begins with the same assumption. The fact that women are oppressed as subjects of art does play a part in the acknowledgment that gender is influential, but it is not necessarily all that matters. There is a bias in painting (and print media) toward female subjects (often nude women perceived as passive and wanting to be looked at) and male artists (always in control, always doing the looking). What this feminist view of art history produces is our recognition of the "male gaze," which is a significant part of feminist aesthetics. In this case, feminist aesthetics has contributed something that traditional aesthetics has not so much gotten wrong as overlooked entirely.

Both feminist aesthetics and feminist art criticism have focused on the unbalanced relationship between the subject and object of aesthetic contemplation—and both want to initiate an important blurring of distinctions between them. Further, there is an emphasis on the aesthetic dimensions of everyday life and the importance of seeing art as a process or activity rather than a product. Feminist analyses attempt to link aesthetic judgment and the resultant implied meaning and value of works of art to beliefs and desires in everyday life. That is, we need to consider art and the aesthetic within their own context. It is only here, in this complicated nexus of circumstances, that we can fully understand the significance of art.

See Also

AESTHETICS: BLACK FEMINIST; ART PRACTICE: FEMINIST; CREATIVITY; FINE ARTS: CRITICISM AND ART HISTORY; GAZE; PHILOSOPHY

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Sarah Worth

AESTHETICS: Black Feminist—A Debate

The black feminist in the United States may exist in a state of heightened aesthetic awareness, living daily not only with the black person's double consciousness of being both object and subject in a racist society but also with the feminist awareness of woman as both object and subject in a gendered world. It is precisely the sense of doubleness that differentiates feminist aesthetics from standard aesthetic theory, and it is the duplication of this sense, as experienced by black feminists, that further differentiates black feminist aesthetics from white feminist aesthetics.

Some African-American feminists further distance themselves from white feminism, and, thus, from white feminist aesthetics, by claiming that white feminism deals with middle-class white women's issues, and with those issues alone, offering nothing to poor and black women. Other black women refuse the label "feminist" altogether, pointing out that, whereas white women may want to be equal to white men, black women have no similar incentive to resemble black men. Many black women prefer "womanist," a folk term used by Alice Walker. The Afrocentric scholar Clenora Hudson Weems has proposed still another term, "Africana womanism."

Besides its differences with white feminist aesthetics in the United States, black feminist aesthetics is beset with internal controversies. In such a climate, black critics have no stable, agreed-on guidelines for their work, and each feminist writer propounds her own theory. At worst, this state of uncertainty can lead ro polarization and recrimination, even as the protagonists attempt on higher levels to create a workable consensus on issues important to all black feminisr aestheticians.

The writer and professor Michelle Wallace, for instance, contends that black women writers present critical work that is not of high quality. She has a reputation for writing scathing reviews of her contemporaries' work ("bell hooks Reads between the Lines," 1999). Her colleague bell hooks, who uses lowercase for her pen name to indicate an absence of authorial ego and is one of the best-known black feminists in the United States, is concerned about the divisiveness she believes Wallace causes. In addition, hooks argues, Wallace's unfavorable reviews downgrade black feminist writers in the eyes of the mainstream, making it more difficult for these writers to publish and to achieve the respect they deserve ("bell hooks Reads between the Lines," 1999). Wallace's motives for publicly expressing harsh opinions about the works of hooks and other contemporaries may sometimes be misunderstood. Her goal is to inspire black feminist writers to adhere to the highest standards, and she has never shrunk from controversy but, rather, has been outspoken on controversial matters.

bell hooks writes in a poetic and persuasive style. She and her work have become popular in white as well as black feminist circles, but some critics see her work as marred by a casual approach to documentation (see, for instance, Farris, 1999: 91). hooks's goals are to spur development of criticism, and of a feminist aesthetic, that will transcend boundaries of gender, race, and class, and to persuade the literary world that African-American women aestheticians and critics are serious thinkers and writers.

One cause of the differences between Wallace and hooks may be that they do not use the same definition of quality. Perhaps Wallace considers use of standard English and accurate documentation a requisite for high quality, whereas for hooks the presentation of ideas in an imaginative and accomplished literary style may simply *be* high quality. Another cause may be their opposed personal styles: whereas Wallace sparks controversy and seeks to spur change through her confrontational style, hooks uses her persuasive and harmonizing style to create mutual benefit and acceptance.

Despite, or perhaps in part because of, these controversies, black feminist aesthetics in the United States exists in a state of lively ferment. Debate is fueled by the aestheric and critical writings of Wallace and hooks as well as many others. Some questions at the heart of black feminist aesthetics may remain to be formulated, and some answers do not yet seem ro be in sight. Possibly, one ropic of general agreement is the need for African-American women aestheticians to take their work even more seriously and to gain the increased respect of other critics and writers, both in the so-called white feminist world and in the mainstream culture.

See Also

AESTHETICS; CREATIVITY; FEMINISM: AFRICAN-AMERICAN; LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM; LITERATURE: NORTH AMERICA

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

"Affirmative action" did not become part of the general vocabulary in the United States until President John F. Kennedy issued an executive order that required federal contractors to take "affirmarive action to recruit, hire, and promote minorities." In an executive order of 1967, President Lyndon Johnson added women to the protected group (Stewart, 1998). These orders ban discrimination against applicants and employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, but they also require that employers take affirmative action or positive steps to ensure equal opportunity. Furthermore, employers must state in all advertising that they are indeed affirmative action–equal opportunity employers. According to Revised Order 4, employers with over $50, 000 in federal contracts and 50 or more workers had to file affirmative action plans, including goals and timetables, with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance.

In March 1972, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued a report ("Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Sex"), which set forth general principles to assist employers in complying with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972. Employers could not refuse to hire a woman because they believed women in general have a higher turnover rate than men do. Nor could they refuse to hire a woman because of the assumption that women as a group are less capable of performing certain tasks than men are. Nor could employers cite the preferences of coworkers or customers in excluding women (or men) from consideration for employment. The guidelines also provided the useful information that title VII supersedes state laws which treat women differently from men. And the guidelines provide clarification as to the illegality of separate seniority systems by sex, discrimination against married women, sex-separated advertising, discriminatory practices by employment agencies, pre-employment inquiries by sex, provision of unequal fringe benefits, and provision of discriminatory benefits for temporary disabilities such as those related to pregnancy and childbirth.

The requirements for "acting affirmatively" stipulated not only that employers cease taking the discriminarory actions described above but that they take positive steps to ensure the provision of equal opportunity to women of all races and minority men. In other words, employers cannot simply say that they would welcome applicants of under-represented groups; they must take affirmative action in three areas: (1) recruitment, (2) selection, and (3) training.

In the area of recruitment, for example, the employer could show good faith by making certain that advertisements for job openings were sent not only to traditional outlets but also to agencies and publications that might reach groups unreached before. If the employer was fair in using only job-related criteria in selecting among the applicants, then he or she would be deemed to have satisfied the standards for fair selection. And in the area of training, employees who are women of any race (or minority men) must be offered opportunities for training on the same basis as majority employees.

These requirements—indeed, the whole concept of affirmative action—had critics in the decades that followed. In 1976, researchers compared the sex and race composition of companies that were visited by compliance officers with companies that were not. Their study suggested strongly that affirmative action programs were helping men—especially white men—but having an adverse effect on women (Goldstein and Smith, 1976).

A review of the status of women and minorities in administrative posts in institutions of higher education showed that, despite professed commitment, little progress had been made (Van Alstyne et al., 1977).

Other researchers have suggested that the excess of government regulations applying to academic institutions acted as a damper to change rather than encouraging it (Spriestersbach and Farrell, 1977).

Members of protected groups sometimes argued, in the 1980s, that antibias laws in general and affirmative action in particular were not working. They pointed to the paucity of women leaders in corporations and in the professions as evidence that majority men were not practicing affirmative action. Others argued that, while affirmative action was helping elite managerial women to some extent, it was not helping large numbers of low-paid women (Blum, 1997). Many felt that it was inherently unfair to make special efforts to ensure fairness in recruitment, selection, and training. Many seemed to believe that affirmative action was equal to preferential hiring, to hiring and promoting unqualified women and minorities, and to granting special privileges to protected groups. Proponents of affirmative action defended the concept by pointing out that it is illegal under Title VII to hire an unqualified person because he or she is a member of an underrepresented group. In some other countries, it is legal to specify that one seeks a woman or a member of a minority group for a specified job: "No white males need apply." This is illegal in the United States.

In the 1980s, there was considerable pressure to declare that hiring and admissions would be best left color-blind. Proponents of race-conscious hiring countered by acknowledging that places at universities, in industrial organizations, and in the professions should ideally be awarded on merit and merit only. Ideally:

> ...colorblind policies often put racial minorities at a disadvantage. For instance, all else being equal, colorblind seniority systems tend to protect white workers against job layoffs, because senior employees are usually white. Likewise, colorblind college admissions favor white students because of their earlier educational advantages. Unless pre-existing inequities are corrected or otherwise taken into account, colorblind policies do not eliminate racial injustice—they reinforce it. (Plous, 2000)

At Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, the Office of Affirmative Action changed its name in the 1980s to the Office of Equal Opportunity. In 2000, the name was changed once again, this time to Workforce Diversity, Equity, and Life Quality. In the spring 2000 issue of the university publication on benefits, the change was explained as follows:

> Diversity is related to equal opportunity and affirmative action in that those who promote diversity recognize that there are differences among us that do not affect the quality of our work, teaching, or research. But, in addition to those differences covered by affirmative action or local equal employment law and regulations—race, gender, disability status, veteran status, age, marital status, national origin, religion, and sexual orientation—diversity includes differences that are not specifically protected by law, such as educational background, socioeconomic class, job title/responsibilities, or a person's status (whether a person is faculty or staff, supervisor or non-supervisor, exempt or nonexempt, for instance.) To recognize the importance of diversity is to recognize that having a diverse population in an organization is good both for the organization as a whole and the people within it. (Chappell-Williams, 2000)

Concern with affirmative action has mutated into a focus on equal opportunity, which has in turn given way to a larger concern with diversity. Whether this moves the society as a whole toward a merit-based ideal or a continuation of current injustice is a matter on which good people differ. The news of Microsoft Chairman Bill Gate's $1 billion Millennium Scholarship Program was no sooner announced than criticized:

> Bill Gates's $1 billion Millennium Scholarship Program may do more harm than good unless its criteria for awarding college scholarships are altered. Based strictly on "minority" preference rather than need, it is bound to exacerbate racial resentment. (LeFever, 2000)
>
> Critics of Gates's aid to the United Negro College Fund are more than a little off base in assuming that any type of educational aid to minority groups

> is about some form of affirmative action. Many minority students, myself included, who are accepted into. Ivy League schools (which typically serve as springboards to a brighter future) simply cannot afford to go. There are few scholarships that cover four-year tuitions in excess of $25,000 [per year]. (Clark, 2000)

Some criticized affirmative action because it did not work; others, because they felt it was working too well. A merit-based hiring and promotion system is one most Americans want. How to achieve a diverse, fair one is the point of disagreement.

See Also

ANTIDISCRIMINATION; DISCRIMINATION; EDUCATION: GENDER EQUITY; WORK: EQUAL PAY AND CONDITIONS; WORK: OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

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Jennie Farley

AGEISM

Ageism is prejudice against the elderly. Coined by Robert Butler in 1968, the word *ageism* is more precisely defined as "a process of systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this with skin color and gender" (Butler, 1975). This tendency to homogenize the old and classify them as "the other" in turn leads to their being marginalized as a discrete population, separate from the mainstream.

At the individual level, ageism is rooted in a personal revulsion toward growing old and experiencing disease and disability, and to a fear of uselessness and death (Butler, 1969). Collectively, at the social level, ageism stems from the apprehension that the needs of the aged may burden a nation's resources and siphon off resources from younger segments of the population.

Probably the most blatant form of ageism occurs in the job market in western industrial societies, where chronological age has served as a marker for retirement. Although there is no rationale for specifying a given retirement age, many bureaucracies, both public and private, have established a certain age (usually between 65 and 70) as the age of pension eligibility and retirement. Ageism also plays a role in hiring; for instance, employers may be biased against older workers, who are perceived as less adaptable and less willing to learn. Moreover, an employer may be reluctant to invest in the training of workers whose tenure with the company is uncertain. Economic recession, automation, and corporate restructuring also result in the replacement of company "veterans," or long-standing employees, by younger, lower-paid workers. Although the United States and other countries have enacted legislation banning the arbitrary dismissal of workers on the basis of age, corporate mergers and the accelerating pace of technology have led companies to streamline their staffs. In the process, long-tenured and higher paid employees are often targeted and older workers are disproportionately affected.

In youth-oriented cultures, where beauty and physical prowess are held in great esteem, individual and institutional ageism may take more subtle forms. There is, for example, an entire vocabulary that describes and stigmatizes persons on the basis of age. The elderly are also depicted as comical figures, the butt of jokes. In addition, the aged are excluded from public images, as if this segment of the population did not count. Some of these stereotypes are self-reinforcing: the elderly may tend to adopt negative views of themselves and thus either conform to these stereotypes or make special efforts to counteract them.

Ageism often represents a more formidable barrier for women than for men. Because many cultures regard childbearing and childrearing as women's central, if not exclusive, mission, menopause represents the beginning of women's loss of status. Thus as women age and are no longer considered indispensable to the family, they may feel increasingly useless—and this effect, too, reinforces negative ageist stereotypes. The premium placed on good looks may also have a greater negative impact on women, many of whom have internalized the prevailing social value placed on beauty, and particularly rhe association of beauty with a youthful appearance.

In the workplace, women also are differentially affected. In rural societies, where women have traditionally participated in agricultural labor, loss of physical strength may signal loss of a woman's income-producing capacity. In industrial and service societies, where women often enter the labor market only after their child-rearing obligations have decreased or ended, women may find themselves at a disadvantage in competing against younger workers of both genders. And because women leave and enter the labor market with greater frequency than men, they are less likely to have attained seniority and are therefore more vulnerable to employment shifts than males of the same age group.

Laws as well as the roles that society decrees for the elderly determine the extent to which ageism is allowed to prevail. Where age is equated with wisdom, the elderly are seen as a repository of tradition and as nurturers of family unity. The status of the aged is also enhanced in societies in which older people command resources (including skills, money, and time), which give them power over others. By contrast, societies that prize youth and perceive old age as ohsolescence rather than experience—and as the approach of death rather than as the culmination of life—will find that ageism persists regardless of laws to protect the rights of the aged.

See Also

AGING; AGING: JAPANESE CASE STUDY; ANTIDISCRIMINATION; BODY; DISCRIMINATION; ELDERLY CARE, *specific topics;* FAMILY STRUCTURES; LONG-TERM CARE SERVICES; NURSING HOMES; YOUTH CULTURE

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AGING

Aging is a lifelong process, but the term *aging* itself usually refers to "patterns of late-life changes which are eventually seen in all persons but which vary in rate and degree" (Butler, 1975) from one individual to another.

Aging As a Time of Biological Change

Biological aging, called *senescence,* involves cellular changes that may affect physical appearance and functional capacities. This process is associated with a decline in the immunological system and with a reduction in the effectiveness of the hormonal system leading, in turn, to a deterioration in the ability to adapt and a gradual increase in vulnerability to disease. Physiological changes include the decline or atrophy of certain systems and a decrease in sensory functions. Some of the more overt signs of aging include wrinkled skin, graying hair, and stiffened joints. The pace at which aging occurs varies not only among individuals, but also from one organ to another. Faculties peak at different ages, and their loss occurs at different rates. Thus, for example, hearing peaks at infancy, while muscular strength peaks in the twenties (Williamson et al., 1980).

Many biological changes associated with aging, however, are effects more of disease than of aging per se. Moreover, biology may be tempered or offset by social, emotional, economic, and environmental factors. Certain cultures have been more successful than others in ensuring that the losses of old age are cushioned by adequate income, supportive networks, access to care, and the recognition that the aged have a valuable role in society.

In women, menopause is often seen as a biological milestone that marks the onset of middle age, with loss of the capacity for childbearing seen as the end of a biological stage. Although twentieth-century health practitioners tended to consider menopause a pathological condition requiring medical treatment, by the end of rhe century there was increased recognition that it is neither an illness nor a deficiency (Porcino, 1991). Furthermore, the prolongation of postmenopausal fertility made possible by medical technology is making this stage less of a clear-cut transition.

Aging As a Time of Psychological Change

At the time of menopause, however, women may be experiencing other changes that affect their self-image and relationships. These changes may include children's departure from the home (a process termed the "empty nest syndrome"), new responsibilities involving caring for elderly parents, and entry or reentry into the workforce. Women may thus be confronted with the need to make numerous adaptations at this time in their lives.

For most women, therefore, aging is associated with role changes and the probability of coping with loss. Because women tend to outlive men in nearly all countries and age groups, the proportion of women who are heads of households tends to increase with age. As a result, many of the health, social, and economic problems of the aging population are largely the problems of women.

Old age may involve separation from relatives, friends, and familiar surroundings; loss of work; a reduction in income; and the death of a spouse and peers. For women, the situation may be exacerbated by financial insecurity. Because women's work is often unpaid, unreported, unrecognized, and unstable, women tend to lack pensions and other benefits that would allow them a measure of financial independence.

Some of these changes may produce feelings of isolation, dependence, and powerlessness, which in turn produce depression. The psychological effects of aging are therefore receiving increasing attention. In the elderly, mental and physical problems often go together, with symptoms in one sphere masking those in another.

Rethinking Images of Old Age

Various studies have attempted to disentangle the effects of aging from those of disease. These have tended to find that, despite the prevailing myths, both serious memory loss and intellectual decline are quite gradual in healthy individuals as they age. In addition, aging women tend to maintain a higher level of intellectual functioning than their male counterparts, who show earlier and faster declines (Williamson et al., 1980).

The available evidence also indicates that learning continues into old age and that those who continue to exercise their learning skills throughout their lives are better able to adapt and learn new things. "Use it or lose it" has therefore become a popular slogan for successful aging and the maintenance of both physical and intellectual abilities. Resiliency and optimism are also associated with a fulfilling old age.

The social aspects of aging have been encoded in employment practices and legislation. The ages between 60 or 65 and 70 have been selected for determining retirement and eligibility for financial entitlements. This social definition of old age, while essentially arbitrary, has nonetheless shaped the images and expectations of the elderly, and society's attitudes toward the aged.

As the population pyramid in many countries becomes more top-heavy, with the aged constituting a larger proportion of the population, the political power of the elderly and hence the importance given to the biological, psychological, and social aspects of aging are likely to increase. This shift has been recognized by the United Nations Action Program on Aging, which culminated in 1999 with the International Year of Older Persons.

See Also

AGEISM, AGING: JAPANESE CASE STUDY; DISEASE; ELDERLY CARE, *specific topics;* FAMILY STRUCTURES; GRANDMOTHER; HORMONES; LIFE EXPECTANCY; MENOPAUSE; WIDOWHOOD

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AGING: Japanese Case Study

In the half century after the end of World War II, women in Japan experienced drastic changes in their life cycle. While the average life span reached 83.82 years by 1997, the total fertility rate declined from 4.32 in 1949 to 1.39 in 1997 as a result of changes in the state's population policy, which shifted from pronatalist to antinatalist in the postwar era. The legalization of abortion in 1948 played an important role in this process. By the end of the twentieth century, however, Japan's declining birthrate and its rapidly aging society were causing anxiety among political and economic leaders, who began encouraging women to bear more children in order to rejuvenate the population. Many women retorted that they could not and did not want to have bigger families because modern Japanese society does not provide them with a favorable environment for bearing and raising many children.

One of the major problems of the aging society, especially for women, is the care of bedridden or senile people at home. In Japan, more than 50 percent of the aged live with their adult children. Although the eldest son is traditionally expected to live with his parents, in fact it is his wife who is responsible for care of parents-in-law when they become bedridden or senile. Also, with the decrease in number of children per family, the rate of parents living with a single or married daughter is increasing rapidly. The Japanese assume, in general, that it is natural for family members to take care of the aged at home, and public and private services to help old people or caregivers are far from adequate.

Accordingly, the burden of caregiving rests heavily on women. In 1995 more than 2 million old people were estimated to be in need of care, of which about 860,000 were cared for at home. Most of the caregivers at home were women, including wives (31.6 percent), wives of eldest sons (27.6 percent), eldest daughters (15.5 percent), and other daughters (4.5 percent). It is not uncommon for a woman to spend many years taking care of one or both parents of parents-in-law, and later her husband. Working women are frequently forced to quit their jobs because of this highly demanding caregiving labor.

The situation is also critical for women who are themselves in need of care. Because women, on average, live longer than men, the rate of bedridden or senile women increases with age. It is reported that old women are twice as liable as old men to be abused by caregivers, and the number of old women killed by exhausted caregivers is six times greater than that of old men. Although sons and husbands are a minority among caregivers, the incidence of abuse and murder increases when the caregiver is a man, sometimes taking the ultimate form of double suicide in which a desperate male caregiver kills both the old woman and himself.

There have been recent efforts to remedy such gender imbalance in the care of the old. For example, newspapers and television programs have included positive coverage of men who willingly resigned from high-status jobs, such as bank president or mayor, in order to care for their elderly and ill wives. Books written by sons and husbands about their caregiving experiences are published and received favorably. Also, in April 2000, a new national insurance system for the care of the aged was implemented with the purpose of facilitating social support for caregiving labor. However, it is unclear whether such new phenomena signal any substantive change in the conditions surrounding Japanese women and aging.

See Also

AGEISM; AGING; CAREGIVERS; ELDERLY CARE: CASE STUDY—CHINA; ELDERLY CARE: WESTERN WORLD; FAMILY STRUCTURES; LONG-TERM CARE SERVICES; NURSING HOMES; POPULATION CONTROL

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Miho Ogino

AGRICULTURE

Women around the world contribute a significant proportion of the labor and expertise required to feed human populations. Their roles have varied through times and regions, but even in modern industrialized societies, there are many opportunities for women in food production. "Agriculture" is narrowly defined as the cultivation of domesticated plants ("cultigens") for food and fiber; more broadly, "farming" also includes the management of domestic animals for meat, milk, eggs, and other uses such as fiber. The term "horticulture" is used to distinguish the production of edible and ornamental plants, usually for eventual transplanting.

Agriculture arose independently in different parts of the ancient world at different times. The wheat-based system that characterizes Europe, western Asia, and the Middle East probably began in present-day Turkey between 9,000 and 10,000 years ago; rice was farmed in China as early as 8,500 years ago, sorghum in western and central Africa 5,000 years ago, and maize (corn) in Mesoamerica by 4,000 years ago. Before these innovations, people subsisted by hunting game and gathering wild plant foods. In recent hunting-and-gathering societies, men specialize in hunting large game, while women forage for plants and small game, an activity that can be combined with the physical restrictions of pregnancy and child care. Possibly, therefore, it was women who learned the life cycles of plants and their response to environmental conditions. When they observed food plants growing from discarded seeds near dwelling sites, they probably encouraged plant growth by manipulating soil disturbance and irrigation, and selected particularly productive individual plants. Thus, they created the first farms.

The increased food security granted by agriculture brought fundamental changes to human society. Women, no longer required to travel so much, could bear, nourish, and tend more children—who were needed to labor in the fields and defend the territory. In their permanent dwellings, they could keep nonportable tools and store heavy foods. Early agricultural societies exploited these advantages to move their increasing populations into new territories, where they eventually displaced hunter-gatherer groups. The spread of Indo-Europeans in Eurasia and that of Bantu-speaking peoples in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, are attributed in large part to their management of agriculture.

Despite women's fundamental role in the creation and maintenance of agriculture, they are often said to be "invisible farmers." In most parts of the world—especially in western cultures—the stereotypical farmer is male. Many factors combine to make rural women less visible than men, including male ownership of land, male domination of the credit system, and the submersion of women's farm labor in the sphere of domestic work. Even in Africa, where women dominate farm production, they tend to work on land owned by their husbands or other male relatives. They usually concentrate on producing food for domestic or local market consumption, whereas men are more likely to raise crops for external sale. Throughout the world, large agricultural enterprises tend to be male-operated. The actual extent of women's contribution to farm production can be difficult for researchers to determine because government databases tend not to identify it separately; however, there is increasing recognition of the need for "gender disaggregated" data for use in development planning.

Women's work on farms is likely to be considered a natural extension of their work in the home, and both are often undervalued in economic treatments and more general views. In fact, farm women in developed countries have been found to work longer hours, on average, than women in other types of employment. Moreover, most farm women contribute agricultural labor at peak periods, but farm men typically contribute little domesric labor (housework, cooking, or child care).

Physiological differences affect women's role in agriculture in several ways. Worldwide, they reduce their farm activity while pregnant and lactating. Caring for small children limits the time a woman can devote to field labor, although older children can help with the work. There is rising concern about women's exposure to agricultural chemicals, which—especially in developing countries—are often applied without adequate safeguards; some of these substances are especially dangerous to pregnant women and children.

The economic constraints on women's successful participation in agriculture fall under two broad headings: land tenure and access to credit. In many parts of the world, legal ownership of land is still restricted by law or custom to males; thus, it is difficult for women to secure land for their own use or to use it as collateral for loans in their own names. Land and other agricultural resources tend to be inherited by male rather than female children, and a widow or divorced woman may lose the use of her family's land.

There are several kinds of land tenure among rural households, ranging in level of security from landless squatters through various lease and sharecropping arrangements to actual ownership. Landless women tend to work for wages as unskilled agricultural laborers, but men are more in demand for this kind of work, which is often migratory; as a result, these women are more likely to head households (at least periodically), to be poor, and to have a high birthrate. Women in landowning households, by contrast, devote less time to cultivation (though sometimes more time to animal husbandry) and enjoy more leisure and economic independence. They may be able to hire domestic help, and they often manage small nonfarm businesses.

Poor rural people, especially those who own no land, have little access to the credit that would enable them to invest in income-producing ventures. Unequal access to credit has restricted women's success and autonomy in all regions and economic spheres, and nowhere more than on the farm. Legislation is now making farm credit more accessible to women in western nations, although entrenched attitudes may still impede their equal participation. In developing nations, women farmers may depend on loans from government and international aid programs to fund their ventures. They tend to have a better record of repayment in rural small loan programs than do male borrowers; in India in the 1980s, for example, the Working Women's Forum's rural credit society reporred a repayment rate of 90 to 95 percent, compared with a national average of 30 to 40 percent for similar loans from commercial banks. An exciting development is the Grameen Bank, started in Bangladesh, which lends small amounts to help poor people start businesses. In 1990, 80 percent of Grameen's borrowers were women. These loans do not support the purchase of land, but they are often extended to help women buy small livestock, poultry, or fish for pisciculture, or to develop business that utilize local agricultural products to make processed foodstuffs, textiles, and other craft items. Grameen Bank programs now exist in many countries, including the United states.

Women farmers tend to concentrate on certain types of production. In developing countries, they produce food for their own households and sell the surplus in local markets. Among low- to moderate-income groups, female-specialized cultivation often supports expenditures for women's and children's needs: the African vegetable grower may pay her daughter's school fees by selling extra squash, and many pioneer American farm women bought pianos and books with the "egg money." Other typically female agricultural specialties include culinary and medicinal herbs, dye plants, cut flowers, and ornamental potted plants. Small livestock (for example, goats) and poultry are often managed by women, whereas men tend cattle and other large animals. This division of labor reflects women's need to remain close to home to care for children and elders, as well as differential physical strength and cultural restrictions on mobility.

A little-recognized dimension of women's agriculture is urban farming. Especially in developing countries, people living in cities often have small plots where they produce vegetables, fruits, and small livestock for home consumption, market sale, or barter. Especially where cultural patterns limit women's employment outside the home (for example, in some Islamic societies), they often can make more money market gardening than in any other work. Women's urban farming, however, is rarely reflected in official statistics or made the object of development programs. An exception is Peru Mujer, a Peruvian nongovernmental organization, which established a community gardening project that eventually reached 5,000 households in Lima; women received training and extension visits as well as support in marketing and food processing ventures. In the United States, women are likely to participate in community garden programs in low-income urban neighborhoods.

In the early 1990s, according to a World Bank report, approximately 40 percent of agricultural holdings in developing countries were managed by women. Women's direct involvemenr in farm production is highest in sub-Saharan Africa, eastern Asia, and the Indian subcontinent, and lowest in highly industrialized nations and Latin America. Complex interactions of historical, religious, and economic factors have created the differing regional patterns.

Sub-Saharan Africa is the focus of many studies and development programs in the field of women's agriculture. women here have been estimated to constitute between 60 and 80 percent of the agricultural labor force; there are more females than males engaged in the subsectors of homestead production (small farms), urban agriculture, pisciculture (raising food fish), small animal production (including poultry), and tree culture. Household economy in this region tends to be dual: women are responsible for obtaining food, while men perform outside wage labor for other needs; men's and women's earnings are not typically pooled; and budgets are separate.

Food production by African smallholders has declined in recent decades for several reasons. National governments, often at the urging of international lenders, encouraged increased production of export crops, which are owned and worked mostly by men. Collapsing prices for these commodities have thrown many men back into food production, where they may displace women from their traditional source of income. Moreover, export crops are typically grown on large holdings constituted by combining former small farms; this disappearance of smallholdings increases the gap between economically secure landowners and the landless poor, and exacerbates malnutrition. As land for food production becomes scarcer, the remaining available land is overexploited and soil fertility drops; only additional labor—from exhausted farmers and their increasingly numerous children—and the fertilizer and technology they cannot afford can wring more food from the land. Warfare adds to the woes of rural Africans; as men die or become disabled, the burden of providing food falls ever more heavily on women.

Aid organizations in Africa, especially those associated with the United Nations, have made special efforts in the past two decades to assist African rural women, but many obstacles persist. In most areas, men have ultimate control over land tenure, and inheritance is patrilineal (although matrilineal systems also exist). National authority structures tend to reinforce the subordinate status of women in the interest of conserving male dominance. Credit associations and export marketing groups may restrict membership to heads of households, who are rarely female (at least officially), even though pilot projects have demonstrated that women borrowers tend to have higher repayment rates. Infrastructure improvements are concentrated on serving the industrial sector rather than the rural areas, where women's food production is known to increase with road access to markets.

Women are also prominent in Asian agriculture—especially in less developed nations—but here the sexes tend to cooperate in a single cultivation process, performing complementary tasks. In rice farming, for example, men do the heavier work, while women perform repetitive tasks such as planting and weeding. Men, however, usually control land tenure and make decisions about crops. In a pattern similar to early European peasant farming, women contribute field labor at peak times and otherwise specialize in raising small livestock and poultry. As in Africa, men are more likely to migrate for wage labor, while women assume an increasing share of farmwork; for example, the 1990 Chinese census found that women constituted 48 percent of farmworkers nationally, but more than 50 percent in industrially developed areas of the country. By 1997, a survey by the Chinese Women's Federation reported that women constituted more than half the nation's agricultural workforce; at the same time, the proportion of women managing or owning farm enterprises fell from 26 percent in 1988 to only 8 percent in 1995, indicating that men have been more successful in taking advantage of Chinese economic reforms (Riskin, 2000). In difficult economic conditions in Malawi, young male entrepreneurs have taken over the formerly female niche of operating vegetable market stalls; in addition to depriving market women of employment, they are reported to steal crops from the farms of women, especially single women.

Two cultural areas in which women are less prominent in agriculture are the Islamic world and Latin America. In the former, religious restrictions on the activities of women of reproductive age tend to keep them near home, where they often engage in domestic food gardening and especially in food processing; young girls and old women, however, may work more in the fields. In colonial Latin America, men were withdrawn from subsistence farming to provide labor on cash crops, and women took up the responsibility of feeding the family; but recent consolidation of landholdings, industrialization, and emphasis on export crops have reduced the presence of women in the farm workforce. Land available for leasing by subsistence farmers has greatly diminished, further excluding women. Many rural women here migrate to cities for domestic or industrial jobs, in the reverse of the pattern in other parts of the developing world.

In western Europe and North America, social, religious, and legal constraints on women's farming are less salient, but women are a minority presence among farmers. In Canada, for example, they constitute about one-third of the half million people who derive their income from agriculture. Married farm women often manage the financial side of the enterprise, contrihute labor to main crops at peak periods, and engage in specialized production such as ornamental horticulture. They are more likely than rural women in less developed areas to take part-time or seasonal wage employment.

Professions ancillary to farming attract many women, especially in the West. In 1997, women received 46.8 percent of agriculture-related baccalaureate degrees granted by U.S. universities, but only about 10 percent of these graduates are likely to become farmers. Instead, they find employment as farm credit managers, laboratory researchers, extension agents, or development specialists, and in other professions. Historically, women have been especially numerous in animal science, horticulture, food science and technology, nutrition, plant pathology, and entomology. Agricultural colleges actively recruit women students, and a few, such as Wageningen Agricultural University in the Netherlands have specialized programs focusing on gender issues. In most African countries, however, national committees on crop resources and biotechnology are largely or even exclusively staffed by men, and none of these bodies include women farmers.

Since 1950, world agriculture has been transformed by three related movements: cash or export cropping has increased at the expense of varied domestic food production; landholdings have become larger, on average, eating up small farms; and the so-called green revolution, while increasing productivity through the introduction of industrial chemicals, improved plant varieties, and mechanization, has also increased reliance on capital-intensive activities. All these changes have altered the position of women in agriculture in fundamental ways. Large cash-crop operations are primarily male enterprises, so women's food-producing property may be marginalized as the best land is taken up for export production. When men migrate for wage labor, women assume added burdens at home—and they often have to supporr temporarily unemployed, sick, and elderly men. Differential access to credit may make technological improvements less available to women smallholders, who thus cannot compete effectively. Overall improvements in total farm production, average income, and world food supply can thus mask a deteriorating situation for women farmers.

To ameliorate this problem, international development agencies and national support organizations are increasingly offering programs aimed at women food farmers. Most prominent among these are the Food and Agriculture Organization and UNICEF, branches of the United Nations, and the U.S. Agency for International Development and Peace Corps. Most developed countries have farm women's organizations that now address such issues as access to credit. There is hope that the drive for gender equality will extend to the women who work the land, as women have for millennia.

See Also

ANCIENT INDIGENOUS CULTURES: WOMEN'S ROLES; DEVELOPMENT: OVERVIEW; DEVELOPMENT: CHINESE CASE STUDY—RURAL WOMEN; ECOSYSTEM; ENVIRONMENT: OVERVIEW; FOOD, HUNGER, AND FAMINE; WORK: EQUAL PAY AND CONDITIONS; WORK: OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

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Jane McGary

AIDS AND HIV

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a serious disease resulting from infection by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). AIDS and HIV infections have reached pandemic levels in many parts of the world (Mann and Tarantola, 1996; World Health Organization).

Retroviruses, Infections, and the Immune System

HIV is a retrovirus that can be transmitted through infected blood, semen, or other body fluids and tissues; and from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth, or breastfeeding. After HIV enters the body, it targets CD4 lymphocytes (also called T-helper cells), which are white blood cells that function as an essential part of the body's immune system. By penetrating the nucleus of a CD4 cells, HIV can use the cell's genetic machinery to replicate itself, with the enzymes reverse transcriptase and protease playing important roles in the replication process. HIV replicates each time the lymphocyte replicates. A nonsymptomatic latency period usually follows, often lasting for years. Eventually, however, HIV destroys its host lymphocytes, releasing new viral particles into the body. As the immune system loses its CD4 lymphocytes, it loses its ability to protect the body against other infectious viruses, bacteria, and fungi. Seroconversion from HIV-negative (HIV–) status to HIV-positive (HIV+) status occurs when an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA test) detects measurable levels of antibodies to HIV in the bloodstream. The ongoing impact of HIV on the immune system is commonly measured by CD4 cell counts, which decline as the disease progresses and improve when medications work effectively.

Medications to control and treat HIV infection usually target the replication enzymes reverse transcriptase and protease. Drug "cocktails" that combine multiple reverse transcriptase and protease inhibitors have been the most effective treatment to date and are classified as "highly active antiretroviral therapy" (HAART). Important medications approved for treatment of AIDS in women in the United States include the reverse transcriptase inhibitors zidovudine (AZT or Retrovir), stavudine (d4T or Zerit), lamivudine (3TC or Epivir), zalcitibine (ddC or Hivid), and didanosine (ddI or Videx), and the protease inhibitors saquinavir (Invirase), ritonavir (Norvir), indinavi (Crixivan), and efavirenz (Sustiva) (US Food and Drug Administration, 1997).

During the 1980s and early 1990s, AIDS was considered a terminal illness (except for a few anomalous cases) and HIV+ status was considered a death sentence. Current treatments have changed AIDS to a chronic condition amenable to long-term management if (an important qualification) people with AIDS have access to early diagnosis, if they can pay for treatment, and if they can adhere to the complexities of treatment and tolerate its side effects. As of this writing, a vaccine to immunize people against HIV infection had not yet been developed.

The AIDS Epidemic

There are multiple strains of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The earliest strain is believed ro have developed from a simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV) that crossed the species barrier in Africa from chimpanzees to people during the early years of the twentieth century, HIV-1 is the viral strain that has spread worldwide; HIV-2 has been mostly localized in west Africa.

In 1980, the scholarly *Journal of Homosexuality* (volume 5) published reports from several physicians in San Francisco, New York, and Chicago whose medical practices included sexually active homosexual men with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). These physicians were seeing an unusual form of pneumonia (*Pneumocystis carinii*) and an unusual cancer (Kaposi's sarcoma) in that patient population. On 5 June 1981, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued the first in a series of similar alerts as part of the epidemiologic *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.* In 1983, the virus itself was identified, allowing the field of AIDS medicine to expand (Merigan, 1999).

In addition to *Pneumocystis* pneumonia and Kaposi's sarcoma, researchers designated a list of infections that "opportunistically" targeted the HIV+ population: cytomegalovirus, toxoplasmosis, thrush (oral candidiasis), cryptosporidiosis, amoebiasis, giardiasis, histoplasmosis, *Mycobacterium avium* infections, and others. These infections were considered indicators of HIV+ status and their presence became part of the diagnostic protocol for AIDS that determined eligibility for treatment.

Conspicuously missing from the diagnostic lists of AIDS indicators until 1993 were gynecologic disorders: vaginal yeast infections (candidiasis), pelvic inflammatory disease, genital warts (human papillomavirus infection), cervical dysplasia, and cervical cancer. Women, particularly women of childbearing age, were explicitly excluded from participation in research and clinical trials of medications. The results of those early failures to diagnose and treat women are still evident.

During the the first decade of the epidemic (the 1980s), the patient population was primarily male and usually white: sexually active homosexual and bisexual men, users of heroin and other injectable street drugs who shared needles; prison inmates; surgical patients and people with hemophilia who received blood transfusions; and transplant patients who received donor organs, immunosuppresant medications, or both. Women who were diagnosed with AIDS had to meet the diagnostic criteria established for men, and most HIV+ women were linked to the at-risk male population: women whose husbands were bisexual men or users of injected drugs, women who injected drugs themselves, women who were sex workers or prison inmates, and women who gave birth to children with HIV. However, by the second decade of the epidemic (the 1990s) the patient population had shifted toward people of color, with young pregnant women at particularly high risk (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999).

Public health efforts during these first two decades were aimed at educating at-risk populations never to share needles, always to use condoms during sex ("safer sex") so as to reduce viral transmission, and to seek early diagnosis and treatment. Several gay organizations (including Project Inform in San Francisco and Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York) helped to set the original public health agendas (an unusual pattern, given the homophobia of most cultures). Those agendas still have not shifted their primary focus from sexually active men in developed countries to young women of color and mother-to-child transmission among poorer populations (Center for AIDS Prevention Studies). The research agenda continues to be androcentric as well.

Special Problems for Women with HIV and AIDS

Although women are no longer invisible in the AIDS patient population, problems continue for HIV+ women as a result of women's subordination to men, their exploitation by men, and their disadvantaged socioeconomic and legal status (UNAIDS, 1996):

- Women are no longer explicitly excluded from research and clinical trials of new medications, but barriers to women's equitable participation in clinical trials still exist (Lucey and Zangeneh, 1999).
- Women receive HIV screening tests less often than men, even when HIV tests are supposed to be mandatory (Link, 1999).
- Women must negotiate with men for safe sexual behaviors (use of condoms and caution regarding multiple partners). Rates of male-to-female transmission continue to rise, however, indicating that women are unlikely ever to achieve parity in heterosexual dyads.
- Prostitution and pornography put sex workers (primarily women and children) at greater risk of HIV infection, and this population is less likely to have access to health care.
- AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) carry considerable social stigma along with their physiological complications. Women who report STDs or HIV+ status to male sexual partners are at greater risk of domestic violence and of discrimination (Roth and Fuller, 1998; UNAIDS, 1996). There is also some evidence that this stigma interfered with how energetically feminist media and feminist activists have reacted to the AIDS epidemic (Treichler and Warren, 1998).
- Mother-to-child transmission of HIV usually occurs during late pregnancy, during childbirth, or during breastfeeding. Unless pregnant women can improve their access to HIV testing, counseling, treatment, and safe substitutes for breast milk, this problem cannot be solved (UNAIDS, undated).

Researchers hope that, in the future, HIV and AIDS can be limited to occasional outbreaks in isolated areas (as happened with the *Yersinia pestis* bacterium that caused bubonic plague in Europe during the "black death" of the 1300s) or to a research vault (as happened with the variola virus that caused smallpox), or that HIV/AIDS will be added to the list of diseases that can be prevented through childhood immunization. Until any of these things happen, however, the Joint United Nations Programs on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) have identified public health goals for 1999–2004 as: (1) to reduce incidence of HIV in people 15 to 24 years old by 25 percent in the 25 most affected countries; (2) to give at least 50 percent of all HIV+ pregnant women access to HIV-related health services; (3) to give at least 75 percent of all HIV+ people access to medications for AIDS-related infections; and (4) to give all AIDS orphans in Africa access to food and education on an equal basis with their nonorphan peers. Although these public health goals for children and pregnant women are ambitious, one might suspect that if wealthy white men in developed nations were the primary patient population, prevention and treatment goals would be 100 percent and immediate.

See Also

AIDS AND HIV: CASE STUDY—AFRICA; BIOETHICS: FEMINIST; BISEXUALITY; DISEASE; HEALTH: OVERVIEW; HETEROPHOBIA AND HOMOPHOBIA; LESBIANS: HIV PREVALENCE AND TRANSMISSION; MEDICINE: INTERNAL, I AND II; PHARMACEUTICALS

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Faye Zucker

AIDS AND HIV: Case Study—Africa

In the year 2000, about 70 percent of all those infected with AIDS lived in sub-Saharan and southern Africa. Worldwide, about 34 million people carried HIV, and 23 million of these were in Africa. Of the 5.6 million people who were newly infected, 3.8 million were in Africa.

Background

The AIDS/HIV epidemic in the developing world—as of the year 2000—is a complex problem, medically and socially. AIDS/HIV is often seen as a gay disease, and this has been a potent reason for denial. Also, the biological characteristics of the virus, and the mechanisms of infection, which took many years to elucidate, remain difficult to understand. Moreover, the long incubation period makes AIDS/HIV hard to describe in practical terms to people accustomed to infections like malaria, which have more immediate manifestations. And although drug therapy has continued to evolve, it is inaccessible in regions where the epidemic is most prevalent. Strategies for prevention have relied on motivating people to make changes in their sexual behavior: abstinence, monogamy, fewer sexual partners, and the use of condoms.

The challenges of this epidemic have become most evident in sub-Saharan and southern Africa, especially in women. There, AIDS/HIV is primarily transmitted sexually between men and women, or transmitted from mother to child; to a lesser extent it is transmitted through contaminated blood. Women are implicated in each mode of transmission and become diseased as a result of their own infection or that of their children, spouses, families, or communities. They suffer enormously and variously: they are predisposed to infection because of biological and social factors, blamed and stigmatized for the spread of the virus, perceived as responsible for infecting their children, burdened with caring for the sick and orphans, and denied their rights or violated as a consequence of their perceived guilt or complicity.

In 1999 UNAIDS reported that in Africa 2 million more women than men were infected, and that girls were most vulnerable: girls aged 15 to 19 were five to six times more likely to be infected with HIV than boys of the same age. At that time, 12.2 million African women and 10.1 million men carried HIV, a ratio of 6 women to 5 men.

Factors such as poverty and foreign debt prevent countries in this region from responding adequately to the crisis: of the worldís 50 poorest countries, 33 are African. In Africa, AIDS was expected to reduce life expectancy to 45 years by 2005. More than 7 million children in Africa have already been orphaned by AIDS/HIV, and often the people who should care for children are themselves dead, ill, old, or desperately poor.

The rate of increase in HIV is greatest in southern Africa, as compared with east and central Africa; the highest rates of infection are in Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and South Africa, where as many as 1 in 7 people are infected. The spread of HIV in Africa is affected by cultural and socioeconomic factors such as sexual behavior, stigma, tradition, access ro services, women's social status, and migration. Some occupations are associated with higher risk, including long-distance driving, migrant labor, and military service. Another factor is male circumcision: in one study, the two cities with the highest rates of HIV and ulcerative sexually transmitted diseases (Kisumu, Kenya; and Ndola, Zambia) also had the lowest percentage of circumcised males.

Transmission of HIV from mother to child has become a significant problem, in part because most infected women have contracted the virus at an early age, before marrying or bearing children. (In the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia, for example, many pediatric AIDS cases are firstborn children of young, recently married couples.) About 570,000 African children are infected, 90 percent by their mothers, and according to estimates, 1 million more HIV-positive infants will be born to infected mothers by 2003.

A joint study by Uganda and the United States (HIVNET 012) found that a single dose of an inexpensive antiretroviral drug, nevirapine (NVP), given to mother and infant, reduced HIV transmission by 47 percent; thus, annually, NVP could prevent infection in about 300,000 to 400,000 newborns. However, successful use of NVP—and of the earlier drug AZT—requires not only access to the drug but also testing, counseling, and community support. Another strategy involves preventing transmission of HIV through breast milk; a study in Kenya compared breastfed and formula-fed babies and found that an additional 16.2 percent of breastfed babies, uninfected at birth, became HIV-positive during the first six months of life (Nduati, 2000).

There are two forms of HIV in Africa. The more virulent, HIV-1, has perhaps ten subtypes. Subtype B predominates in the developed world, but many subtypes are common in Africa (and in Asia). The major cause of death is disease induced by subtypes A, C, D, and E. The Harvard AIDS Institute believes that of the subtypes, C is most transmissible through sexual intercourse, and this is thought to have contributed to the spread of HIV in Africa, especially southern Africa. HIV-2, a weaker virus, was first described in the mid-1980s in west Africa and has remained mostly confined to this area, and to sex workers.

Women's Risk of HIV

For African women, the risk of HIV is determined more by cultural, social, and economic context than by individual behavior. Women are valued for marrying and remaining married, bearing children, caring for their families, placing men's and children's interests above their own, and deferring to men's authority. Thus women have little say in decisions regarding sex and reproductive health—for example, whether or not to have children or whether to breastfeed or bottle-feed a child. Women in situations where it is difficult to claim any rights—refugee camps, prisons, and forced prostitution—are especially at risk of sexual abuse and rape, and therefore also of HIV.

Studies in Kenya have found that nearly one girl in four between ages 15 and 19 is HIV-infected. Among females, the peak age for infection is between 15 and 24 (compared with 25 to 34 for males). Even women in stable relationships are highly vulnerable. For young women, societal norms increase the risk of infection: they are not expected to learn about sex, and others decide when and whom a woman will marry. Reproductive health services, preventive or curative, are often inaccessible to young people. Child marriages, often between teenage girls and much older men, and female circumcision are still common; both practices increase the risk of HIV. Poverty also has an effect: poor parents are unable to meet their children's basic needs, and many young girls turn to commercial sex to support themselves—often with men who refuse to use condoms.

Addressing AIDS/HIV

Strategies for combating AIDS/HIV in Africa have tended not to confront men's sexual behavior directly but rather to focus on women. The message has been that women should empower themselves to prevent infection by changing their own behavior or negotiating with their male partners for safer sex. Given women's lack of power and their economic dependence on men, this approach has been largely ineffective.

Moreover, prevention has stressed individual actions, whereas traditionally African women's strength has been in working together, teaching and supporting one another, and sharing experiences. More effective strategies would build on this strength by identifying and overcoming gender-based and sociocultural problems: women would develop solidarity to eliminate risky behaviors by men, and to impart new values to their sons and daughters. Realistically, however, this would require a social revolution.

As of the year 2000, the most important preventive measure remains the condom. But although condoms are used effectively in the western world, this is not true in Africa, where the condom is considered appropriate only for promiscuous people and for sex workers. Condoms (male and female) could be used more successfully in Africa if greater efforts were directed toward building skills, improving access, and making condoms respectable. A promising development for the future is microbicides, chemical agents that would improve women's ability to protect themselves.

A simple, basic strategy is improving communication within couples. To enhance communication about sex, general communication skills, such as problem solving, should be promoted. This would make couples better able to deal with sensitive issues such as HIV testing, disclosing test results, monogamy, condoms, treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), childbearing, and breastfeeding.

Testing has been a problematic strategy. Many women who are offered an HIV test in order to participate in programs providing antiretroviral drugs and free formula refuse because of the difficulties they would face if they tested positive: rejection by their partners, loss of rights and social support, stigma, and psychological stress. Widows of men who died of AIDS are not an encouraging example: they have been dispossessed of their farms, household property, and money, although they are still held responsible for caring for their children.

In fact, women in Africa are the chief caregivers for victims of AIDS, often without support and despite their other responsibilities. When a woman herself has AIDS, she is commonly her own caregiver. Further, women are disadvantaged regarding access to paid care and treatment such as drugs and hospitals; they tend to lack money, and in some cultures they need their husband's permission to go to a hospital. In many African countries, the health care system thinks of women's health in terms of fetal health during pregnancy and infants' health after delivery. Changes are needed so that African women will value their health and seek care.

Responding to the Challenges of AIDS/HIV

Interventions to reduce women's risk and to enable them to cope with AIDS/HIV should span the life cycle. Many groups have mobilized African women to address this challenge. The Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAA), founded in the 1980s, is a grassroots organization working with women in more than twenty-five countries. The International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Africa (ICW), working closely with SWAA, has promoted women's rights. In Senegal, women's associations such as Dimba (which offers advice about reproductive health) and Laobe (which offers erotic products) have used traditional methods of communication and social mobilization (Cheikh Niang, 1995).

See Also

AIDS AND HIV; HEALTH CARE: SOUTHERN AFRICA; HEALTH CARE: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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Eka Esu-Williams

ALCOHOLISM

See DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

From time immemorial the power of the sun, forests, wind, tides, and water has been harnessed for such diverse activities as lighting fires, drying clothes, sailing ships, and turning windmills. Only since the industrial revolution have the energy-hungry nations of the world used large quantities of coal and oil in their raw states to generate the quintessential modern fuel: electricity. Electricity is transmitted through power lines and grid systems that traverse countries. Coal and oil are now considered the mainstream sources of energy and are used to power the economies of the industrialized world, often male-initiated and which marginalize women.

A broad definition of alternative energy refers to systems such as mini-hydro power plants, wind generators, solar heating panels, and photo voltaic (PV) systems, water, wind, and the sun's energy (respectively) to generate and store electricity away from the major grid networks. Apart from off-grid sysrems, other renewables such as biogas and, arguably, biomass (in the form of wood fuel, crop waste, and dung), may be included in the definition of alternative energy. In developing countries wood fuel resources are being depleted, and supplies of fossil fuels (oil, gas, and coal) and grid-electricity are either erratic or beyond the reach of the poor, particularly poor women. Under these circumstances, renewable resources and alternative forms of energy are consistently suggested as the solution to energy scarcity.

Proponents of alternative energy use suggest that poor and rural people, in particular rural women, could have better lighting and communications through solar-powered telephones, computers, and online microcredit systems. Access to global communication systems would also raise the profiles of these communities. Skeptics point out the limited success over the past thirty years in improving the lives of women through low-key technology such as improved woodstoves, biogas digesters, and solar cookers. PV systems are limited because they do not supply sufficient electricity to cook by and thus do not address the primary energy-consuming task.

Some critics of alternative electricity supplies argue further that affordable, safe, and secure supplies of multiple energy sources are a more important consideration than computer networks or on-line credit systems, although these are not necessarily mutually exclusive. They also point out that large users of coal-fired or nuclear-generated electricity are generally found among the wealthy classes in cities, and this is where alternative energy should be most used and mainstreamed. Instead it is often poor and rural people, especially women, who are small consumers of energy that are expected to use energy efficiently. Without the benefit of technical expertise and support available in cities, they are expected to experiment with alternative systems. Attempts to reduce energy consumption in wealthy countries and introduce more sustainable systems such as using PV systems in new buildings, harvesting methane from land fill sites, and developing electric cars are underway. However, a great deal remains to be done. Concerned research and development activists are working on these challenges.

See Also

ENERGY; TECHNOLOGY: WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

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ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

See MEDIA: ALTERNATIVE and PRESS: FEMINIST ALTERNATIVES.

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

See HOLISTIC HEALTH I; HOLISTIC HEALTH II; and TRADITIONAL HEALING.

ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY: Case Study—Africa

Technology may be defined as the totality of knowledge applied to improve productivity. Some technology—though of course not all—causes environmental problems such as pollution. Alternative technology is any technology that is environmentally friendly and differs from an environmentally hostile conventional technology. Examples of alternative technologies are:

- Harnessing solar energy or wind energy to generate electricity or heat for domestic uses such as heating water.
- Practicing sustainable agriculture (such as organic farming and avoiding chemicals and pesticides) that preserves soil fertility without endangering life or polluting the environment.
- Using biogas technology to supply domestic heating and lighting energy by converting biomass into gas.
- Developing fuel-efficient engines.
- Recycling industrial and agricultural wastes to produce economically usable products.

Agrochemicals are one area in which alternative technology may be needed, especially in developing countries where poor education and poverty make them a dangerous undertaking: there is a risk of overdosing the soil, and there are also issues of the availability and affordability of the appropriate agrochemicals. In many developing countries, small-scale farming has become economically unreliable because of the rising cost of agrochemicals.

Much alternative technology has to do with alternative energy sources, because conventional fossil fuels—on the scale on which they are used today—are dangerous to the environment. Burning fossil fuels creates carbon dioxide, which has accumulated in the atmosphere and is contributing to problems such as global warming and depletion of the ozone layer. Gasoline is an an obvious example, but the indiscriminate use of wood as a source of energy is also a serious environmental problem that has led (directly and indirectly) to deforestation and thus has reduced biodiversity.

The need for global action on alternative technologies was set forth in 1992 by the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Agenda 21, signed by all the countries that were represented, is a program of sustainable development at the international, national, and local level.

Problems of Alternative Technology in Africa

Many African countries have yet to industrialize and therefore can choose between several alternatives with regard to industrialization. Thus Africa is in an advantageous position: it has an opportunity to avoid repeating the mistake of adopting environmentally unfriendly technologies. On the other hand, it has problems that must be resolved if it is to benefit from the experience of developed countries.

Cost: First is the problem of costs. Although alternative technologies, like many other technologies imported to Africa from developed coutries, may be useful in settings such as hospitals, hotels, schools, large businesses, and affluent homes, they are often prohibitively expensive in contexts where most African women would use them.

Even in the developed world, the large-scale use of alternative technologies has been hampered by the cost of installation. Solar energy is a clear example. In rural Africa, as elsewhere, the sun has always been a direct source of energy—laundry and agricultural harvests, such as maize and millet, are dried in the sun—but solar energy as a modern technology can be very costly.

Solar energy is harnessed by three methods: passive, thermal, and photovoltaic. Passive methodology involves deliberate building design: up to 70 percent of a building's energy needs can be provided by sensible design and solar orientation. Today, this is the most commercially mature of all the solar technologies, competing very well with conventional energy sources. However, the building design requirements are far beyond the reach of poor families such as those in most of rural Africa.

Thermal methodology uses solar energy to heat water. It is quite basic—a solar water heater is simply water pipes painted black to improve heat absorption. But here too, the technology is not yet in significant use by the majority of poor communities in rural Africa, because these communities have yet to be provided with clean pipe water. In some places people, especially women, must still walk more than 5 miles to fetch water, and in such a setting it is unrealistic to talk about solar water heaters. Moreover, despite its simplicity, this alternative technology is not cheap, even by the economic standards prevailing in most urban areas in Africa. Around the year 2000, typical installation costs (in United States dollars) varied from perhaps $1,000 to $1,500 for a "do it yourself" home system to $5,000 for a commercial system. These figures are by far too high for an average African family or small business; in Tanzania, for instance, per capita income at that time was less than $200.

Photovoltaic methodology, which is the most expensive, involves generating electricity from sunlight. A photovoltaic power supply system capable of meeting the demands of a typical energy-efficient house costs the equivalent of $30,000 to $35,000. Even in the developed world, grid-linked photovoltaic electricity is appealing because it is clean, not because it is cheap; it is far more expensive than conventional electricity. This form of photovoltaic electricity is obviously of little practical use for poor communities. However, photovoltaic generators—solar panels in the design of roofs of buildings—are becoming cost-effective. These generators operate with no moving parts and create no noise or pollution; they are the most appropriate renewable energy source for domestic and public settings. In a few countries in sub-Saharan and southern Africa, solar pumps are widespread in rural areas. Mali, for instance, had more than 100 solar pumps as of about the year 2000.

Foreign influences: A second problem confronting Africa is foreign influence. This problem is related to costs because it often takes the form of demands that are beyond Africa's economic means. What technology to acquire and what products of technology to import are often dictated by the interests of a minute affluent part of the population with foreign consumption values. In Tanzania, for example, the number and types of motor vehicles imported annually are characteristic of an affluent society in the developed world—not a poor society (which Tanzania is) or a society conscious of the environment (which Tanzania, like every other nation, should be). Although some well-off families in the developed world choose smaller fuel-efficient cars, wealthy Tanzanians choose cars that are large, luxurious, and fuel-inefficient.

Foreign influence also has an effect on technological research, most of which is foreign-funded. Given the poverty of Africa, this might seem to be a benefit—and so it could be, if the researchers were left alone to choose their studies. On the contrary, most research is done collaboratively with peers in the developed world who are often ignorant of the needs of developing regions. As a result, to take just one example, most of the research on alternative energy conducted by the only university department of physics in Tanzania—at the University of Dar es Salaam—is high-level research remote from the realities of the country.

Lack of researchers: The problem of foreign influence is made worse because there is often no critical mass of African researchers. In the whole of Tanzania, for instance, there was only one professor of solar energy as of about the year 2000, and there were no woman in this field—a significant lack, since women researchers could be more sympathetic to the needs and interests of African women.

Lack of policy: Another problem confronting Africa is a lack of legislative policies to promote the development and use of alternative technologies. African nations that are serious about alternative technology need the kind of legislation that exists in the developed world. In the Netherlands, for instance, the government, power companies, architects, planners, financial institutions, local authorities, scientists, and manufacturers have cooperated to develop solar energy; Great Britain has a legislative program called the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO).

Better legislative policy is also needed to increase public concern for the environment. In countries such as Tanzania—probably because educational levels are low—the majority if people seem unaware of industrial pollution and other environmental threats.

African Women and Alternative Technology

In Africa, urban and rural communities differ in their need for energy and their capability for capturing it. The energy needs and the "capture potential" of urban African women are not significantly different from those of their counterparts in the developed world. Thus alternative technologies such as biogas, solar panels, and passive solar heating (building design) are all within the reach of many urban African households. However, the use of such technologies is limited by the availability of cheaper energy. In most cases, for instance, hydroelectric power is available; but when it is deemed expensive, charcoal, firewood, and kerosene are used instead, in complete disregard of any environmental hazards. Three-quarters of the energy in sub-Saharan and southern Africa is still derived from biomass in the form of wood, charcoal, crop and wood residues, and cow dung (Hall, 1991).

In rural areas, where there are no industrial sources of energy, life is very traditional. The main problems confronting rural African woman are the fundamental ones: producing, preserving, and cooking food with primitive technologies; walking long distances to get water; procuring clothing; constructing shelter (family houses); and gathering firewood. The hand hoe is the main technology in agriculture; since modern agrochemicals are not affordable, animal manure is the only fertilizer. "Alternative technology" may have no meaning for a rural society that has been exposed to little if any convenrional technology.

There are alternative technologies appropriate for rural Africa—environmentally friendly technologies that are affordable and sustainable and address the problems and needs of both rural and urban communities. The development and marketing of fuel-efficient stoves have received considerable attention from researchers in universities and other instirurions in Africa, as a response to political calls to address the energy problem. Other technologies that have received attention include solar energy, windmills (especially for pumping underground water), animal manure, and biogas (Sadhu and Sandler, 1986). However, progress in these areas has been impeded by several factors, including costs, conservative attitudes, and cultural taboos.

In addition to the costs noted above, prototypes of energy-efficient utilities are expensive because they cannot achieve economies of scale. Too many families cannot afford to become customers, and governments have not created the necessary links between researchers, industrialists, and entrepreneurs.

Conservatism is characteristic of many African societies: people are suspicious of new technologies and reluctant to discard methods they have been using for centuries. New marketing techniques and strategies are needed to educate the end user about the advantages of innovations. In Europe, the Center for Alternative Technology (CAT) explores and demonstrates a wide range of practical alternative technologies regarding land use, shelter, energy, diet, health, and waste management. African researchers have nothing analogous, and they also confront low standards of education and sparsely populated regions in which the communication infrastructure is so poor that many villages are not easily reachable.

Cultural taboos are also a hindrance. For instance, in the Masai culture (Kenya and Tanzania), housing construction is a woman's occupation. It may be difficult for such a culture to adopt the construction and design methods needed for solar energy or biogas technology.

Nevertheless, some methods that are usually not thought of as "alternative technologies" in the developed world are very important in terms of liberating rural African women. Examples include weaving and food preparation. In areas where cotton is grown, household weaving can provide all of a family's clothing, so that the family income can be used for other needs. Rural women could also be taught about nutrition; too often, lack of knowledge about healthful food combinations has resulted in malnutrition existing along with an abundant variety of foods. There is no reason why these simple technologies should not be spread widely in African rural communities.

The Way Ahead

Several avenues could improve the situation in Africa. First and foremost is the need to train a critical mass of African men and women who can adequately address issues of alternative technology.

Second, African governments should translate their political pronouncements into action. such as setting aside funds specifically for research on alternative technology and for training, especially of women.

Third, African governments should pass legislation to preserve the environment, discouraging utilities that waste enegy or create pollution and encouraging environmentally friendly technology. Examples include using animal manure instead of agrochemicals; reviving healthful traditional methods of preserving and storing food, especially in rural areas; constructing houses that use renewable energy sources, such as sunlight and rainwater; using windmills to harvest groundwater; and using biomass to provide biogas for domestic heating and lighting to reduce overdependence on firewood and charcoal and diminish deforestation.

African governments should also raise the general level of education. Primary school education is inadequate in the modern world; a secondary school education (at leasr) should be provided for the majority of the population.

Finally, African nations should modernize agriculture; in particular, they should say good-bye to the hand hoe. Food shortages have persisted in almost all African countries for several decades despite the existence of numerous technologies that could solve this problem once and for all. Even the ox-drawn plow in place of the hand hoe would constitute an alternative technology.

Conclusion

African women are still struggling with poverty characterized by primitive agriculture and shortages of food and water. In some cases, alternative technology is meaningless because there is really no technology in use that can be said to require an alternative. What is often required is to relieve African woman of some primitive technology and provide environmentally friendly technology—while avoiding, as far as possible, the mistakes made by developed nations. Agrochemicals, for example, should be discouraged in favor of more natural and sustainable alternatives.

Many African women—particularly rural women—want access to better education. They may need to learn about the dangers of some traditional technologies of food production, preparation, preservation, and storage, and about alternative sources of energy; and whatever alternatives are adapted must be less troublesome than the old metnods. The communication infrastructure must be improved; it is crucial for survival. Research is needed to clarify the status quo in a given community, identify the best alternatives available and affordable, and only then design the mechanisms for bringing about change. Opportunities for technological training must be provided to African women, so that they can participate more fully in the development and promotion of alternative technology.

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ALTRUISM

It has been common in the literature for connections to be made between *volunteerism* and *altruism.* In other words, writers attempting to understand why people give their time freely, without expecting to be paid, have assumed that this is due to altruism. Altruism in this context is defined as an act that is not directed at gain, is given voluntarily, and is for the benefit of others. Feminists have pointed out that in the tradition of liberal economic thought, altruism tends to be seen as part of the *private sphere,* the family and the world of women. Thus although altruism is cherished as a human trait, it has no place in the *public sphere*—the competitive world of men. It is women who are seen to be the embodiment of the altruistic spirit and of the caring and helping menrality needed for the charitable activities of the voluntary sector (Blum et al., 1976). The central argument of feminist writers, then, is the existence of an "*ideology of altruism*" that compels women to provide their services without receiving anything in return. Land and Rose (1985) coined the term *compulsory altruism* to describe this situation.

See Also

VOLUNTEERISM

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Cora V. Baldock

AMENORRHEA

See MENSTRUATION.

ANARCHISM

The term *anarchism* has, unfortunately, long been associated with violence and mayhem. Its connotation is often chaos and complete destruction of the social order. In fact, however, the literal definition of *anarchism,* "without government," actually means a social, political, and economic system in which there is no hierarchy and no domination from above. It is a strucrure in which no one person or group of people has any power over other. Those who espouse this ideology believe that individuals can best decide how to live their own lives, without the intervention of government. Anarchists are opposed to domination in any form—governmental, religious, economic, societal, or interpersonal.

Anarchism is similar to other socialist ideologies in its analysis and critique of economic domination, but it goes further than Marxism in its thinking about the state, hierarchy, and all authority relations. Anarchists want to abolish all structured relations of dominance and powerlessness in society. They aim to create a society based on equality, mutuality, and reciprocity, in which each person is valued and respected as an individual (Ackelsberg, 1991). Anarchisrs believe that "the means are the ends" and that people must create the new society themselves, in a leaderless and self-directed manner.

Ideology

Anarchists believe in the use of direct action, such as general strikes and boycotts, as well as the use of political propaganda. Generally, anarchists believe that the poor and powerless will bring about dramatic social transformation by revolutionary means rather than reformist measures such as the ballot. For the most part, anarchists are atheists and believe that the idea of God is used by the church to maintain its own authority. Religion is seen as a tool for containing social change. Some anarchists believe that revolution will come through the establishment of small, leaderless communes and work groups that have the power to determine for themselves how they will operate. This is called *anarchist-communism.* Others, more individualist in their thinking, believe that a person is best left alone and unencumbered by forced social arrangements. This is called *anarcho-individualism.* People who believe in this ideology are more interested in social contracts between people as the basis for an economic system (Leeder, 1993). Another important thread in anarchist history is the *anarcho-syndicalist* movement, which was primarily based in Europe—particularly Spain—but also spread to Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina. This movement believed that revolution would come through labor activities and that the basis of the new society would be found in the workplace and through unions. In some countries, anarchists also have been involved in violent attacks on people in positions of power and authority. Additionally, there have always been anarchists involved in terrorism and attempts to overthrow governments.

The origins of the concept go far back, to the writings of Lao-Tse, Zeno, the apostles of Jesus Christ, Diderot, William Godwin, Sir Thomas More, and the Anabaptists, to name a few. The ideology seems to have evolved into a full-blown articulation in the works of Pierre Proudhon, Mikael Bakunin, and Peter Kropotkin, who developed the ideas of federalism, mutual aid, and inevitability of revolution by peasants, not just workers. Out of a long evolution of the ideology came the organizations in which women played an important role. It also might be postulated that anarchist-feminist ideology, particularly the belief in the harmony of humankind working together, has its roots in the Babylonian myth of Tiamat. In this myth, Tiamat created the world whole and without division so that life flowed spontaneously between light and dark, season and season, birth and death. Humans were not owned, separated, or put into categories. But Tiamat's son grew in power, overthrew his mother, cut her into pieces, created his own world, and was called creator. She became the goddess of destruction, of chaos, and was feared. This concept—the overthrow of woman as creator—also provides insight into the evolution of the idea of anarchism from a feminist perspective.

Politically, anarchism has been a useful ideology in understanding women in the context of domination and oppression. Anarchists believe that all people have the right to complete liberty as long as one person's actions do not interfere with the rights of other individuals. Although it is not an explicitly feminist doctrine, the seeds of women's liberation exist within this school of thought. For that reason, the anarchist movement has long attracted and has had at its center noteworthy women who have influenced the development of the movement worldwide. These women have challenged male assumptions and have transcended conventional moral dictates on personal and political levels. They urged economic and psychological independence from men in the belief that personal autonomy was an essential component of sexual equality. It was their belief that sexual and personal liberation was a political goal and led to ultimate freedom for women, which also would be good for the greater society.

History

As early as the 1870s in the United States and Europe, anarchist writings declared that women ought to be fully the equals of men in the home and the workplace (Ackelsberg, 1991). A number of noted anarchist theoreticians, however, maintained fairly traditional ideas about the roles of women. Kropotkin (Russia), Bakunin (Russia), and Proudhon (France) all espoused a belief in certain "natural" behavior patterns for each sex and all maintained fairly conventional families. These same women, however, often challenged the dominant assumptions and sexism of anarchist men.

Anarchist Women in Europe and Asia

In Europe, the anarchist impulse has long been alive and well, manifesting itself in Russia, Ukraine, Spain, France, Germany, England, and Italy, to name but a few countries. Women have long been influenced by anarchist ideology and activism in those places.

In France during the Paris Commune (March–May 1871) a significanrly important anarchist woman emerged. Louise Michel was a teacher whose devotion to the anarchist cause led her to be called the "anarchist saint" (March, 1981). In fact, because of her love of humankind, when she was almost assassinated she refused to press charges against her assailant. During the Commune, she served as an ambulance nurse and soldier. When the Commune was over and her mother had been arrested, Michel cajoled the military into arresting her instead and freeing her mother. She was charged with trying to overthrow the government, inciting civil war, having borne arms and worn a uniform in an insurrectional movement, and being complicit in assassinations (Thomas, 1980). As a result, she was banished to New Caledonia near Australia from 1873 to 1880, when complete amnesty was granted to all Communard deportees.

On her return to France, Michel became a charismatic and magical figure in politics. She spoke on the rights of women and took an anarchist perspective. She urged totally free education for women, and free marriages in which men held no proprietary rights over women. Her speeches drew thousands to the streets to hear her. Being imprisoned became a way of life for Michel because of her radical activities and her challenges to the French authorities. When she died, at the age of 75, as many as 100,000 people marched in her funeral procession. All were there to honor the memory of this valiant poet and revolutionary.

Anarchist women have long been important characters in Russian revolutionary activities. Many of these women later emigrated to the United States, and their influence was felt by contemporary radical women. During the Russian Revolution, anarchist women played important roles in the early stages of the rebellion and were instrumental in establishing anarchist federations in Petrograd (now St. Petersburg) and Moscow. Women played important roles as propagandists, theorists, and agitators. Vera Figner, Sophia Perovskaya, and Sophia Bardina were particularly known for their revolutionary zeal and contribution to the Russian revolution through the group V Narod ("to the populace"). Later, the Krontstadt rebellion—in which sailors fought against the authoritarian practices of the Bolsheviks—was put down and the anarchist impulse was thwarted by repression that became the norm of the Bolshevik government's political policies. Many women were arrested, imprisoned, and tortured as anarchist leaders.

In Spain, an equally important anarchist female presence, the Free Women of Spain (Mujeres Libres), was founded in 1936. This was a movement of over 20,000 women from Madrid and Barcelona, mobilized to develop a network of activities designed to empower individual women while building a sense of community (Ackelsberg, 1991). It grew out of the activities of antifascists who were active in the first months of the Spanish Civil War. The movement was rooted in anarcho-syndicalism, which envisioned a society with unions as its base, in which each union would send a delegate to coordinate local and industrial federations to run the social and economic order. This left out many women, children, and other nonworkers, however, and did not include an analysis of the subordination of women.

Mujeres Libres provided such an analysis and established storefront cultural centers, schools based on an anarchist model of education, and other community-based organizations offering theater, recreation, and education for women and young people. The movement was based on the concept of direct action and "propaganda by the dead," which consists of engaging in activiries that are exemplary and that attract adherents by the power of the positive example they set (Ackelsberg, 1991: 33). In this way, self-generated, spontaneous organizations were encouraged, in which people who participate eventually learn how to gain and use power. These organizations were then federated and networked, rather than dictated from above, following the basic tenets of anarchist theory. Groups were organized to publish, to provide jobs and apprenticeships, and to discuss and challenge assumptions about the role of women as mothers and other traditional expectations. Their dual goals were education and activism.

A number of important women emerged from Mujeres Libres, including Frederica Montseny, Mercedes Comaposada, Lucia Sanchez Saornil, and Amparo Poch y Gascon. These women influenced others through their writing, and insisted on women's separate and autonomous status. They argued that women were oppressed as a group and that women's grievances could be addressed only through collective action. They challenged the dominant society and their anarchist comrades to recognize and respect their presence. For three important years, Mujeres Libres made a difference and a statement about the role of women in Spanish society.

In Asia, anarchism had a presence for quite a while as well. In China in the early 1900s, the thinkers Liu Khipei and Wu Zhihu began articulating anarchist ideas and tapped the indigenous sources of the anarchist vision. In the 1930s, a labor college (Laoda in Shanghai) was established, in which a number of women were recruited to participate in this showpiece of higher education for manual labor. Later Chinese anarchists studied in Paris and Tokyo and brought the concepts home to influence aspects of the Chinese revolution. Anarchism, though not a prime ideology in China, has served as a counterpoint to the authorirarian aspects of that revolution and serves as a critical perspective on the course of Chinese history.

In India, anarchism also played an important role in the thinking of Gandhi, who called himself a "kind of anarchist." He planned a decentralized society based on autonomous village communes. This did not come about because the political vagaries led to the formation of an Indian state modeled on the British system.

Anarchist Women in the United States and Latin America

Anarchist women have questioned the subjugation of women and have urged economic, psychological independence from men, often believing that personal autonomy is an essential component of sexual equality (Marsh, 1981). They were very important in influencing anarchist thought by their challenges to men and by their contributions to public awareness. Anarchist women who were active from 1870 to 1920 in the United States argued for the abolition of the institution of marriage and the nuclear family. They advocated "sexual varietism," that is, nonexclusive sexual relationships. They also wanted women to be self-supporting and often urged communal child rearing and large cooperative houses. Some believed that heterosexual lovers should never live together because of the treatment of females by males. Some women of this era even argued that homosexuality was part of the fight to free sexuality and saw it as a legitimate sexual alternative.

Emma Goldman, Voltairine deCleyre, Florence Finch Kelly, Lucy Parsons, Mollie Steimer, and Rose Pesotta are among the famous—and obscure—who were part of the early development of anarchism in the United States. Emma Goldman, long known in radical feminist circles as "Red Emma," is probably the best-known anarchist woman of that era. Goldman, a Russian Jewish immigrant, became known for her early advocacy of birth control, her propaganda activities against World War I, her famous lectures around the United States on theater and literature, and her long association with her anarchist comrade, Alexander Berkman. Goldman's activities, in her public espousal of free speech, led to the development of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Her refusal to adhere to conventional expectations for women in social and sexual behavior led to her being adored by many and reviled by the government. She was incarcerated for her activities and, eventually, deported in 1919 as a result of the "Red scare," in which hundreds of anarchists were sent back to Russia because of their politics. To this day, Emma Goldman's name is used to evoke the image of the revolutionary woman. Her ideology was rooted in an anarchist analysis of the world, and she lived her ideology fully, even unto her death.

Voltairine deCleyre—less well known but equally important in the development of anarchist theory and action—is noteworthy for organizing women's groups for education and consciousness raising. She was a Catholic anarchist intellectual from Michigan, who espoused women's taking their own liberty, "being what we teach," and expecting nothing from men, and generally advocating a leaderless general strike against marriage and motherhood (Marsh, 1981). She became somewhat of a myth in anarchist circles because of her passion and revolutionary zeal. She was called the "tevolutionary vestal" and the "priestess of pity and vengance."

Neither Goldman nor deCleyre believed that women should participate in the "women's suffrage question," because neither had respect for the political arena of legislation and voting. Both argued, as did other anarchists, that freedom would mainly come through self-assertion, by refusing to be a sexual commodity, by refusing to be a servant to God or the state or any domination. Goldman argued that women needed internal emancipation to know their own value, respect themselves, and refuse to become psychic or economic slaves to their husbands.

Other anarchist women, such as Kelly, Steimer, and Pesotta, chose to be involved in progressive political causes of their times. Florence Finch Kelly, for example, was a well-educated, middle-class woman who defied traditional roles by becoming a journalist and novelist. She never chose conventional solutions to problems and held a healthy skepticism regarding tradition.

Another important thread in anarchist women's history is the Modern School. This educational movement, which was founded by Francisco Ferrer in Spain, held that children needed a healthy physical environment in which to learn as well as short and interesting instructional periods. Through nonimposition of ideas and lack of restraints on a child's natural inclination to learn, educators in the Modern School emphasized the process of learning and learning by example, rather than learning by rote. Children were taught to be self-reliant and were not viewed as their parents' property (Avrich, 1980). Anarchist women participated in the Modern School movement from the outset. They understood that politics occurred in the home and private arena as well as in the public domain. As a result, women emphasized the need for egalitarian relationships with one's children and saw the importance of education in attaining that equality. Many women took their children to live in rural areas where Modern School programs were established. Some of those settings—Stelton in New Jersey and Mohegan in New York—thrived well into the 1960s. The threads of libertarian education can be found even today in "free schools" and in writings about open class-rooms and the active involvement of students in decision making and in their own learning.

Anarchism has thrived in lands of the sun, and Spanish immigrants brought the ideology to Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Uruguay, and Brazil in the 1800s. Anarchists were active in setting up anarcho-syndicalist organizations; and in Mexico an anarchist, Ricardo Flores Magnon, is considered a father of the Mexican revolution. Women were integrated early into the Mexican labor movement as a result of anarchist advocacy. Carmen Huerta became the president of the labor congress as early as 1879, and labor policies always reflected women's concerns as a result of anarchist demands.

The anarchist impulse remains alive in many of the countries discussed around the world. Invariably, wherever one travels, one finds anarchists and anarchist feminists active in grassroots and decentralized activities, espousing the ideology that has been around for hundreds of years.

Contemporary Anarchist Feminism

The legacy of the anarchist foremothers has not been lost on a new generation of women. Since the 1960s, anarchist feminism has seen a resurgence of interest. With the emergence of third-wave feminism, there is an anarchist impulse alive and well in the women's movement. Often these women might not even call themselves anarchists; more often, they identify themselves as radical feminists. Emma Goldman became an early role model for radical feminists, and her name is conjured up when one thinks of strong-minded and revolutionary women who will not kowtow to domination and oppression by men. Radical feminists—some of whom have the anarchist ideology but not the anarchist name—believe that "the personal is political" and that it is necessary ro "build the new society in the vacant lots of the old." The writings of Carol Ehrlich, Peggy Komegger, Elaine Leeder, and Martha Ackelsberg were early manifestations of the anarchist presence in the contemporary feminist movement.

Anarchist feminism and other forms of radical feminism exist worldwide in new, contemporary forms of direct action. Food co-ops, self-help collectives, squats, equity housing programs, rape crisis centers, and battered women's shelters are all examples of decentralized, nonhierarchical structures that reflect the anarchist impulse. Women's peace encampments in the United States, Scandinavia, and England were all anarchistic in orientation. These groups are run in ways that empower the women who participate and present daily direct challenges to the local and national authorities they confront. Anarchism and anarchist women remain active, demanding equal rights for women but insisting that change will not come through reformist means such as the ballot. Instead, the emphasis remains on direct action, propaganda by deed, and involvement in voluntary, nonhierarchical organizations. Anarchist women continue to influence the thinking of the contemporary anarchist movement. This includes informing the ecological orientation of current anarchist thinking with a feminist analysis and demanding a "politics of diversity" (Ackelsberg, 1991), in which a gender perspective is valued equally to that of race, class, and ethnicity. Anarchism, although now old in its traditions and analysis, is surprisingly relevant to today's issues and the concerns of modern women.

See Also

ACTIVISM; COMMUNISM; COMMUNITY POLITICS; FEMINISM: ANARCHIST

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Elaine Leeder

ANATOMY

Anatomy—(From Greek ana-temnein, to cut open.) (1) Science of the build, shape, and composition of the body, in terms of internal organs and glandular, skeletal, muscular, arterial, and neural structures. Study of these structures by cutting up the body. (2) The build, shape, and composition of the body.

Introduction

The significance of "anatomy" for feminism and women's studies stems from a historical blurring of the difference between these two meanings. This was made possible by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century developments underlying the rise of the empirical sciences, among which anatomy was prominent. Anatomy came into being as a practice in the historical period in which the separation of "nature" from "politics" and "culture" originates. This separation was designed and invoked to argue the possibility and necessity of the objective scientific study of nature and to endow its results with the status of universal truth outside the scope of human authority, politics, or prejudice. In the definition here, the first meaning, "anatomy" as a science, refers to a human practice, but the second refers to the product of that practice, anatomical knowledge. In this second meaning, *anatomy* has acquired a material referent outside human history, culture, and practices and has come to stand for the body itself.

In this latter guise, anatomy has long been perceived within feminism as a problem to get around rather than to confront (as has "biology" in general). As "the body itself," anatomy stood for the eternal, natural, and therefore unalterable and apolitical differences between the sexes, setting the limits for all arguments for social equality. In this way, anatomy figured in many biological-deterministic arguments about "women's role," as epitomized in the Freudian dictum, "Anatomy is destiny." Consequently, feminists contested the relevance of the "facts about the body" for social order and shifted the boundary between the "social" and the "biological" to diminish anatomy as an explanation of existing sex differences. In its most powerful form, this strategy generated the distinction between sex and gender, which separates the biological (including the anatomical) realm from a cultural and historical realm of "gender." Feminists have tried to expand the domain of gender to leave as little as possible accounted for by biology and anatomy.

Useful as this strategy has been in countering biological determinism, it left essentially untouched the status of anatomy as the ahistorical limit to any argument for change. Because it still equated "anatomy" as a set of representations produced by historically located human practices with anatomy as "the body itself," it remained an Achilles' heel for biological determinism. For instance, if feminists, in arguing against an appeal to "maternal instincts" in explaining why women (should) take care of children more than men do, pointed to sociocultural ideas about femininity and mothering, to tradition, or to psychodynamics within families, then any newly found correspondence between women's postpartum emotions toward newborns and hormonal levels seemed to pose a "problem."

Two connotations of the biological, and consequently the anatomical, body that motivated the feminist gender strategy to a great extent have been effectively criticized: (1) that biology and anatomy are outside culture and history and (2) that with regard to the duality of "the social" and "the natural," it is (only) in the sphere of the social that political change can be achieved.

Anatomy As Historical Cultural Practice

A rapidly growing body of historical research suggests that the science of anatomy has been intrinsically guided by agendas reflecting contemporary political struggles. Thus, at the time of the Enlightenment, when formulations of "equality among all men" generated claims for political equality from women and from people of color, anatomists set out to investigate and locate sexual and racial differences in the body in unprecedented ways. Until then, the male body and the female body were seen as essentially the same, with female reproductive organs an inverse version of the male organs. Sexual differences, in this model, were differential positionings of women and men on one scale of metaphysical being, with the male as the perfect form. Women were a less perfect version of men; this imperfection was caused by women's lack of "heat," a characteristic that, among other things, prevented their reproductive organs from extruding as male organs extrude. Thus, women were seen as producing seed, as men do, in their internal "testes," with their vagina, cervix, and uterus pictured as inverse versions of the penis and scrotum. This account, especially in its formulation by Galen (second century after Christ), was passed on to the medieval West through the writings of the Arab Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and remained authoritative and influential all through the Renaissance, as is still discernible in the first anatomical drawings (by Leonardo Da Vinci and Vesalius) of dissected corpses. It was then gradually replaced by a fundamentally new account that saw the sexes as essentially and incompatibly different, instead of as a perfect and imperfect version of the same ideal. At the moment in history when human inequality was contested by an appeal to "universal man," anatomical, natural differences were produced that presented women not as "less" than men but as altogether incomparable: the naturalists' complementarity model of the sexes came into being.

Significantly, the shift from "a lesser version of the same" to "not less but essentially different" did not coincide with the turn toward empirical study of the human body by actual dissection and graphical description. Corpses had been dissected occasionally for centuries, and the graphic renderings of female and male organs by Leonardo da Vinci and Vesalius show how they actually saw what they dissected as inverse versions. This implies that it took "something else" besides just opening the body and merely "looking at how things really were," as the standard story about the "discovery" of the modern anatomical body goes.

The complementarity model of sex differences gained ground when women's claim to equality and access to the public sphere could no longer be countered by an appeal to a metaphysically grounded cosmology, in which everyone had his or her ordained place in accordance with a natural hierarchical order of being that did not distinguish between the natural and the social. That very distinction, in fact, was produced in the process of overthrowing this old cosmology and its claim to "natural," God-given authority for some over everyone else, and in the creation of a separate domain called "nature" over which neither church nor king would have any authority. The newly articulated basis from which to proclaim equality among all men, however, provided no reason to exclude groups that were never meant to be included in the brotherhood of men, such as women and people of color. Therefore, it became important, in a way it had not been before, to ground empirically essential differences between white males and everybody else.

Within this project, the anatomical search for sexual difference concentrated on female reproductive organs and skeletons (in particular, pelvises and skulls). With the rise of evolutionary models of human origins, difference as "race" became conceptualized as relative proximity to animals, most notably apes. White women, because their skulls were relatively larger than men's, were described as being less developed in the sense of being closer to children. The anatomical racial and gender characteristics produced were without exception conceptualized as differences from the white, male body, the norm against which all difference became essential otherness. Then, after their transformation into "scientific fact," such naturalized differences were reintroduced into political debates to contest claims to political equality and representation, access to scientific education, and so forth. This type of historical work has provided a basis for reversing the biological-deterministic premise: "Destiny is anatomy," rather than the other way around.

The fact that the model of antiquity, with women's bodies as inverse, imperfect versions of men's bodies, remained in place for a long time, even after the first anatomists set out to dissect and study corpses, not only points to the role of preconceived ideas and political agendas in the making of the modern anatomical body but also challenges the notion of objectivity—unmediated vision and pure observation—as the distinguishing methodological novelty of modern empirical anatomy. Besides the broader political changes mentioned here, and their role in defining research questions and conceptualizing difference, there are other factors determining what the eye can see at any particular historical moment. The "anatomical gaze" was shaped to a large extent by the development of specific tools and techniques as well. One cannot "see" the anatomical body as it developed from the seventeenth century onward, in messy and bloody bowels lying on a dissection table, with a naked, untrained, and unaided eye; it took the later development of techniques of preservation for the corpses, and specifically drawings and etchings of the body, to guide and train the hand how to cut and the eye what to see. In this sense, even the anatomical body was never the product of enlightened and pure empirical observation but very much a body crafted by a broad variety of factors.

Changeable Anatomy

The second connotation of the anatomical (biological) body, underlying feminist strategies of explaining existing sex differences as much as possible in terms of the social, is that "anatomy" stands for the unchangeable, and therefore the apolitical. Connected to this was the idea that whenever one could prove a particular inequality "social" in origin, this in itself would render it amenable to change. Neither idea is still considered self-evident. Twentieth-century western biomedical sciences and technologies created unprecedented and seemingly infinite possibilities of manipulation and reshaping of the body, while at the same time belief in the malleability of social structures has been diminished by their unforeseen persistence in the face of emancipatory social policies.

For instance, the latter decades of the twentieth century proved that the manipulation of women's reproductive anatomy and physiology—with hormonal treatments, in vitro fertilization (IVF), gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT), and so on—was far easier to accomplish than changing attitudes toward the necessity of genetically related children for a fulfilled life. Similarly, the statistics on cosmetic surgery show that psychosocial pressures to conform to ideals of beauty, despite many analyses and criticisms of the female role in heterosexual relationships, are still far stronger for many women than the fear of pain and health hazards. Far from being outside history and politics, the body in general, and the female body in particular, has been a site of "materialized politics" and remains so in an relentlessly intense way.

Consequently, anatomy, like biology and the biomedical sciences in general, is no longer considered a realm closed to feminist scrutiny but is regarded instead as a domain where critical analysis is urgent. This urgency is produced by a growing awareness that current medical practices, combined with the growing transformative powers generated by rapidly proliferating biomedical technologies, may affect women's lives profoundly. Since these practices and technologies are building on scientific traditions, such as anatomy, that are increasingly proved to carry historically and culturally determined accounts of femininity, it has become a prime task for women's studies to investigate how these accounts are currently shaping our medical sciences, practices, and technologies. Many areas within medicine are currently being investigated, providing new insights into the relationships between cultural and historical definitions and structures of gender inscribed in the "natural body" and current reproductions of gender assymmetries within medical practices.

Traces of History in Contemporary Medical Practices

The focus on female sexual and reproductive organs in the search for sexual difference, the fascination with the *secreta mulierum,* has found historical continuity in a persistent relative overexposure of women's reproductive biology compared with men's. This overexposure has produced a female reproducrive body that is known and subject to medical interventions to a much greater extent than its male counterpart. There is no medical specialty for men's reproductive functions comparable in history, scale, or scope to gynecology. Men's reproductive parts have never been studied or manipulated with respect to as wide a variety of hypotheses concerning physical and mental pathologies. As a consequence, great asymmetries in the medical treatment of males and females as reproducers persist in ways not attributable to nature or necessity. For instance, in the domain of contraception, large asymmetries between women and men with respect to contraceptive methods, in terms of availability, invasiveness, effectiveness, risk, side effects, and necessity for medical surveillance, still leave the female body as the primary site of birth control. Similar asymmetries in the area of infertility treatment are so large that today both female and male fertility problems are increasingly solved by medical interventions such as in vitro fertilization and gamete intrafallopian transfer; these take the female body as their object of intervention.

Where "difference" was also practically equated with inferiority and imperfection, it has historically proved to be easily translatable into "prone to pathology," thus producing anatomical and physiological accounts of female reproductive bodies as "naturally" in need of intervention. Today, pregnancy, childbirth, menstruation, and menopause have come to be perceived as diseaselike, high-risk events requiring medical surveillance and, more often than not, pharmaceutical, hormonal, surgical, or other types of intervention.

The mirror image of this is that the male body often functioned (and still sometimes does function) as the model for the human body in areas related to parts less deeply inscribed by struggles over cultural definitions of masculinity and femininity than the reproductive organs, the skull, the brain, and so on. This overexposure of the genital-reproductive female body is reflected, for instance, in contemporary cancer research, where the percentage of women studied for genital and breast cancers is larger than the relative incidence of these types of cancer in women, whereas, conversely, the same types of cancer in men are studied less in relation to incidence. Mirroring this is the fact that when women and men share a certain body part—for example, the lung—researchers tend to study the related form of cancer in the male. Thus, nonsexual parts are studied in males as the model for women and men alike. Women were often excluded from clinical trials (as were female animals in animal models) because the particularities of female bodies were thought to interfere with the results—results that, once established, were nevertheless thoughr generalizable to women. This practice results in therapies that are designed on the basis of male bodies but may work differently in women in terms of effectiveness or side effects.

See Also

BIOLOGICAL DETERMINISM; BIOLOGY; BODY; CANCER; CHILDBIRTH; CONTRACEPTION; COSMETIC SURGERY; DIFFERENCE; FEMINISM: EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY; FERTILITY AND FERTILITY TREATMENT; GENDER; MEDICAL CONTROL OF WOMEN; PHYSIOLOGY; PREGNANCY AND BIRTH; PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME (PMS); PRIMATOLOGY; REPRESENTATION; REPRODUCTION: OVERVIEW; REPRODUCTIVE PHYSIOLOGY; REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES; SCIENTIFIC SEXISM AND RACISM; SEXUAL DIFFERENCE

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ANCIENT INDIGENOUS CULTURES: Women's Roles

The original inhabitants of a geographic region are often referred to as indigenous cultures. The indigenous peoples who originated and lived in specific territories have a historical continuity with preinvasion and precolonial societies, which consider themselves distinct from those that now prevail on the land. Most continents in the world had indigenous populations and cultures—for example, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Landers of Australia, the Igbo-Ukwu and Nok of Africa; the Maori of New Zealand; the Aztec, Mayan, Ojibway, and Iroquois of the Americas; and the peoples of ancient Mesopotamia, Levant, China, India, Japan, the Mediterranean, Caribbean, and South Pacific. These are all peoples, communities, and nations with their own culture and society based on their own values and traditions. Today, many indigenous peoples and nations are nondominant sectors of society, but they are determined to preserve and maintain their identity, culture, and ancestral territories for future generations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, 1999: 61).

Colonization had a destructive effect on the gender relationships of indigenous people and an impact on all spheres of the society, including family organization, childbearing, child rearing, politics, spiritual life, work, and social activities (Smith, 1999). Ancient indigenous women's roles were unique to their specific society. Although commonalities existed, there was no universal role other than bearing children. No "universal ancient indigenous woman" exists. It is important not to generalize and to be as specific as possible when speaking of indigenous women. Their specific physical environment, culture (values and traditions), subsistence patterns, and resources influenced their roles, identity, and lifestyle. Some were nomadic hunters and gatherers, others agrarian, more sedentary, and more socially complex. Many were matrilineal, others male-centered or a combination.

Ancient indigenous women had many roles, including but not limited to roles in religion, the economy, leadership, and domestic life. Selected roles and cultures will be highlighted to illusrrate the diversity of the indigenous women around the world (Vivante, 1999).

Domestic Roles

Many ancient indigenous cultures embraced women as nurturers: care providers as well as leaders. A key role for most indigenous women was motherhood, and childbearing was highly valued and honored. This was true for most indigenous women, including those of Native North America and Mesoamerica. Women's work was recognized as being as essential as men's for tribal survival. Men's and women's roles were complementary, with neither more important than the other. In Aztec and Mayan cultures, the home was the domain of the woman, where most of her work was performed, and the women were responsible for childbearing, child rearing, and processing of maize. This was also true for women in indigenous west African societies. Although the man was the formal head, the woman controlled the family and domestic issues and was responsible for the education of the children. Transmission of culture, values, and traditions to their children was also the responsibility of Iroquois women of North America. In the Jomon society of Japan, women enjoyed freedom and high status in matrilineal households, where they often continued to live after marriage. Women's primary responsibility was childbearing. Ancient Mesopotamia is an example of a patriarchal family system in which the women were not independent of male influence throughout their lives. The father was head of the family and had this authority until his death. The women were to bear children, especially sons, to ensure continuation of the male line, and they were generally subordinate to men.

Leadership Roles

The degree of involvement of ancient indigenous women in leadership of their societies varied greatly. For instance, the Iroquois women of North America were the heads of their clans and villages, and it was their responsibility to fill leadership positions. The women not only selected the men who represented the village but could depose or "dehorn" a chief who did not do the will of the people. In ancient Egypt, kingship was essentially a male institution; Hatshepsut was one of the few women ever to hold this position. Women's influence on government was indirect, through their husbands, but they did exercise authority over their households and children. In west Africa, women influenced the building and maintenance of their nations in matters of governance and structure, and succession to leadership positions was often based on matrilineal descent. The ancient tribal group of Yamato in Japan was jointly ruled. A male was responsible for military and civil affairs, and a woman priestess was in charge of spiritual matters.

Economics

Most ancient indigenous women contributed to the economy of their societies. Indigenous Iroquois women had a significant impact on the tribal economy. They were responsible for planting, cultivating, harvesting, storing, and trading crops and foodstuffs, and they also managed the distribution and trading of agricultural and hunting resources. In Japan, Jomon women were the principal contributors to a domestic economy based on household goods gathered from their coastlines and forest environments and were instrumental in bartering the goods. In Mayan society, the men did most of the agricultural work, although women tended gardens and orchards and raised animals. Mayan and Aztec women were both involved in commerce and in trading foodstuffs and woven goods. Textiles were essential for daily and ritual use in Mesoamerica; in ancient Japan, the women processed food and excelled in basketry, pottery, and weaving, producing many items for ceremonial use.

Property Rights

Ancient indigenous women owned or used property in their societies to various degrees. In fact, a man's association with a woman often brought benefits to the husband. In Aztec society, a man could not acquire land without being married. Women were also free to divorce and remarry, and the property a woman brought into a marriage remained with her. In indigenous North America, Iroquois women owned houses and stores, and the use of property was passed through the matrilineal line without actual ownership; property was owned by those who used it. The longhouse and the village were women's domains. Men owned their own personal property, and other property remained separate during the marriage. In Japan, Jomon property (usually land) jointly owned by households was inherited matrilineally and entrusted to a matriarch. In Mesopotamia, inheritance generally was divided among the sons or survivors in the male line.

Religious and Spiritual Roles

Women in ancient indigenous cultures had an influence on religious and spiritual practices. Many creation stories involved women, and there were female deities. Aztec culture had female deities, and women participated extensively in the cycle of religious activities and festivities. They danced, impersonated goddesses, and were sacrificed in ritual human sacrifices. Women's role was not straightforward but penetrated many levels of symbolism, including male activities. In ancient Japan, women (usually the daughters of a male or female chieftain) were priestesses of their tribes or kinship groups and acted as protectors and healers. They were sought to cure injuries and illnesses and to make predictions with their magic and prayers.

Conclusion

Ancient indigenous women's roles were as diverse as the environments in which they lived and the cultures they represented. To get a complete picture, one must research a specific culture thoroughly. Commonalities do exist, but generalizing is problematic, and information on indigenous women is often lacking and inadequate. Directly or indirectly, indigenous women influenced the daily life of their societies, and their roles were essential to me survival and continuance of their people.

See Also

ANCIENT NATION STATES, WOMEN'S ROLES; FAMILY: PROPERTY RELATIONS; FAMILY: RELIGIOUS AND LEGAL SYSTEMS; GODDESS; HOUSEHOLDS: FEMALE-HEADED AND FEMALE-SUPPORTED; INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RIGHTS; MATRIARCHY; MATRILINEAL SYSTEMS; TRADITIONAL HEALING, *various topics*

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Vivante, Bella, ed. 1999. *Women's roles in ancient civilizations: A reference guide.* Westport, Conn: Greenwood. See articles by: Michiko Y. Aoki (on ancient Japan), Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox (on Ojibway and Iroquois women in ancient North America), Karen Rhea Nemet-Nejat (on Mesopotamia), Tolagbe Ogunleye (on ancient west Africa), Gay Robins (on ancient Egypt), and Andrea J. Stone (on ancient Mesoamerica).

Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox

ANCIENT NATION-STATES: Women's Roles

Women's roles in ancient nation-states display numerous similarities, beginning with childbearing and child rearing, and including the harvesting, gathering, and preparation of food; weaving and textile manufacture; midwifery; nursing and healing; various creative, economic, and ritual activities; and—not infrequently—political and even military leadership. The values accorded to these roles differ markedly: generally the roles were highly valued in indigenous and developing state societies, but value eroded as nation-states evolved.

The Development of Nation-States

The development of nation-states also displays similarities. Shifting from family- or clan-based social organizations, which value all members for their contributions, state societies develop to administer larger population groups. They show increasing centralization of governing and religious functions, with increasingly structured and hierarchical administrative systems, frequently accompanied by shifts to male domination. Although many indigenous societies highly value women's roles, often calling themselves matriarchal (not, however, in the sense of being simply a reversal of modern concepts of patriarchy), many nation-states show increasing male domination in realms deemed authoritative: political, legal, economic, and, ultimately, religious and artistic. Realms deemed characteristically female, notably the home and domestic occupations, then become undervalued. Archaeological and historical evidence from civilizations worldwide documents this progressive devaluing of women's activities as nation-states developed. Some state societies, however, still valued women's roles: Minoan Crete, Sparta, and the various states of Mesoamerica and pre-Islamic west Africa.

The criterion for a nation-state, then, is not size but rather this shift to a centralized, hierarchical social organization. Hence, this article considers women's roles from the relatively small "city-states" of ancient Greece, Japan, and Mesoamerica to the larger empires of Mesopotamia (Sumer and Babylon), China, Egypt, India, Rome, and west Africa. In the time periods considered here—mostly the third to the first millennium B.C.E., but the third to the seventeenth centuries C.E. for Japan, Mesoamerica, and west Africa—patriarchal customs were developing but were hardly uniform or fixed. Most evidence refers to the lives of elite women; women of lower classes were generally acknowledged only through their various roles of support and work for the elite.

Principal Roles for Women

Women's principal roles in all these nation-states centered on the home on activities of childbearing and child rearing. Women's rights in marriage, divorce, and controlling their own sexuality suggest the power and status women held. Although the husband mighr nominally be head of the household, women often were recognized to be in charge of domestic affairs—this was explicitly so in

Egypt, India, Sparta, Mesoamerica, and west Africa. Texts from India, Sparta, and west Africa indicate that women's control of household affairs included—to a greater or lesser degree—control over their husbands' activities as well. Many societies favored monogamous marriages. In one type of Indian marriage, women could freely choose their partners, and, although this was not a frequent option, Indian women could choose the life of a religious ascetic—affording greater individual independence—instead of marriage. In Sumer, Egypt, and west Africa, married women had legal parity with men. A Chinese woman's right to defy her husband in the Qin dynasty (221–207 B.C.E.) suggests her autonomy in the home and equal status with her husband. In many cultures, women could divorce without stigma or penalty and had the right to remarry; widows often gained greater independence than they had while married. In Mesopotamia, a man could be heavily penalized for divorcing his wife, especially if she had borne sons. In Athens and Rome, women required legal guardians their entire lives and could not independently choose marriage partners or decide to divorce or remarry. Nevertheless, elite Roman women often circumvented their legal restrictions.

Hierarchical polygyny—ranking first and subsequent legal wives and concubines—was practiced in China and sometimes India, but multiple wives in Japan were not ranked; the Dravids in southern India practiced polyandry. In Japan and west Africa, women could choose their husbands, residence was matrilocal, households were registered under the mother's name, inheritance was matrilineal, and children were not marked as legitimate or illegitimate. Laws in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and India stressed the husband's role in providing for his wife's security and sexual pleasure; art and literature portrayed the loving couples. A recognized benefit of marriage was sexual pleasure. In India, Japan, and Sparta, female adultery was not taboo; in some cases, women were encouraged to have extramarital sexual partners both to produce healthy children and to enhance the married couple's sexual pleasure. Roman poetry extolled the adulterous liaisons of elite women.

In Athens, China, India, and Mesoamerica, a man had to be married in order to fulfill his public and ritual obligations—these dual-gender obligations were incorporared into Chinese marriage vows—and in Mesoamerica men had to be married in order to own land as well. Chinese and Greek female philosophers and Mesoamerican art and hieroglyphics make explicit the concept of complementarity underlying women's and men's spheres in the home and public life, respectively. This complementatity, a key to gender relations in indigenous societies, suggests that, despite women's frequent legal and marital restrictions, early state societies valued women's domestic role, and mothers were highly honored. Although Confucianism led to women's devaluation in China, its emphasis on filial piety resulted in great deference to the elder matriarch of the household, even by the emperor to his mother.

Economic Roles for Women

Much of women's economic activities, primarily gathering, harvesting, and preparing food and textile production, also centered on the home. Women were not always economically rewarded for these essential activities, although they might gain status and esteem for excelling in them. In China, women's textile production released their male relatives from labor conscription. In Japan, women supported their households and the government from their cloth and food surpluses. Greek and Mayan women's weavings were important items in trade, gifts, dowries, bride wealth, tribute, and rituals—weavings were prized offerings made to Greek deities, as in the annual rites to Athena, portrayed in the central part of the frieze of the Parthenon, the temple to Athena in Athens. The attention to intricate detail of clothing design in the art of both cultures illustrates the cultural importance of Greek and Mayan women's weavings and the esteem accorded to this characteristically women's art.

Women also participated in the larger economy of their societies, including business, trade, owning and managing property, and manufacturing; and as doctors, midwives, nurses, and prostitutes. Some women's work was underpaid and undervalued, but where women controlled their economic activities, they had greater independence, status, and power. Women could often sell the surplus and control the income from household agricultural, textile, or craft production. Some women's activities were central to the economy, for example, in Japan, deep-sea diving and making salt (from sea water); in Mesopotamia, perfume manufacture, and brewing and selling beer; in west Africa, salt trade, soap manufacture, and gold mining and trade. In Sumer, Egypt, Sparta, Rome, and Japan, women owned, could bequeath, and could inherit large tracts of land, and they controlled the wealth from its production. In Mesopotamia, Egypt, Rome, and west Africa, women actively engaged in business. Prostitutes were generally not highly paid or esteemed, but courtesans were educated and gained great wealrh: in India and Rome many were noted for their business acumen; in India some became wealthy patrons of religious orders; in Greece some achieved political prominence. In India, Rome, and imperial Greece, wealthy women underwrote public, religious, and artistic activities independent of their husbands.

Women and Positions of Authority

Rulers were frequently male, but royal women had several means of access to ruling power. In political marriages, women exercised influence on behalf of their natal families, thereby acquiring esteem. Queen mothers of minor sons too young to rule wielded significant power. Royal courts everywhere were notorious for political intrigues and murders by royal wives and mothers on behalf of their sons. In Japan, Palenque (sixth- to seventh-century classic Maya), and west Africa, many women ruled in their own right as queen, a role that often included military leadership. Japan, west African states, and, possibly, Sparta had traditions of dual rulership. In other countries, women occasionally ruled in extraordinary circumstances, such as the Egyptian "female-king" Hatshepsut (fifteenth century B.C.E.). Nonroyal women had varying access to authoritative decision making in their communities, depending on their class, legal, and economic standing; on cultural appreciation of women's authority; and frequently on their ritual roles. Such access tended to be considerable in Sumer, Crete, Sparta, Japan, Maya, and west Africa.

In most cultures, women held significant ritual roles, and many important deities were female. Goddesses were worshiped as deities associated with, for example, creation (Nü Wa—China, Aditi—India, Gaia—Greece, Amaterasu—Japan, Atoapoma [Akan], Idemili [Igbo], Nana-Daho [Fon]—west Africa); the earth (Demeter—Greece, Bona Dea—Rome, Asase Ya [Asanre], Oto [Binis], Tenga [Mossi]—west Africa); sky (Nut—Egypt); fertility, sexuality, erotic desire (Inanna/Ishtar—Sumer/Babylon, Hathor— Egypt, Aphrodite—Greece, Yemoja—Yoruba); marriage, motherhood (Isis—Egypt, Hera—Greece, Juno—Rome); childbirth (Hathor, Isis—Egypt, Aditi—India, Toci—Maya); crafts (Athena—Greece); learning (Saraswati—India); power and rulership (Queen mother of the West—China, Inanna/Ishtar—Sumer/Babylon, Athena—Greece, Shakti—India); and wealth (Lakshami—India). Goddesses also were associated with the sun, the moon, planets, stars, water, natural forces, weaving, justice, death (often in the sense of the earth or mother taking the dead back into her care), destruction, and numerous other qualities. Many of these roles overlapped, and in India, in west Africa, and among the Maya, these goddesses continue to be worshiped today. Worship of female deities reinforced on a divine level the respect accorded actual women. Women often held important roles as priestesses.

Many cultures held important rites marking significant stages in a woman's life: rites for puberty and adolescent transitions; entry into adulthood, marriage, birth, motherhood; and annual cycles of women's fertility and sexuality. These cycles often were celebrated in "sacred marriage" rites known throughout the ancient world. Many women's rites were for women only and were considered fundamental for promoting and maintaining the well-being of the society. Women gained crucial support for their identity, sense of self-worth, and esteem from these recurrent ritual practices. Moreover, because religious practices often were fundamental to much societal activity, the central and important roles women held in religious life, both as priestesses and often as ordinary female practitioners, gave them respected, public roles within their community.

In Greece, a woman's entire life from the age of 6 or 7 through adulthood was marked by frequent rituals. The numerous religious festivals in which women engaged afforded women opportunities to move about independently and, apparently, without restriction in the community. For 2,000 years (until their sanctuaries and rites were deliberately destroyed by Christian zealots in the fourth and fifth centuries), the Eleusinian mysteries for the two goddesses Demeter and Persephone were the most important form of religious expression for both women and men in Greece. A comparable centrality of worship of female deities and of women's ritual roles can be found in Mesopotamia, Japan, Mesoamerica, and west Africa; however, they were later eclipsed by male-dominated religious and philosophical beliefs.

Although in many nation-states women's lives were restricted politically and legally, the importance of other spheres of activity indicates that political or legal status does not adequately convey the full picture of women's roles. Frequently, women's importance in domestic, religious, economic, and creative activities substantially offsets legal and political restrictions. The esteem—and often direct economic and status rewards—women received for their activities testifies to the value accorded to women even in patriarchal societies where gender inequities were developing. Moreover, many state societies still maintained considerable respect for women ideologically as well as politically, legally, and economically. These various sources of esteem in ancient nation-states deteriorated in the face of increasing male supremacy advocated by religious and philosophical ideologies with their concomitant increasing male domination in the political, legal, economic, religious, and—ultimately—domestic spheres.

Awareness of the numerous ways women were fully participatory agents, or enjoyed arenas of esteem even in predominantly patriarchal systems, provides an important corrective to previous historical views of women as being completely subjected and subordinate in ancient cultures. It also challenges the commonly held notion that the position of women in modern, democratic, industrialized nations represents an advance over women's position in earlier societies—a linear view of social and historical development. Although this "advance" may be valid when compared with the position of women in recent histories of patriarchal nation-states, it does not hold up in the longer historical perspective when set against women's roles in most ancient societies. In contrast, there are great complexities in gender relations and in the roles women have held historically in civilizations around the world, which often have been roles of power and strength.

See Also

ANCIENT INDIGENOUS CULTURES: WOMEN'S ROLES; GODDESS; HISTORY; HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES: OVERVIEW; POLITICS AND THE STATE: OVERVIEW

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Bella Vivante

ANDROCENTRISM

Androcentrism is the view that male behavior and characteristics are central—are the norm. This view so permeates society that female behavior is understood and seen as deviant, that is, deviating from the male norm.

Androcentric society values characteristics associated with men and maleness. Thus, competitiveness and aggressiveness are highly valued and rewarded, whereas characteristics associated with women—caring and cooperation—are devalued.

Androcentric societies are organized on the assumption that the male is the norm. This is clearly illustrated by the ways in which paid employment is organized in advanced industrial societies: full-time work with a lifelong and uninterrupted commitment to the labor market is assumed to be the norm. Women who have domestic responsibilities and cannot conform to this expectation are disadvantaged both in the jobs for which they are seen as eligible in the labor market and in their promotion prospects in employment.

Androcentric texts and scholarship present women as absent or silent or treat them in stereotyped ways. Hartmann (1978), for example, points out the inherent sexism in Marxist theory. Hoagland (1980) points to the way in which androcentric rhetoric is used in sociobiology. Forenza (1983) demonstrates that theological texts present women as absent or silent or in their traditional roles. In this way women have been "hidden from history."

See Also

HISTORY; OTHER; SEXISM; WORK: FEMINIST THEORIES

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Pamela Abbott

ANDROGYNY

Androgyny, or gynandry, is the presence, within one body, of both female and male sex characteristics. The human species is gynandrous in several ways. The fetus is female up to six weeks; then, if sperm is present, the clitoris enlarges to become a penis, vaginal skin folds over to become the scrotum, and a male grows. Also, estrogen and testosterone are varyingly present in both sexes. Thus human genders branch from a female root, and from earlier kinds of reproduction—for billions of years on Earth, reproduction occurred by asexual, bisexual, or parthenogenic cloning.

Early human cultures often envisioned deities as female. Paleolithic cave art and icons, Megalithic and Neolithic archaeologic sites, and many rituals and myths worldwide indicate worship of a "great mother" who, as Earth, gave birth, sustained life, and after death recycled all life forms. Everything created, in both its "female" and its "male" aspects, expressed this gynandrous process of a living, sacred planet. Hunting-and-gathering peoples did not strictly differentiate sex roles. Among animistic cultures, to become "the other"—that is, to experience otherness in oneself—is a psychic moment of both integration and release. Tribal shamans, medicine women and men, the berdache, and the wiccan all enacted this participatory fusion, becoming not only other animals but the other sex: shamanic males wore ornamental breasts and acted as spirit mothers; shamanic females wrestled and hunted and, in later Neolithic depictions, wore beards. The androgynous "both-in-one" activated pragmatic and sacred powers of magic, healing, tribal integrity, and prophecy.

In historic eras, patriarchal cultures, which value fixed sex roles, have superseded most of the primal animistic beliefs. Yet androgyny as symbol of human balance and fusion, or psychic holism, is still found worldwide, for example in the Taoist yin and yang, tantra, the gnostic and alchemic hermaphrodite, African and Caribbean Voudoun, and Hindu devas. Catalytic powers of the androgyne are also popularly embodied in the artist: the poet, the dancer, the actor, and the rock star bear witness to the constant other who lives within us. In reaction to the commercial bombardment of global culture, with its extreme, sensational sexual stereotypes, many young people have adopted more androgynous or unisex styles and attitudes, both as a fashion statement and as a mode of conscious behavior.

In a sense, then, androgyny activates and celebrates the full spectrum of human possibilities. Few people fit a completely male or completely female norm—most range along a continuum of body types, talents, and concerns. Restriction of human work and human dreams to stringent sex roles could entail a real loss of evolutionary capacity. Twenty-first-century technology—such as space travel, computer networks, biospheres, and microsurgery—requires patient precision and bold decision making, that is, androgynous skills. The astronaut is not "male" or "female" but a heroic, though fragile, human being floating in space. The globe will be—in fact, it already is—crowded and beset by problems of scarce, polluted resources confronting burgeoning populations. Such a planet cannot sustain the continuous aggression, repression, forced breeding, and warfare that characterize, as Margaret Mead and other anthropologists have documented, those cultures that depend on fixed sex roles (that is, the denial of androgyny) as their rationale. Our species' survival might well require universal retraining in the ancient gynandrous art of experiencing the other as oneself.

See Also

ANDROCENTRISM; BUTCH/FEMME; GODDESS; HETEROSEXUALITY; HYPERMASCULINITY; LESBIANISM; MOTHER EARTH; OTHER; SEX AND CULTURE; SEXUAL ORIENTATION

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Barbara Mor

ANGER

In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Virginia Woolf argued that women should not dwell on their anger at male treatment of womankind, because anger consumes women's productive energies by "reflecting men at twice their natural size," in Woolf's own phrase. Her argument is that such anger "centers" men. More recent feminist analysis has taken an apparently very different stance, seeing anger as women's legitimate response to injustice and oppression and also, more important, as the dynamics of change, both individual and societal, because it motivates and propels feminist action. Slogans like "angry women," "take back the night," and more recently "zero tolerance" are public expressions of feminist anger at male violence that are designed to bring to public consciousness both male violence and women's knowledge of and active and organized opposition to this violence. Woolf's comments were directed toward anger experienced and understood as an uncontrollable and directionless force, one turned inward toward the self rather than outward toward the delineation of the sources and substance of power and evil; by contrast, Woolf had no reservations about writing in the white heat of rage against fascism in *Three Guineas* (1938). Woolf's position actually has much in common with feminist theorizing about emotions (for example, Jaggar, 1989; Lorde, 1981), which sees emotions as culturally proscribed in content and definition and as capable of rational expression, redirection, and use.

See Also

PSYCHOLOGY: OVERVIEW; SOCIALIZATION

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Liz Stanley

ANIMAL RIGHTS

Animal rights is a specific philosophical argument—that animals possess rights, including the right not to be harmed—as a well as the general term for the movement to end the exploitation of animals by people. The animal rights movement targets the main forms of animal exploitation—eating, wearing, exhibiting, and experimenting on animals. Women have been prominent in this movement; there is a long tradition of women evidencing concern for the treatment of animals (see Donovan in Donovan and Adams, 1995), and attention to the issue continues to grow. However, animal rights has not been central to contemporary feminism, nor has the animal rights movement necessarily reflected feminist commitments.

Historical Background

Several feminist theorists associate women's oppression with animal exploitation. A few argue that matriarchy preceded patriarchy and that its overthrow—due in part to a change in humans' relationships with the other animals—enabled both women's and animals' oppression. Peggy Sanday correlates male domination with animal-based economies and concludes that gatherer societies were egalitarian. The feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether establishes a connection between the domestication of animals, the development of urban centers, the creation of slavery, and the creation of the inequality of the sexes. One ecofeminist has speculated that patriarchal religion itself resulted from the guilt of killing animals for food. Others proposed that after the domestication of animals, it was the breeding of animals that suggested the idea of controlling women's reproductivity (see Mason, 1993). Feminists have noted that the first reproductive technologies, such as embryo transfer, were developed as part of the cattle industry and then transferred to women (see Corea, 1986). Theoretically, western cultures have equated women, children, animals, and "the natural" with one another and with the body—which was devalued, if not repudiated (see Adams, 1994).

Historically, animal rights arguments appeared as part of the revolutionary fervor in the United Kingdom during the 1790s, when support of the French Revolution, antislavery activism, and animal rights were seen to be interconnected. Again, in the 1890s and the following decade, in both Great Britain and the United States, connections were made among pacifist, temperance, suffragist, vegetarian, antivivisection, and trade union activists (see Adams, 2000; Lansbury, 1985). Contemporary feminists consider animal activism part of a progressive agenda. Feminist theoreticians are developing a cross-cultural ethics that identifies how sexism, racism, and specisim interact. They challenge the hyperrationalistic philosophical language of rights, arguing that it arises from a male-identified concept of an autonomous, separate individual.

Many women in the western tradition have an ethical history that is rooted in culturally prescribed practices of caring. Part of this history is an active concern about animals. Josephine Donovan suggests that the eighteenth-century emphasis on sentiment, associated with the appearance of numerous women writers, paved the intellectual ground for the appearance of animal rights, in the nineteenth century (Donovan in Donovan and Adams, 1995).

Women have composed the majority in many animal welfare groups. Animal advocacy has often been belittled because of this association with women: Spinoza argued that opposing animal exploitation was "womanish" (see Adams, 1994). During the nineteenth century, when most antivivisectionists were women, the movement was called "illogical" and "emotional." Meanwhile, women's claims on behalf of themselves were ridiculed by equating women with animals. For instance, the philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was dismissively parodied in *Vindication of the Rights of Brutes.*

Historically, the ideological justification for women's alleged inferiority was made by associating them with animals: women's bodies supposedly impaired their rationality. Since most western theorists construed rationality as the defining requirement for membership in the moral community, women—along with men of color and animals—who were seen as less able to transcend their bodies, were long excluded.

At least three responses to the historical alignment of women and animals have appeared in feminist theory. The first argues against identifying women with animals, asserting that women are rational—*like* men and *unlike* animals; the second argues that feminist theory has nothing to do with animals; and the third affirms the identification of women with animals, insisting that feminist theory must engage itself with the status and treatment of the other animals. Those who take this third position argue, for instance, that activism by women on behalf of animals arises: (1) from identification with victimized animals (see, for instance, the discussion by Lansbury, 1985, for early twentieth-century women's activism); (2) from empathy for the suffering of another being; and (3) as a part of an understanding of the interlocking systems of oppression that organize the world (and the oppressed) by gender, race, class, and species. Thus, some feminists argue that animal advocacy is a necessary extension of feminist insights, while simultaneously refusing to adopt the terminology of "righrs."

The Feminist Animal Rights Argument

Since the 1970s feminists in the United States and the United Kingdom have articulated several central premises regarding the position of animals. (1) The oppression of women and animals is interconnected; women will not be free unless animals are free as well. (2) Violence against animals is one aspect of patriarchal culture—arising within and receiving legitimation from the way male sexual identity is constituted. For instance, eating animals enacts and symbolizes male dominance. (3) Feminism is a transformative philosophy that embraces the amelioration of life on Earth for all life-forms and challenges all forms of oppression; thus feminists must refuse to participate in or benefit from violence against animals. (4) Species, like gender, race, and class, is socially constructed and should not be the basis on which ethical decisions rest. These arguments constitute one aspect of ecofeminist thought, sometimes called "animal ecofeminism" (Gaard, 1998).

Insights into Feminist Issues from Animal Ecofeminism

Animal ecofeminism joins a variety of discussions in feminist theory, offering its own distinctive interpretation. For instance, while antipornography feminists in the United States must contend with the question of the encroachment on freedom of speech from legislation that addresses the harms of pornography, animal rights activists have had their speech curbed by "hunter harassment" laws passed by Congress and various states. (Thus pornography remains protected speech, but talking to hunters while they hunt or warning the animals is not protected speech.) Meanwhile, although sexual harassment has been a contested area, in part because of the question of defining harassment, hunter harassment bills have not faced such scrutiny. Maria Comninou argues that "those in power make and interpret the laws to suit their purposes" (Adams and Donovan, 1995: 128), and that this can be seen when we analyze such laws with the interests of both animals and women in mind.

Animal ecofeminists argue that falsely generic words (such as *man* and *mankind*) that give men full human status must be analyzed in tandem with animal pejoratives for women (*catty, bitch, sow, shrew, dog, chick, cow*). Joan Dunayer observes that "Applying images of denigrated nonhuman species to women labels women inferior and available for abuse; attaching images of the aggrandized human species to men designates them superior and entitled to exploit" (Adams and Donovan, 1995: 11).

Feminist philosophers raise feminist questions in science; animal ecofeminist scholars raise questions about animals in feminism. Lynda Birke and Barbara Noske specifically argue that while feminist analyses of patriarchal science reject biological determinism for women, they do so by relying on overgeneralized and inaccurate ideas—fostered by patriarchal science—of "animals" as well as "humans," thus tacitly accepting biological determinism and female and male stereotypes for animals (see Birke, 1994; Noske, 1997).

Violence toward animals is a central aspect of much sexual violence against women and children, including incest, woman battering, and marital rape. Carol Adams explains that antiviolence interventions and theories will be inadequate if they ignore the control perpetrators gain by violence toward animals loved by the victims (see Adams, 1994: 144–61; and Adams and Donovan, 1995: 55–84).

Feminist Insights into the Status of Animals

Just as incorporating the status of animals into feminist analyses enhances these analyses, so, animal ecofeminist argue, a feminist analysis is required to understand the current treatment and maltreatment of animals. Basically, various analyses hold that a patriarchal culture feminizes animal victims. For instance, Karen Davis argues that the reason farm animals have been neglected by the environmental movement is that they are "creatures whose lives appear too slavishly, too boringly, too stupidly female, too 'cowlike' " (Adams and Donovan, 1995: 196). Marti Kheel, founder of Feminists for Animal Rights, argues that the reason hunting has been defended in some environmental writings is that it is associated with male self-identity (Adams and Donovan, 1995: 85–125). Carol Adams (2000) proposes that vegetarianism is opposed in patriarchal cultures because of the sexual politics of meat, in which meat eating is associated with virility and seen as symbolic of masculinity; vegetarianism, on the contrary, is seen as feminine.

Debates about the Status of Animals in the Feminist Movement

Feminist perspectives on the condition of animals are just beginning to emerge around the world. Until very recently, animal ecofeminists wrote mainly in the United States or the United Kingdom and clearly represented a western approach. International dialogue on the subject is beginning and includes, in part, German, Italian, and Japanese translations of some American works. In addition, with the proliferation of U.S.-based transnational corporations in other parts of the world (especially fast-food restaurants that specialize in hamburgers), many of the issues raised by western animal ecofeminists, especially issues concerning the health and environmental consequences of animal agriculture, increasingly apply to more cultures.

Animal ecofeminism is far from being a settled issue within feminist theory and activism; indeed it often provokes contention. This is due in part to the apparent sexism of the animal rights movement in both its leadership and its attitudes toward women. For instance, the antifur campaign, in its targeting of women as consumers, may be thought of as countenancing harassment of women on the street. Feminists may fear that successes with animal rights pave the way for human fetal rights. Some feminists worry about whether a pluralistic feminism should hold what appear to be absolute positions on animal-related issues. Argumenrs for vegetarianism, for instance, are sometimes viewed as restrictive or legislative. Animal ecofeminists, on the other hand, argue for a pluralistic feminism that includes concern for other animals and contend that animal advocacy, by exposing the anthropocentrism of the antiaborrion movement, actually bolsters the arguments for reproductive choice (Adams, 1994: 55–70).

The unique perspective animal ecofeminism brings to the issue of environmental concerns and feminism is its focus on the contested idea of "animals." For instance, this article has followed conventional English usage in its discussion of animals; that is, accepting the idea that the word *animal* applies to all creatures excepr human beings. But animal ecofeminists argue that this language masks people's own animal status. They argue that until people confront their own animality, their "membership in animalkind" (Adams and Donovan, 1995: 23), they will endorse a strict—but false—boundary between animals and humans that upholds institutionalized and individual maltreatment of the other animals while providing a conceptual foundation for other forms of oppression.

See Also

ECOFEMINISM; ETHICS: FEMINIST; FURS; HUMAN RIGHTS; HUNTING; VEGETARIANISM

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Carol J. Adams

ANOREXIA NERVOSA

There are well-documented instances of religious ascetics suffering from anorexia nervosa in the mid-thirteenth century, and the first medical description was written as early as 1694 by Richard Morton, a doctor in London. Morton had observed patients with symptoms of an unfamiliar disorder: they felt no hunger and had lost a great deal of weight but seemed unconcerned about this. Today, it is generally believed that anorexics do experience hunger but resist it; however, Morton made several astute observations that are still used to diagnose anorexia nervosa: emaciation, amenorrhea (cessation of menstruation), preoccupation with food, and observance of many rituals related to eating and food. Other fundamental characteristics of anorexics include a strong drive to be thin, with self-esteem being closely tied to weight and shape; preoccupation with weight, body image, and eating; severe weight loss or, in young girls, failure to gain weight at critical developmental stages; and, often, a skewed or unrealistic perception of one's own body, usually referred to as "distorted body image."

Before the 1960s there was not a great deal of interest in studying or writing about eating disorders, and until the 1980s the sociocultural analysis of these disorders—which is now the prevailing approach—hardly existed. During the 1980s, awareness of eating disorders heightened and researchers and others began to think of them more in terms of the societal milieu. Anorexia nervosa is now recognized as a significant problem and is the subject of much research and literature; this entry can provide only a brief introduction to what has become a vast, complex, and multifaceted topic.

Diagnostic criteria for anorexia nervosa have been specified by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) in its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,* indicating that this disorder is considered to be psychological. The criteria include percentage of body weight lost. It is interesting to note that between 1980, when the third edition of the manual (DSM-III) was published, and 1987, when it was revised as DSM-III-R, the weight loss necessary to make a diagnosis of anorexia nervosa was lowered from 25 percent to 15 percent of total body weight. A fourth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* was published in 1994. According to DSM-IV, anorexia nervosa is most prevalent in western and developed nations where food abounds and women feel pressure to be thin.

Anorexia nervosa was once seen as a white, upper-middle-class disorder, but today it appears to be on the rise in all racial groups and all social classes. A typical sequence begins with dieting and reasonable weighr loss, which in the short run boosts self-esteem but then develops into more and more stringent dieting, eventually progressing to self-starvation, emaciation, and in some cases death.

Although the risk factors for anorexia nervosa are highly individualized, certain important factors are well known. The greatest risk factor is being female: 90 percent of anorectics are girls and women. The second-largest factor is being young: the average age of onset is 17. Studies have found that women in careers that emphasize thinness—such as dancing and modeling—are also at a high risk of anorexia nervosa. Female athletes in general are at risk, and those in sports where leanness is considered essential, such as gymnastics and figure skating, are particularly vulnerable. (In fact, a *female athlete triad* of three related disorders—anorexia and, as a result, amenorrhea and osteoporosis—has been identified.) Some studies have found evidence of a genetic predisposition to anorexia nervosa. It has also been found that there is a disproportionately high incidence of eating disorders in girls whose mothers are obese.

In western societies, a distorted body image is typically associated with anorexia nervosa: anorectics see themselves as fat even when they are alarmingly thin and wasted. However, anorexics in certain cultures may not have a distorted perception of their body shape and may report different reasons for not wishing to eat, such as stomachaches, indigestion, or dislike of food.

Treatment of anorexia nervosa usually combines medical, pscyhological, and nutritional interventions; these vary according to the seriousness of the patient's condition and range up to hospitalization and tube-feeding for those in imminent danger of death. At presenr, the outcome of treatment is by no means certain: probably only about half of those treated can be expected to recover fully; among the others there may be some or very little improvement, and relapse is common. Moreover, many anorectics never receive treatment at all, because denial is typical and help is not sought. Many people consider prevention a better approach, but there are as yet few systematic preventive programs—and many societies, meanwhile, continue to equate thinness with beauty, attractiveness, and even health, making preventive efforts very difficult.

See Also

ADVERTISING; BODY; BULIMIA NERVOSA; EATING DISORDERS; EXERCISE AND FITNESS; FOOD AND CULTURE; IMAGES OF WOMEN: OVERVIEW; PSYCHOLOGY: SOCIAL

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Meredith Nachman

ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology is the discipline that seeks to explain cross-cultural variation in human behavior, and it takes as its subject matter the span of human cultural behavior across time and space, focusing traditionally—although not exclusively—on social groups that do not or did not maintain written records. Variation among contemporary cultural forms is studied through methods and theory of sociocultural anthropology, while archaeology is used to reconstruct the prehistories of these traditions. In addition, biological anthropologists investigate the synergistic relationship between human cultural behavior and biology through the lens of evolutionary biology. Hence the temporal scope of anthropology ranges over at least 4 million years of evolutionary history, the time period in which the first direct human ancestors appear in the fossil record and the first evidence of cultural behavior is recorded in the systematic manufacture of stone tools (ca. 2.5 million years ago). Conforming to the challenges posed by its diverse subject matter, anthropology's methods and theories embrace modes of analysis that range freely among the humanistic, social scientific, and scientific. Feminist studies within anthropology similarly assume this wide range of intellectual positions, rendering anthropological work on gender relations unique in its ability to access and synthesize or juxtapose diverse intellectual standpoints. Under the heading of this one discipline is an array of subjects, methods, and explanations—including everything from analysis of gender relations in primate societies (used as models for early hominids' social life) through reconstruction of women's activities and roles in now extinct societies to the study of women as active agents in the construction of social relations of power within a specific cultural setting. Although there has been a good deal of cross-fertilization among feminist researchers working in the various subfields of anthropology, the timing and historical development of their work have been quite different.

In its aspiration to represent and explain the range of variation in human cultural behavior, anthropology has always made a place for accounts of women's activities. Indeed, the intellectual framework of anthropology's founding traditions as practiced through the 1950s required that descriptions of women's activities and roles be included in ethnographies. In the tradition of the British structural-functional school, which emphasized the complementary functioning of the structural components of a stable social whole, women's roles were consistently described in accounts of the kinship and marriage structures understood to be the primary structures of social integration in nonwestern societies. Women's work, however, was less uniformly considered in functionalist descriptions of subsistence or economic activity, and women were almost never incorporated into accounts of ritual and politics. Similarly, the culture historical approach espoused by Boasian anthropologists in the United States required documentation of women's roles within cultural wholes that were the object of description and reconstruction. Boas encouraged and sponsored a number of women fieldworkers among the native cultures of the southwestern United States, where their charge was to gather information on "women's affairs," a task for which Boas assumed they were uniquely suited. Margaret Mead—undoubtedly the most famous of Boas's students—set out to study "sex roles" specifically, and through her fieldwork in Samoa in the 1930s was the first scholar to document the role of culture in determining gender roles and personalities. Mead's work added weight to the early feminist argument that gender is culturally constructed rather than innate.

Anthropological theory of the 1960s grew out of and sought to deepen insights gained in these formative years. Three major schools of thought came to dominate investigation in this era, and these tended to split the explanation of human behavioral variability between either mentalist-idealist or materialist causality. The structuralism of Levi-Strauss and the symbolic anthropology of Clifford Geertz constituted the former approach. Structuralists centered their efforts on understanding variability in human behavior through the apprehension of underlying structuring cultural principles expressed as dualisms encoded in myth and ritual; symbolic anthropologists sought to penetrate the cultural meaning embodied in public symbols. Opposed to these two schools of thought was cultural ecology, representing the materialist school of thought that sought to explain variation in culture as a result of human cultural adaptation to specific environmental settings. Although strikingly different in method and underlying assumptions, all of these theoretical structures shared in the perspective that social actors were passively shaped by cultural forms. In this context the contributions of early "prefeminist" women anthropologists were overshadowed by theoretical positions that either ignored or made unwarranted assumptions about gender. That is, gender could be ignored because it was irrelevant to understanding either the public myth and ritual assumed to be the domain of men or the process of adaptation, again dominated by male subsistence activity. Alternatively, where gender demanded treatment, explanations were underwritten by assumptions about gender structures mirroring middle- and upper-class western culture that were supposedly based on "natural" differences between women and men and therefore common to all cultures. This context confronted emergent feminist anthropology of the 1970s.

Feminist anthropologists of the 1970s, drawing inspiration from the widespread intellectual and social ferment of the period, cast the male-biased assumptions underlying this knowledge structure into relief and began the process of challenging and replacing them. Resurrecting the work of Mead, these scholars first began documenting variability in women's experiences across cultures. Questioning earlier theoretical models that assumed a peripheral position for women in social relations, new ethnographies were written that put the female subject at the center of examination or action. At the same time that these data on women's lives in traditional societies began to accumulate, a coherent picture of gender asymmetry across cultures began to emerge, and this became the dominant issue for the feminist discourse of the 1970s: how to account for the nearly universal or historically developed subordination of women, even as it was apparent that women's roles and their individual power or autonomy varied considerably in different cultures.

Several lines of thought were developed to address this issue, and this body of work came to be identified as the "anthropology of women." One school of thought, taking its inspiration from newly revived Marxist thinking in anthropology, sought to explain women's status on the basis of transformations of the material conditions of life. Here the central arguments were mounted by Karen Sacks and Eleanor Leacock, who proposed that women in foraging and early horticultural societies enjoyed egalitarian relationships with men, based primarily on their relatively equal contribution to subsistence. Structures of male dominance, in turn, came into play with the social stratification and privatization of kinship associated with the rise of the state and the spread of capitalism through colonialism. Hence the universal subordination of women is more an artifact of world economic structures than a "natural" condition. Another formative position was mapped out at this time by Michelle Rosaldo, who argued that women's roles in childbearing and child rearing associated them with the domestic and private spheres in all societies. To the degree that the public and private may be separate spheres of influence in any given society, this separation provides the basis for hierarchical valuing and dominance of men over women's affairs in the public arena. While Rosaldo's formulation incorporated both symbolic and institutional factors, Sherry Ortner offered another key to understanding women's status that followed from the structuralist paradigm, suggesting that women are conceptualized worldwide as natural, while men are associated with culture. This dichotomous categorization then accounts for women's devalued position relative to men, who are the possessors and creators of the cultural phenomena that dominate and transcend nature. Here again the variability in arguments should not obscure a basic similarity in all of these approaches to the study of women; they search for key structures that allow systematic cross-cultural comparison and explain women's status within that framework.

Related issues were engaged within biological anthropology during this period, and these debates both crosscut and drew inspiration from work going on in sociocultural anthropology. Like their colleagues in sociocultural anthropology, feminists in biological anthropology began their critique with direct challenges to models of primate society and, by extension, reconstructions of early hominid society that rested on androcentric assumptions. Central to this critique was the issue of the accuracy of Sherwood Washburn and Irven DeVore's model of baboon behavior that featured the organizing axis of baboon society as a stable male dominance hierarchy. According to this model, baboon social groups consisted of a few powerful, central males that aggressively controlled the behavior (especially mating patterns) of a set of physically weaker females and their dependent offspring. From this form of organization, females were thought to gain protection for themselves and their young in a dangerous savannah environment, while the dominant males gained exclusive mating rights. Since human ancestors evolved in the savannah environment and this particular form of social organization was interpreted as an adaptation to this environment, it was a short step to conclude that early hominids were likely to have been organized on similar principles. Thus emerged the "man the hunter" model of early hominid social organization in which a core group of male hunters who provided meat and physical protection to a their female mates and dependent young were cast as the central and distinctive feature of hominid social life. All other features of hominid social life and indeed biology were then considered to be the result of various selective forces acting on this male-dominated base.

Feminist challenges to these models took two related forms. Within primatology, Washburn and Devore's model of baboon social organization was first called into question by the work of Thelma Rowell throughout the late 1960s and into the 1970s. Through her painstaking longitudinal studies that paid equal attention to the activities of females and males, Rowell was able to demonstrate that a stable male hierarchy was an artifact of short-term observation of more noticeable male behavior patterns. Her observations uncovered instead a primate society in which baboon mothers and their offspring (particularly daughters) constituted the stable core of a social group resident within a particular range, while adult males moved among these groups. By 1980, Jeanne Altman—following a similar field observation strategy—was able to demonstrate that the knowledge of range and social history possessed by females residing in a troop over relatively long periods of time could be translated into social power. Finally, Barbara Smuts, working into the 1980s, enhanced this alternative model by demonstrating a lack of correspondence between reproductive success and dominance among male baboons. She postulated insread that male "friends" (in other words, those individuals with learned social skills and maturity) were most frequently soliciced as mates by females. In these alternative models of baboon society females were moved from subordination to being key social acrors.

Even as these studies were being conducted, Adrienne Zihlman and Nancy Tanner offered their "woman the gatherer" challenge to the "man the hunter" model of human evolution. Specifically rejecting the traditional model of baboon social organization, Zihlman and Tanner turned to the then available data on chimpanzees that suggested the centrality of the mother-offspring relationship and female mate choice in the social organization of our closest primate relatives. Using this alternative primate model and data from the fossil record and contemporary foraging peoples, Zihlman and Tanner proposed that women's gathering activities and the tools associated with them, coupled with food sharing among related females and their offspring, formed the basis for human social life. Various selective forces acting upon this set of hominid behaviors were then keys to determining the human evolutionary path. Far from leaving women on the fringes of the human evolutionary process, the "woman the gatherer" model placed women at the center.

The body of work produced by feminist anthropologists up through the 1970s thus successfully integrated women into the study of human culture and demonstrated the necessity of documenting women's experiences in coming to a more accurate depiction of human cultural and biological variability. But it did so by simply inserting women or women's perspectives into anthropology's then-reigning theoretical constructs. It was soon discovered that this approach to studying women had two major drawbacks. First, it resulted in an anthropology where one simply did traditional anthropology but added women into the mix. This has been called the "add women and stir" approach to the study of gender, and it fostered the ghettoization of women's studies within anthropology. Second, by failing to question the constructs that we use to study gender, this approach ended up seeing the male-female matrix as the most important domain for understanding women's lives. Single or "key" variables were sought that might explain differences in, for example, women's status. This approach masked the variability among women, and it is the redress of these shortcomings that has absorbed the most recent feminist anthropology.

As sociocultural anthropology as moved into a self-reflective, postmodern critique of its underlying assumptions and operating principles, feminists moved in a parallel direction and, some would argue, even led the dialogue. Central to this movement has been the understanding that categories we use to describe other cultures are in themselves constructs of our own culture and knowledge system that enforce a potentially misleading categorization on cultural others. Thus when a scholar studying the anthropology of women makes an assertion about "women's status among the X," he or she assumes the unchanging reality of three variables: women, status, and population X. The feminist anthropology of the 1980s sought to address such categorization by emphasizing the historical contingency of all three variables. Thus gender was emphasized as an embedded construct sensitive to the historical trajectory of social, political, and economic contexts in any given society. So also did concepts like "status" and a historically unchanging and definable population come into question as each social group under study came to be understood as the momentary product of its own unique history. Within this reformulated structure, the meaning and implications of gender must be explored rather than presumed, and this exploration must take place in relation to other key cultural variables. Hence gender becomes intimately linked to other analytical concepts, such as the social relations of production, and constitutes a critical analytical concept for all cultural studies. It then becomes just as important to understand differences among women in their relation to other cultural features as it is to understand differences between males and females, and understanding gender constructs is another key for apprehending cultural difference.

Parallel understandings percolated through biological anthropology over the same time period. In primatology, the construct of dominance hierarchy has been increasingly eschewed for an understanding (derived primarily from the baboon work discussed above) that primates live in a complex web of social interactions in which varying contexts will lead to differential expressions of dominance as individuals predict and manipulate interactions to attain specific and shifting goals. So also has it become clear from rapidly accumulating primate studies of female activity patterns that there is a great deal of variability in behavior that cannot be neatly subsumed under simplistic gendered dichotomies. Hence among primates as well, a new call has been issued to study variability across individual life spans and troop histories. The field of evolutionary biology has also responded to such insights, and beginning from the proposition that human females should have evolved a reproductive biology attuned to protecting offspring, has begun to study specialized and varying female patterns of growth, development, and psychological and behavioral adjustment across the life span in response to reproductive status. In short, the category of "female" is no longer invariant and essential in biological anthropology, just as the construction of gender has been substituted for "women" in sociocultural anthropology.

Despite these advances in allied subdiciplines, it was not until the mid-1980s that archaeologists finally sought to incorporate systematically understandings of gender into their reconstructions of past human societies. As early work in this area pointed out, archaeology has not been silent on the gender issue in its traditional reconstructions; rather, unexamined androcentric models stemming from contemporary western ideals sneaked into the description of past human society. Thus there was a brief flurry of "remedial" work in which feminist archaeologists identified the ways in which male bias has colored our readings of the past and the female perspective might be inserted. Borrowing perspectives from colleagues in sociocultural anthropology, feminist archaeologists moved quickly beyond this type of work and sought to redefine how we write and think about the past so as to make gender part of an overall interpretive shift. Contextual archaeology, introduced in European archaeology of the 1980s, became an initial attractive home for feminist perspectives, emphasizing the necessity of tracking and describing the development of particular past cultural contexts and the worldview that informed them. Here gendered constructs could be construed as one of the key attributes of cultural traditions. The Americanist tradition experimented with alternative narrative form that eschewed the supposedly neutral voice of the male scientist and introduced the explicitly female voice of past cultural participants. Conceptual categories were also called into question, as feminist archaeologists have attempted to move beyond the gender essentialism inherent in reconstructions of origins of particular cultural practices or institutions such as plant domestication, female subordination, or the state. Thus, though late to the debate, archaeology has quickly adopted contemporary understandings of gender constructs from feminist research and stands to reshape the discipline in significant ways.

As feminist anthropology develops, it is likely that the pattern of increased dialogue across the subdisciplines will continue, and a disciplinary understanding may emerge so that it will no longer be possible to study the category of "woman" in isolation. Rather, gender constructs will be understood as a basic organizing principle of human experience that must be accommodated in any adequate account of human biological and cultural variability.

See Also

ARCHAEOLOGY; CULTURE: OVERVIEW; EVOLUTION

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ANTIDISCRIMINATION

Discrimination may be defined as a denial of equal enjoyment of rights. From the 1960s the resurgent women's movement focused attention on the prevalence of discrimination based on sex and marital status. The women's movement demanded antidiscrimination measures similar to those already being introduced around the world as a result of the 1965 United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Legislation forbidding sex discrimination was passed by many countries in the 1970s, particularly as a result of the momentum created by International Women's Year (IWY) in 1975 and the UN Decade for Women (1976–1985). The World Plan of Action adopted at the IWY Conference in Mexico City placed special emphasis both on government machinery to advance the status of women and on antidiscrimination legislation. Such legislation usually prohibited both direct discrimination (less favorable treatment or unfavorable treatment because of sex or marital status) and indirect discrimination (employment requirements such as continuity of service, which, although apparently neutral, have a disparate impact because women are more likely to have interrupted work histories).

As can be seen from the above description of indirect discrimination, sameness of treatment or "facial" neutrality does not necessarily mean the absence of discrimination. Nor is it necessary for discrimination to be intentional (this applies to direct as well as indirect discrimination). The concept of indirect discrimination as incorporated in much recent antidiscrimination legislation has its origin in a U.S. Supreme Court case of 1971, *Griggs* v. *Duke Power Co.* The Court found in this case that requiring a high school education or a certain minimum score on an intelligence quotient (IQ) test as a criterion for recruitment or promotion was discriminatory in effect against the black complainant and could not be defended as directly job-related. The court determined that the legal proscription of discrimination in the Civil Rights Act extended to "practices that are fair in form but discriminatory in operation."

Similarly, it is now widely recognized that apparently gender-neutral requirements may discriminate in effect against women. In 1984, in *Holmes* v. *the Home Office,* it was found under the U.K. Sex Discrimination Act that the refusal to make part-time work available to the complainant after return from maternity leave constituted indirect discrimination, and the Home Office had failed to justify its requirement for full-time hours. (Discriminatory requirements may be defended as a business necessity and therefore as reasonable in the circumstances.) The concept of indirect discrimination involves recognition that relevant "differences" such as women's reproductive role or their role as primary carers must be accommodated if equal opportunity is to be achieved—that is, women's full enjoyment of the right to paid work.

The concept of indirect discrimination has also been accepted in the interpretation of the guarantees of equality in the Canadian constitution. In 1989, in the pathbreaking *Andrews* case, the Supreme Court of Canada adopted a disadvantage test to establish whether discrimination had taken place. The test requires examining whether the claimant is a member of a group that has experienced persistent disadvantage on the basis of personal characteristics, and, if so, whether the measure in question continues or worsens that disadvantage. The Supreme Court of Canada was the first court in the world to use the test of social disadvantage when interpreting constitutional guarantees of equality (Mahoney, 1994).

A narrower test but one with a similar effect was applied by the High Court of Australia in 1989 in the *Australian Iron and Steel (AIS)* case. AIS had for many years discriminated against women, but thanks to an earlier case had started recruiting them. Soon after, during a recession, AIS began dismissing workers, according to the traditional "last on, first off" rule. The High Court found that the application of this rule, while facially neutral, had the effect of compounding and perpetuating the discrimination the women had experienced in the past at AIS.

In addition to prohibiting direct and indirect discrimination, antidisctimination legislation characteristically has a "special measures" exemprion, which excludes measures designed to promote equality or to overcome disadvantages arising from characteristics such as sex or marital status. Unfortunately, special measures exemptions have often been very narrowly interpreted by the courts when men have brought complaints of being discriminated against by "women-only" programs. Another exemption that routinely forms part of such legislation covers special measures for the protection of maternity. Other characteristic exemptions are for situations where sex is a "bona fide occupational qualificarion."

Later legislation often prohibited unwelcome sexual conduct, particularly in the workplace or in educational institutions, where the victim might reasonably feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated. The American feminist Catharine MacKinnon argued in *The Sexual Harassment of Working Women* (1979) that sexual harassment was a form of sex discrimination, an argument subsequently accepted by courts. She was largely responsible for "naming" this phenomenon, which earlier generations of women had thought was just called life. She later commented (1987) that the experience of providing legal remedies for sexual harassment suggested that legal initiatives designed from women's real experience of violations could make a difference. Her attempt (together with Andrea Dworkin) to construe pornography as a form of sex discrimination proved more controversial, both with civil libertarians and with many feminists.

Discrimination based on sexual orientation is not explicitly included in the international instruments relating to sex discrimination (or in domestic legislation closely tied to such international instruments), and same-sex relations are not protected by marital status provisions. Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or sex of partner may, however, be proscribed in omnibus antidiscrimination or equal opportunity legislation. A considerable amount of antidiscrimination legislation is of this omnibus character—for example, prohibiting discrimination on a range of grounds such as sex, race, disability, age, and sexual preference. Complaints of discrimination on more than one ground (for example, sex and race or age and sex) may be handled under such legislation.

There has been debate over the relative merits of omnibus and specialized legislation regarding sex discrimination, but in both cases prohibition of sex-related forms of discrimination such as sexual harassment became more detailed and specific in the 1980s as a result of both accumulated case law and legislative amendments. One area that became important was discrimination based on "demeanor"—that is, discrimination resulting from stereotyped expectations of gender-appropriate behavior and double standards.

As we shall see below, discrimination on the grounds of family responsibilities (or parental or career status) was frequently added to antidiscrimination legislation. Other grounds made explicit in different Australian jurisdictions in the 1990s included potential pregnancy (in addition to pregnancy, breast feeding, the identity of a spouse, and occupation (the last to protect sex workers).

Antidiscrimination legislation is usually complaint-based and oriented toward providing remedies for discrimination that has already occurred. Critics have pointed out that the onus for reform is thus placed on the victims of discrimination, and little impact is made on forms of systemic discrimination such as the sex segregation of the labor market and the undervaluing of women's work (for example, Thornton, 1990). Class actions and government funding of public interest advocacy are two ways in which the disadvantages of complaint-based legislation can be mitigated. Class actions have been most common in the United States, where contingent fees are available as an incentive for lawyers to take on such litigation. The Canadian Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) was established by feminist lawyers in 1985 to help women exercise their constitutional equality rights. LEAF has received substantial public as well as private funding and has been involved in more than 100 test cases.

Nonetheless, complaint-based approaches have definite limitations as a means of achieving social reform. Recognition of these limitations led to increased emphasis on affirmative action—known as "positive action" in Europe and "employment equity" in Canada. Affirmative action places the onus on employers to identify sources of direct, indirect, or systemic discrimination within their organizations and to develop programs involving a series of steps to remove barriers and achieve measurable improvement. Typically such programs involve allocation of management responsibility; appointment of an action officer; consultation; the production of relevant statistics, strategies, timetables and targets; and monitoring, evaluation, and reporting mechanisms.

The term *equal employment opportunity* (EEO) is also used, as here, for such voluntary or legislated programs, although EEO is the hoped-for outcome rather than the means of achieving it. The term *affirmative action* has been associated with pioneering measures in the United States and, to a lesser extent, in Canada, and with the remedial imposition of numerical quotas by their courts—seen by critics as "reverse discrimination." Controversy over the nature and effectiveness of the EEO approach is examined later in this article.

EEO programs tackle issues such as the distribution of women in organizations and the training, staff development, and promotional opportunities available to them. Recruitment practices and promotion criteria as well as the criteria used in job classification and performance appraisal are examined for gender bias. EEO programs also try to tackle broader issues of organizational culture, including the accommodation of family responsibilities and forms of work-based harassment or exclusion. Mentoring systems are sometimes developed for women or members of other disadvantaged groups so that they can become familiar with the unwritten rules of the organization.

The need for affirmative action was confirmed by the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted in 1979 after more than a decade's work by the Commission on the Status of

Women. The Convention does not prohibit differential treatment on the basis of sex, but only differential treatment adverse to women's equal enjoyment of human rights. In 1988 the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the body responsible for monitoring implementation of the Convention, recommended that "States Parties make more use of temporary special measures such as positive action, preferential treatment or quota systems to advance women's integration into education, the economy, politics and employment."

The Convention builds on the guarantees of equality and nondiscrimination in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights. It extends the principle of equality into the private as well as the public sphere and deals with sexist attitudes as well as discriminatory actions. Topics covered include the elimination of stereotyped concepts of the roles of men and women from the education system; recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children; the inalienable right of all human beings to paid work; the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value; and equality of treatment in work evaluation (later spelled out as gender-neutral criteria for job evaluation). The Convention requires that the principle of the equality of men and women and their equal enjoyment of rights and freedoms be embodied in national constitutions as well as in antidiscrimination legislation.

The Convention was signed in 1980 by 53 countries at the opening ceremony of the Mid-Decade UN Women's Conference in Copenhagen, and by February 1994, 131 countries had ratified the Convention. Ratification signals acceptance of an obligation to eliminate discrimination against women by all appropriate means, from antidiscrimination legislation and affirmative action to community education. Reports on implementation of the Convention must be submitted on a four-year cycle.

Despite the apparent readiness to ratify the Convention, there has been controversy over sweeping reservations entered by some countries and debate over whether they are compatible with its object and purpose. The Convention has been subject to more substantive reservations than any other major human rights treaty. Islamic countries have entered reservations over even the general principle of nondiscrimination, on the basis of incompatibility with the Shari'a. Conversely, some countries have not entered reservations but continue to allow violations of women's rights. Despite the important role of CEDAW in setting international standards for women's rights, it has been the poor cousin of the international human rights treaty bodies (Byrnes, 1989). It is the only such body with a limitation (two weeks) placed on its annual meeting time, causing a substantial backlog in consideration of reports. Moreover, the Convention does not provide for CEDAW to receive complaints from individuals, unlike the Racial Discrimination Convention or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

CEDAW has had fewer resources than the other (male-dominated) treaty bodies that have been serviced by the Human Rights Center in Geneva. CEDAW has been serviced by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, based in Vienna, and now in New York, which may have contributed to its marginalization. The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna called for the greater integration of women's rights into the international human rights system.

For a time there was one nongovernmental organization (NGO) focusing on CEDAW—International Women's Rights Action Watch, based at the University of Minnesota. Justice Elizabeth Evatt (1990), when Chair of CEDAW, called for greater involvement by NGOs in supporting the committee's work, in providing independent information to supplement government reports, and in querying government reservations. It is accepted wisdom that the effectiveness of human rights–monitoring bodies depends on such independent sources of information. Ideally, NGO representatives should be present when their country's report is being reviewed and ensure publicity at home for the issues raised.

One development during the 1980s was increased international recognition that violence against women underpins women's subordination, preventing equal participation in public and private life. In 1989 CEDAW issued a recommendation that gender-based violence be covered by the Convention (although not explicitly mentioned in it) and that governments should report on measures taken to prevent it: "Discrimination is most dramatically illustrated by toleration of violence and acceptance of it as a cultural norm." A UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, instigated by Australia and Canada, was adopted by the General Assembly in 1993 and reiterated that "violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position."

Another important development in the 1980s was a focus on the links between paid and unpaid work and the impact of the latter on equal opportunity. The International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva has a history of pioneering antidiscrimination measures, including ILO

Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration (1951) and ILO Convention 111 on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation (1958). The ILO claims that the global trend toward enactment of measures to prohibit sex discrimination may be attributed directly to the impact of these conventions (International Labor Conference, 1993).

The ILO has also led the way on the need for the redesign of paid work to enable men to take up a more equal share of family responsibilities. Convention 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities was adopted in 1981 and together with its accompanying Recommendation superseded the 1965 Recommendation on Women with Family Responsibilities. The preamble refers to the statement in the UN Women's Convention that "a change in the traditional role of men as well as the role of women in society is needed to achieve full equality between men and women." It stressed the need for changes in the terms and conditions of paid work and of social security as well as the provision of community services such as child care to ensure equal opportunity for workers with family responsibilities. The Convention aimed to minimize the conflict between paid work and family responsibilities to exercise their right to paid employment.

Relatively few countries have ratified ILO 156 (20 by December 1993), perhaps because it requires policies enabling men as well as women to combine family responsibilities with paid work. However, a number of countries, including Canada, have adopted policies consonant with ratification (International Labor Conference, 1993). Countries ratifying the Convention, such as most of the Nordic countries and France, the Netherlands, and Australia, have passed legislation prohibiting discrimination in employment on the grounds of family or cater responsibilities and have encouraged employers to adopt "family friendly" policies, such as flexible working hours, reduced hours for parents of young children, career breaks, 48-week years, and help with child care, vacation care, and care for aged family members.

Educational programs undertaken by countries that have ratified ILO 156 have been directed toward raising employers' consciousness of the impact of family responsibilities on employees. They have also been directed toward raising community awareness of the disproportionate share of unpaid work carried by women (in part through time-use studies) and the need for a more equal sharing of the load if equal opportunities are to be achieved.

Another international pressure point for the adoption of antidiscrimination measures has been the European Economic Community (EEC)—now known as the European Union (ECI). Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome, establishing the EEC, required equal pay for men and women; subsequent Council Directives and judgments by the European Court of Justice have strengthened this requirement. Directives have covered areas such as equal treatment in employment, self-employment, and social security, and a minimum standard for paid maternity leave. Community members such as the United Kingdom have had to amend their legislation to conform to community standards. The EEC has also provided financial support to increase access by women to nontraditional jobs, to assist women in setting up small businesses, and to increase the provision of child care facilities and vocational training for child care workers.

There have been a series of Community Action Program to promote equal opportunities for men and women workers and a considerable amount of comparative research and dissemination of best-practice models, including models of positive action in public and private sectors. Current themes include discrimination in job assessment and classification, the concept of indirect discrimination, and the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities (see also the Community Charter of 1989). Community legislation and programs promoting equal opportunity for women have flowed (with a little help from European feminists) from the economic aim enshrined in the Treaty of Rome of preventing any distortion of competition stemming from a lower-paid female workforce.

There has been considerable debate over the introduction of affirmative action EEO programs, particularly in the private sector. These programs have been introduced at a time when the political climate in western countries has been increasingly unfavorable to regulation and government intervention in the economy. This may mean a reluctance on the part of governments to provide adequate sanctions for noncompliance or incentives for compliance. It may also mean depriving EEO agencies of resources, so they are unable to perform their role of ensuring that legislation is implemented.

Research has indicated that political will on the part of governments is an important element in the effectiveness of EEO programs, as is the existence of a political base for EEO personnel, whether provided by trade unions, women's caucuses, EEO practitioner organizations, or strong EEO agencies. Without a base that provides political support and social validation of equity principles, isolated EEO officers are likely to become assimilated to prevailing organizational values. This is in any case believed by some critics to be inevitable, given the management focus of EEO programs, and the need for organizations to "own" their programs and to be convinced that they will contribute to greater productivity or profitability.

EEO programs have also been criticized from other directions. Some equate affirmative acrion for women with violation of the merit principle. This assumes that the existing skewed distribution of the sexes in occupational hierarchies reflects greater merit on the part of men—or greater commitment to paid work, greater competitiveness, greater capacity for leadership, and so on. The way in which merit is constructed is indeed central to EEO, as is the removal of those elements that are more related to homosocial reproduction (like recruiting like) than to job performance (Burton, 1988).

Conservative elements have viewed EEO legislation as a threat to traditional gender roles and to the role of the male as the provider. Women who have chosen to be full-time homemakers have been described as disadvantaged by programs under which their breadwinner is exposed to greater competition from other women. Conservative parties have also fanned resentment at the level of taxation needed to provide community services, which they believe could be provided by women "for nothing" if they were not being encouraged to pursue careers in the paid workforce.

On the other hand, equal opportunity programs have also been criticized for their failure to grapple with issues of class and economic disadvantage and their complicity in maintaining structures of inequality. EEO programs seek not to narrow the gap between top and bottom but rather to remove forms of group closure that prevent individuals from entering nontraditional jobs or rising up the job hierarchy. Such programs do not tackle broader issues of social inequality and may indeed help to legitimize inequality by ensuring that ascriptive criteria such as sex and race do not preclude some individuals from rising to the top, even at the expense of solidarity. Hester Eisenstein (1991) has commented thar letting women in has been found more palatable than letting women's values in.

In general, EEO programs are seen as directed more toward ensuring that women can compete for male jobs than toward improving the conditions and remuneration of female jobs. It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of EEO programs because of the number of other changes simultaneously occurring in the labor market. Greater equity in employment is described by advocates of EEO as contributing to greater productivity, but there is also a fear that employers will switch production—for example, in female process work—to unregulated free-trade zones in the third world.

The adverse impact of economic restructuring on women in both rich and poor countries has been an insistenr theme of recent reports to CEDAW. The cutting of social budgets in the interesr of more "productive investment" has a disparate impact on women and adds to their burdens. So although there is increased sophistication regarding the nature of discrimination and in the provision of legal remedies, there is at the same time an adoption of economic policies that undermine the ability of governments to provide equal opportunity.

See Also

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION; DISCRIMINATION; ECONOMIC STATUS: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS; EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES; EQUITY; NEPOTISM; SEXUAL HARASSMENT; VIOLENCE; WORK: OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

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Marian Sawer

ANTIQUITY

See ANCIENT INDIGENOUS CULTURES: WOMEN'S ROLES; and ANCIENT NATION-STATES: WOMEN'S ROLES.

ANTIRACIST AND CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS

Antiracist and civil rights movements are significant driving forces in contemporary civil society and are central components of the history of worldwide democratic actions. They are often the springboard for other humanitarian movements, connected by ideas, personnel, structures, and forms of activity.

One of the earliest uses of the term *antiracism* follows a world conference in France in the 1930s, which included anticolonial and antifascist mobilizing (Lloyd, 1998). Antiracist movements vary according to national political cultures. British antiracist organizations tend to identify with the responses to the discrimination faced by postwar migrants or with some of the solidarity organizations set up during the period of decolonization. The publications of the Mouvement Contre le Racisme (MRAP), one of the longest-established organizations in France, refer to the "antiracists" of the Enlightenment, such as the Abbé Grégoire. This poses the problem of how to understand an eighteenth-century mindset in terms of a twentieth-century concept.

Today we would not see Grégoire as an antiracist. He helped establish the Société des Amis des Noirs in the 1790s, which argued that slaves were unprepared for emancipation. They planned a gradual transition based on a paternalistic, European idea of civilization and progress, which the peoples of the rest of the world would have to learn. They distinguished between the present situation and the potential of human populations.

The actions of the African American–Caribbean antislavery campaigners were distinct from those of the white sympathizers. The black antislavery organizations were widespread, helping to provide refuge for runaway slaves. Sojourner Truth, who had spoken at the Women's Rights Convention in 1850, also insisted that black women should be allowed to address the convention in 1851:

> That man over there say that women needs to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children and seen them most all sold off into slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman! (Stanton et al., 1889).

Many of the European and North American organizations for slave emancipation were motivated by evangelical beliefs. The Quakers were an important element, working within an international framework. There was an important link between antislavery and the development of first-wave feminism. When they began to engage in public campaigning, address public meetings, and boycott sugar, women found that men opposed their participation in public life.

In *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism,* Angela Davis shows how in the Reconstruction period that followed the ending of slavery in the United States, black women blues and jazz singers suggested new ways in which women could live. In their songs and lives they struggled to be free from racism and abusive marriages, to travel independently, to earn their own living, and to choose their sexual partners freely (Davis, 1999). Billie Holiday's song "Strange Fruit," a protest against lynching, was, argues Davis, one of the first of many antiracist songs.

Civil Rights and Anticolonialism

The civil rights movement in the United States and anticolonial movements overlap in a number of ways. Activists in the United States frequently referred to their situation as an "internal colony." The civil rights movement coincided with worldwide protests against the war in Vietnam, as well as other anticolonial movements. Mass media and rapid communications helped to produce a consciousness of a global movement.

Earlier gender dynamics continued in both movements. In the United States women played an important part in the mobilizations for black Americans to register to vote and to challenge racial segregation and discrimination. Rosa Parks, tired at the end of her day's work, refused to sit in the "blacks only" section of a bus, initiating a transit boycott in Alabama, the heart of the early civil rights movement. Although women played a significant part, many were relegated to supporting roles: typing, making tea, assisting their male colleagues, and sometimes being sexually exploited.

Similar dynamics operated in anticolonialism and national liberation. Many national liberation movements revived stories of heroic women who resisted colonialism: for example, the Asante queen mother Yaa Asante Waa, who led troops against the British in Ghana in the 1860s, and the

Kabyle heroine in Algeria Al Kahina (Ferrah, 1999). Women resisters took on a symbolic resonance as guardians of a people's integrity and traditions. In Algeria women moudjhadiates played an important role in the war for national liberation; women were also important in Kenya in the Land and Freedom movement, and more recently in Zimbabwe and South Africa. In these and other cases women were pushed aside at independence and were unable to take their place in national governments or other areas of public life.

Feminism and Antiracism

With post-1945 immigration to western Europe, discrimination, restrictive immigration regulations, and racist violence prompted antiracist mobilization. In the 1970s, important debates took place within the antiracist and women's movement in the United Kingdom, informed by earlier experiences. Second-wave feminism was part of a wave of social movements in the West inspired by movements for national liberation, protests against the Vietnam war, and the civil rights movement in the United States.

At the center of feminist arguments in the 1960s and 1970s was patriarchy: the universal system by which women were oppressed by men. This set the terms of debates between women about the priorities of their movement, which had a bearing on the feminist and the antiracist movements. Although the family was the core of white women's oppression, black women defended their families from racism. They argued that the most important problem for them was not patriarchy but racism.

Black women insisted that their specific experience had to be taken into account. Whereas the white women's movement was campaigning for the right to work, black women had always worked, often as domestic workers in the homes of white professional women. While the women's movement campaigned for abortion rights, black women were concerned about the racist effects of population policies which legitimized forced sterilization or the use of dangerous injectable contraceptives. They criticized international campaigns against female circumcision for augmenting sterotyping and at the same time ignoring violence against women closer to home. In France, only a handful of commentators stood back from the debate about Muslim women's appearance to ask more about the meaning of the head scarf for young immigrant women (Gaspard and Khosrokhavar, 1995).

Many black women argued that their oppression was inseparable from racism but could not be reduced to it, wanting to be able to express their grievances while still remaining rooted in their communities. Black women's organizations in the United Kingdom, such as the Organisation of Women of African and Asian Descent, argued that they were subject to "triple oppression": gender, race, and class (Bryan et al., 1985). There were divisions within the black and ethnic minority communities in the United Kingdom over issues such as women's rights, domestic violence, and arranged marriages. Southall Black Sisters continues to campaign on these issues. Although not all black women's organizations would identify themselves as feminists, their priorities have had a great impact on contemporary feminism.

Defining Antiracism

Although antiracism can be seen as an oppositional discourse, it is important to focus on how antiracists organize, what they stand for, and what they do. At an institutional level antiracism is a constellation of organizations shifting between a series of linked pressure groups and a social movement (Heineman, 1972). It is deeply rooted in different political cultures. Antiracist organizations vary from relatively well-endowed statutory bodies such as the British Commission for Racial Equality to more informal organizations run by volunteers at the grassroots level, campaigns based on an individual or family, such as the Stephen Lawrence Family Campaign or politically based movements such as SOS Racisme in France. Broader social movements, such as those of undocumented people or people seeking asylum, have been significant in recent years. The main themes of antiracism are antidiscrimination, representation, solidarity, and the hegemonic establishment of an antiracist common sense indissociable from a wider agenda of social justice. Antiracism also affirms the need to develop different ways in which human beings can relate to one another, respecting human rights and civil liberties.

Another important aspect is the basis of membership within antiracist groups: this varies within and between different countries. Groups can be categorized by whether membership is based on ethnicity or support for a more universalist program (Neveu, 1994), although the same organization may articulate discourses based on different aspecrs at the same time or during different periods. Antiracists are caught between universalism and particularism: at one level they argue for human equality and the application of social justice. In opposing discrimination, representing and practising solidarity toward certain groups of people, they also work within a particularist agenda.

Globalization emphasizes an increased consciousness of the international, often accompanied by yearnings for the recognition of difference and identity. Politically this may involve an apparent loss of control of key aspects of sovereignty by the nation-state, leading to a focus on the control of its own population and its borders. Under these conditions, power leaves traditional political channels; the result is political demobilization, disillusion with mainstream politics, increasing social insecurity, and swings between universalizing and particularistic impulses. Economic globalization may increase insecurity among migrant and ethnic minority populations. If they have the resources, groups can exploit the enhanced opportunities for rapid communications by means of the Internet and E-mail. At the same time, there are problems of alliance building: structure, hierarchies, equality between well-resourced and impoverished groups. While creating uniformity, globalization also stimulates particularist agendas: racism and extreme forms of nationalism. Thus globalization has produced new problems for antiracists, but it has also opened up new opportunities for dialogues and intervention.

Antiracism is multifaceted and various and cannot be wholly separated from ethnic mobilization. At different levels of mobilization (international, national, civil society, grassroots) organizations vary in their distance from policy makers. Groups close to centers of power benefit from funding and may help to set the political agenda, but they may lose their credibility with the grassroots sections of the antiracist movement who fear their concerns may be diluted. Co-option is dangerous for antiracists because they claim to be representative. Despite cultural and generational differences, "transversal" ways of working, common aims, and respect for the positions of different participants are possible. As a system of "alliances" transversal collectives are unstable over the long term, but they also offer a more tolerant and pluralist way for pressure groups and social movement organizations to cooperate (Yuval-Davis, 1997). This may suggest future forms of international antiracism.

See Also

ACTIVISM; FEMINISM: AFRICAN-AMERICAN; FEMINISM: BLACK BRITISH; FEMINISM: BRITISH ASIAN; NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS; QUAKERS; RACE; RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

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Catherine Lloyd

ANTIRACIST EDUCATION

See EDUCATION: ANTIRACIST.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Anti-Semitism is a special form of racism, directed toward Jews and based mainly on Christian anti-Judaism. Of course anti-Jewish resentment had existed even before the rise of Christianity—for example, the mistrust and persecution which accompanied Jewish monotheism during the Roman Empire as well as the Jewish people's marginal though powerful position in classical Egypt. This, however, is not comparable to the endemic and enduring Christian persecution of the Jews. Christianity has a specific problematic relationship to Jews, since it has its origins in the Jewish religion and Christ was a Jew. The new religion denied the teachings of the Jewish religion in order to assert its own doctrines. The credibility of Christianity was therefore at stake. The resulting tension is responsible, for example, for the centuries-old reproach that the Jews had murdered Christ.

Christian persecution of the Jews—ubiquitous since the founding of Christianity—was pronounced throughout the late Middle Ages, especially during the Crusades in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and during plagues and epidemics. The Jews were expelled from England in 1290, from France in 1306, and from Spain in 1492. The expulsion from Spain marks the emergence of racist anti-Semitism from religious anti-Judaism.

At that time the Spaniards had reconquered Spain from the Muslims (the Reconquista). This marked the end of a "golden age" of tolerance during which the Jews had experienced a certain degree of acceptance. The Jews were then forced either to leave the country or to convert to Christianity. The "conversos," however, as the converts were called, were never fully accepted or trusted as authentic Christians. With time, this mistrust led to desperate attempts to "prove" Christian authenticity by referring to Christian ancestors. The "impiezza de sangre" (purity of blood) became all-important, and religion became a matter of ancestry, of blood, of race.

The Reconquista coincided with the Conquista, the Christian conquest of the Americas. Therefore—it is often held—the murderous missionaryism in the world outside of Europe's borders ran parallel to the murderous missionaryism within, persecuting all "others," all religious dissidents as well as real or alleged opponents—especially women, who were burned as witches. On this view, Christian missionaryism gave birth to the secular universalism formulated in a Eurocentric male science. Christian doctrine propagates universal equality under (a Christian) God, and secular universalism propagates a universal equality of reason. The criteria set for the equality of secular universalism, based on a Eurocentric male viewpoint, necessarily led to race hierarchy backed by science.

In the eighteenth century a "Semitic race" was constructed from common traits between Judeo-Arab languages. Language, however, was an unsuitable criterion even according to racist standards, so secular anti-Semitism fell back on religious sources. Even anti-Christian racist Nazi Germany was dependent on parochial registration lists for proof of Jewishness. Religious anti-Judaism therefore was a cornerstone for secular anti-Semitism. For example, the central Christian anri-Judaistic figure Judas, who betrayed Jesus for 36 pieces of silver, was represented in the secular anti-Semitic stereotype as the money-hungry, two-faced, underhanded Jew.

In western feminist discourse we also find anti-Semitic Christian traditions, especially in the research on matriarchy. Here Jewish monotheism is charged with killing the mother goddess in a symbolic sense. Feminist theologists attempting to emphasize the androgynity of Christ require a rigid, patriarichal Judaism as a contrast. The image of the lusty old Jew is frequently reactivated in discussions of incest, for example, the story of Lot and his daughters.

In anti-Semitism Jewish women are mostly ignored. The image of the male Jew is usually understood to represent Jewishness. There are, however, a few female stereotypes: for example, the image of the submissive Jewish woman bowing to Jewish patriarchy or, in contrast, the image of the castrating, vengeful Jewess as personified by the biblical figures Judith, Esther, and Salome. The contradictions in anti-Semitic stereotypes are always striking. The anti-Semites had no difficulty declaring a Jewish capitalist conspiracy ("die goldene Internationale," or golden association), that is, a notion that Jews secretly govern the world through their financial superiority, and at the same time portraying Jews as communist revolutionaries and Bolshevists. This contradiction is inherent, for example, in the post-Soviet anti-Semitic Pamjat movement in Russia in the late 1990s. On the one hand, Jews are declared responsible for the disastrous and corrupt socialist system. On the other hand—a typical anti-Zionist attitude—the Jews were accused of being imperialists.

It is important, however, to distinguish between anti-Semitism and colonial racism. According to the racist view, blacks and people of color were considered to be less civilized, more "primitive," somehow subhuman, whereas the Jews in contrast were considered to be "too civilized," too rich, too intelligent, and so on. The Jews supposedly embodied modernity and the cosmopolitan lifestyle. Envy and feelings of inferiority seem to have played an important role in resentment toward Jews.

Another difference between colonial racism and anti-Semitism is that Jews were not strangers from another country but citizens who had lived with Christians side by side for centuries. Colonial racism is based on external economic and political expansion, whereas anti-Semitism is based on an ideal of cultural purity within. This ideal became an obsession that reached its terrible climax in Nazi fascism, when Jews became the ultimate scapegoats. Barely a few months in power, the Nazis had "legally" reduced the Jews to second-class citizens. They were gradually excluded from their professions, it was forbidden for them to marry an "Aryan," they were banned from cultural evenrs, they were forced to wear a yellow star marking them as Jews, and so on. This process of delegitimization finally ended up in the planning of the complete extermination of European Jewry. From 1939 to 1945 about six million Jews were murdered: they were shot, were worked to death, died of disease and hunger, or were gassed in the concentration camps.

The most far-reaching Jewish reaction to the persistent European anti-Semitism was the immigration to Palestine initiated by Herzl in 1896 (der Judenstaat). They were backed by the English (Balfour Declaration, 1917) and founded the state of Israel in 1948. Israel's politics met with critiques and resistance. A campaign was launched against "the" Jews, leaning upon traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes, especially the stereotype depicting Jewry as a secret world power. It is argued that Jews should have learned from their own history as victims of the Holocaust and should—more than others—consequently turn away from violence. Their tragic loss is therefore used against them.

The conflicts over Jewish settlement in Israel have taken on many of the discursive and ideological elements of traditional European anti-Semitism. The Islamization of anti-Semitism is the most important recent change (Lewis, 1986).

See Also

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Birgit Rommelspacher

APARTHEID, SEGREGATION, AND GHETTOIZATION

Apartheid, segregation, and ghettoization all entail enforced separation of communities that are identified by ascribed differences of race, religion, caste, or nationality. The separation is generally between unequal groups. Thus, in such societies, greater access to political, economic, and social power is usually vested in certain groups and specifically forbidden to others. Under conditions of apartheid, segregation, or ghettoization, gender differences are often amplified, partly because of the need to control the membership of both dominant and subordinate groups through birth and marriage. Hence particular controls are exerted over women to maintain racial purity, for example, or to ensure that religious instruction is carried out appropriately in the home. Despite the powerful enforcement of identities in such societies, however, women often have been active in opposing the controls placed on them, and in creating bonds across the boundaries that separate them from women and men of different groups.

Apartheid, narrowly defined, was the political and economic system that prevailed in South Africa between 1948 and 1990. This system of laws decreed that all South Africans should be assigned membership in a racialized group. Different racialized groups had different levels of access to political power and economic and social resources. Thus, those defined as white—although a relatively small minority of the population—controlled all the major political institutions; owned most of the land, the mines, and the industrial wealth; and earned higher wages than the black majority. White South Africans had better education and health care, better housing, and better social welfare. Most white women, though owning less than white men and earning lower wages, generally had a much better standard of living than black men and women.

Apartheid was a form of *segregation,* the division of populations based on perceived racial, linguistic, religious, caste, or national differences. Segregation generally entails a separation of social activities (for example, housing or schooling) that reinforces and may be used to legitimate political and economic inequalities between groups. All societies that practice segregation value certain groups more highly than others. One purpose of segregation is to regulate political, economic, and social relations so that the power of the dominant group, which may be a majority or a minority, is not threatened. Examples of segregation are the different treatment accorded to African-Americans in many parts of the United States, enforced settlement of low-caste people on the outskirts of towns and villages in parts of India, and the division of some cities of Northern Ireland between Protestant and Catholic communities.

Although in segregated societies there are gender inequalities within racial or religious groups, these gender divisions may have different features from group to group. The different forms of gender inequity must be examined within the context of segregation. Women of dominant groups may not suffer the same gender discrimination as women form subordinate groups, and generally have better living conditions than both women and men from subordinate groups. Thus women from a subordinate group, although subject to strict controls within it, may in fact identify more with men from that group because of the shared conditions of hardship at the hands of the dominant group. Achieving a universal feminism across the boundaries of segregated societies is therefore problematic, despite the similar forms of oppression women suffer within racialized or nationally defined communities.

Apartheid no longer describes South African society, which has changed dramatically since its first democratic elections in 1994. The term is now used widely outside South

Africa, however, to describe segregation and the accompanying political, economic, and social inequality.

Ghettoization has many features similar to apartheid. The word *ghetto* was used from the twelfth century in Europe to identify parts of cities where Jews were compelled to live. Segregated in ghettos, they could work only in certain occupations. The dominant population was generally hostile and strictly limited its interaction with the ghetto. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, European Jews slowly gained some measure of acceptance and moved out of the ghetto. The term continues to be used, however, to signify any area where a group—generally noticeably different from and considered inferior to the majority of the population of a city—is forced to live. One of the clearest examples of ghettoization at the turn of the twenty-first century can be seen in the treatment of the Roma (Gypsies) in various postcommunist central and eastern European countries. Ghettoization, evident in cities of North America that have distinct communities of black and white, is now usually the result of discrimination in housing and employment and fear of violence. While the laws of a country such as the United States do not enforce ghettoization as it was applied in Europe against Jews, neither do the laws make it easy for African-Americans to overcome social discrimination. Thus, for example, the decentralization of schools means that unequal education resources are available for poor ghetto communities.

Because segregation, apartheid, and ghettoization all work by delimiting which groups can live in certain places and have access to certain resources, all rely on some form of biological or social marker for members of a particular group. Women, because they bear children, are important in this regard. Dominant groups go to great lengths to keep "their" women from living or working with subordinated groups, except in settings where appropriate relations between groups are established. For example, women from subordinated groups may be employed as domestic workers by dominant groups. Strict rules, however, often govern the kinds of domestic work they can do. They may be allowed to be nannies to young children, for example, but not to teach somewhat older children; they may be allowed to be cleaners or work outside, but not to cook or touch food. These rules vary considerably from society to society.

Often women who cross these socially imposed boundaries are vilified. For instance, the apartheid system imposed strict legal sanctions against sex or marriage across racial barriers. The South African writer Bessie Head was the child of a rich white South African woman and a black man who worked in her father's stables. Head was brought up in an orphanage after her mother was placed in a mental asylum for crossing the barrier.

Although gender discrimination is marked in segregated societies, gender cannot be understood in these societies outside of the additional forms of segregated social division maintained by the legal, economic, and social framework. In such societies women are generally not easily able to work together politically despite their common experience of gender discrimination. However, both women and men have joined opposition movements, which often unite people across imposed divisions of nationality, caste, or race. Thus, in South Africa, action against apartheid was undertaken by people of all races, often working together in nonracial organizations. Small numbers of white women were critics of apartheid and tried to work together with black women in organizations based on class (like the trade unions and the Communist Party) or in organizations based on liberal ideas about human rights, or in the national liberation movement of the African National Congress (ANC). In segregated societies such as South Africa under apartheid, or parts of the United States or Israel, alliances made by women across boundaries of race or religion have been very fragile and sometimes difficult to maintain. Nonetheless, in many segregated societies, the high degree of discrimination against women, even those of dominant groups, means they are often more receptive to ideas and political strategies that try to break down barriers. Women from dominant groups often differ in this way from men of those groups, who may have vested interests in maintaining the system. In South Africa, women's contribution to the resistance against apartheid is celebrated on Women's Day, a national holiday on August 9th, which commemorates a large and courageous protest, held mainly by black women with the support of a small number of white women.

See Also

FEMINISM: AFRICAN-AMERICAN; FEMINISM: SOUTH AFRICA; HOUSEHOLD WORKERS; RACE; RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

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Elaine Unterhalter

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology is the study of the past; it aims to reconstruct the way people lived in the past and to explore and reconstruct past cultures. To this end, archaeologists study material culrure—that is, things made and used by humans. The term *material culture* assumes that the manufacture and use of artifacts and other objects will in some way be influenced by and reflect the culture of the period or people that made and used the objects. Archaeologists also study remains of humans as well as plants and animals that were used as food or domesticated.

Archaeology and Its Masculine Image

Indiana Jones is a popular Hollywood character who portrays the archaeologist's professional life as one full of high adventure, treasure hunts, and danger. The masculine stereotype personified by Indiana Jones is one that has been widely held about archaeologists for a long time. For instance, in 1949 A. V. Kidder noted that two publicly held stereotypes existed: that of the "hairy chested" archaeologist seeking adventure and treasure and that of the "hairy chinned" archaeologist, a vague although highly intelligent type, capable of correctly interpreting the most puzzling aspects of the past (Ascher, 1960). These romantic images have little or no relevance in describing the actual nature of archaeological research and endeavor. However, a number of commentators have noted that these images do have some currency in archaeology because they are often used, particularly in western countries, to socialize students into the "culture" of the discipline (see Woodall and Perricone, 1981; Zarmati, 1995, for further details). Masculine images, particularly of "cowboys," are used to develop camaraderie on excavations and during other fieldwork. They are images that, in the view of many women archaeologists, work to marginalize both them and their research (see Nelson et al., 1994).

Feminist Archaeology

Feminist archaeology arose in part as a response to the existence of these stereotypes in the discipline, and in part as a response to assumptions made about the nature of gender relations in the past. Many researchers assumed that the western gender division of labor was "natural" and thus unworthy of critical scrutiny. Interpretations regarding the past often implicitly assumed that men made most artifacts, hunted, went to war, and were the main contributors to religious and intellectual life. On the other hand, it was assumed that women gathered food, cared for children, and were often invisible in the archaeological record because they were not primary actors in developing technologies and making tools. Early feminist researchers were able to show the fallacy of these assumptions by examining women's grave sites, such as those described by Merete Ipsen, which contained tools and weapons that, in other contexts, had been assumed to have been made and used by men.

The feminist response in archaeology developed during the 1980s with a number of aims and goals. One of the primary goals was to challenge many of the androcentric assumptions made by archaeologists and to illustrate the extent to which many researchers unwittingly extrapolate present-day values and assumptions about gender into the past. Another goal was to introduce "gender" as an active and critical factor in the interpretation of past material culture, and, by so doing, to bring archaeological theory up-to-date with a number of sister disciplines already studying gender issues. Another primary goal was to challenge the masculine stereotypes of the discipline and to provide women with a support network to better the working conditions and career prospects of women archaeologists. Organizations such as Kvindelige Arkaeologer i Norge (KAN) and Women in Archaeology (Australia) were developed to provide these networks of support.

Conferences were held to promote gender research, many of which have had significant impacts on archaeological theoretical debates and on research questions and interpretations. The earliest and most nationally or internationally influential conferences and resulting publications included one held in Norway in 1979 (Bertelsen et al., 1987); "Women and Production in Prehistory," 1988, South Carolina, United States (Gero and Conkey, 1991); 1989 Chacmool Conference, Canada (Walde and Willows, 1991); "Feminism and Archaeology?!" 1991, Germany (Kastner and Karlisch, 1991); Women in Archaeology, 1991, Australia (du Cros and Smith, 1993); and many more (e.g., Claassen, 1992, 1994). Some of these conferences, such as Women in Archaeology (Australia) are now held biannually (Balme and Beck, 1995; Casey et al., 1998), and many annual mainstream archaeological conferences now have sessions dedicated to gender and feminist research.

A further goal of feminist archaeology was to challenge the "naturalness" of present-day gender categories and roles. Archaeology as a study of the past is in a significant position, although an apparently paradoxical one, to question the way in which the present is understood. The past is used to validate what we do in the present and to help us understand ourselves and our culture. For instance, we may use the history and past of the country we live in to help us define our cultural or national identity. The fact that archaeology examines physical evidence further reinforces the role archaeological research can play in reinforcing the use of the past in understanding and validating the present. This thing we call "the past" is intangible and often difficult to conceptualize. However, the tangibility and physical reality of material culture help to give substance to the past and to the links we may make between the past and the present.

Feminist archaeologists have thus argued that interpretations of our past have a real ability to influence how we see the present. Studies of past material culture that question how gender categories and roles were organized in the past will have an impact on public debates about present-day gender roles. This goal of feminist archaeology has significant implications not only for archaeological research but also on how archaeologists manage archaeological sites and places for the future.

Cultural Heritage

Archaeologists in many countries not only research the past but may also be active players in the management of their country's heritage. Archaeological sites, artifacts, and places are often part of a country's or a people's cultural heritage. The process of looking after a cultural heritage is called "cultural heritage management" or "cultural resource management" or even "archaeological heritage management." Feminists involved in cultural heritage management are concerned to identify, save, and preserve places of value and significance to women. Feminist archaeologists argue that the preservation of women's heritage will ensure that women's history, culture, and past experiences will be made visible and that women will be acknowledged as having made important contributions to the present. If women's heritage and material culture are not saved and actively managed, then it is possible that the roles that women played in the past will remain or be regarded as invisible and intangible. Further, the multiplicity and complexity of women's experiences and cultures may also be explored and celebrated through the conservation and preservation of the range of material culture and heritage associated with past women's lives.

A significant part of cultural heritage management is the interpretation of heritage for the public. The physicality offered by material culture provides a significant resource through which critical interpretations that challenge androcentric notions about gender roles in the past and present can be made. Thus, it is through cultural heritage management that feminist archaeologists may have a direct and active impact on public perceptions about past and present gender roles and experiences.

Future Directions in Feminist Research

Although there have now been two decades of active feminist debate in archaeology, many androcentric assumptions and practices still remain. Initially, feminist archaeologists—in challenging archaeological androcentric preconceptions—attempted to identify individual women in the past, a practice that has left two legacies. The first concerns a tendency by many to equate "gender" issues with women; when this happens, the identification of gender in the past becomes simply a matter of "finding women." The concept that males are gendered and that masculinity may be a variable in the interpretation of the past is yet to be self-consciously taken up in archaeological discourse. The second legacy is the realization that in many cases archaeology cannot identify individual women or men in the past, and that the desire to identify individuals in fact limits the scope of archaeological interpretation and debate. Rather, the recognition of gender as a variable of interpretation has the exciting potential to extend the scope of archaeological endeavor to include an examination of dynamics, complexities, and developments in gender relations in the past.

See Also

ANDOCENTRISM; ANTHROPOLOGY; ARCHAEOLOGY: NORTHERN EUROPEAN CASE STUDY; HISTORY; HUNTING; PRIMATOLOGY; SCIENCE: FEMINIST CRITIQUES

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Laurajane Smith

ARCHAEOLOGY: Northern European Case Study

Archaeological findings are the physical remains of our past, and when we look at them they can change the way we see the past. Archaeologists find real things, and as a science archaeology presents us with concrete, tangible knowledge. But we need to be aware of the ways in which such knowledge is filtered through what we already know or think we know. The knowledge generated by archaeological findings is shaped and reshaped both by the period in which these discoveries are made and by what the people who seek and find information from the past tell us about it and how they interpret it.

For women anthropologists, archaeologists, historians, and psychologists it is important that we make our own discoveries, but even more important that we interpret the findings ourselves—that we trace the steps of prehistoric women and witness their actions through the interpretation of their bones, their tools, and their utensils.

The majority of excavation reports and museum exhibitions present the actions of men and women and the relationship between them in such a way that the man is seen as active, strong, and dominant, whereas the woman is seen as dependent and in need of protection.

This article presents a number of archaeological findings from Scandinavia that can be seen to challenge commonly held beliefs about the prehistoric relationship between the sexes.

Man, the Hunter

More often than not, our prehistoric forefathers are represented trough masculine metaphors. In western European culture it is the exception rather than the rule for these, the oldest remains of the human race, to be spoken of as belonging to our foremothers.

In most of the findings men have a larger physique than women, leading to theories claiming that the choice of a partner was primarily the initiative of males. Darwin's theory of evolution of the mid-1800s had a great impact on the interpretation of human—indeed all species'—development. In Darwin's theory, male strength and dominance are the motivating forces behind the reproduction of the species. Among humans, gender characteristics such as the strength of the male and the weakness of the female are amplified by the males' choice of curvaceous partners with little body hair and the females' preference for large and powerful suitors. The Darwinian theory of evolution perpetrates this gendered division of strength and weakness in much the same way as the Victorians did in Darwin's time.

Similarly, according to such theories, it was man who was the prehistoric inventor of tools—tools for hunting and battle. Women's tools as gatherers—which many anthropologists and archaeologists agree was their "natural" occupation—are largely ignored, as is the inventiveness involved in the development of tools like digging sticks and bags to carry the gathered roots, seeds, berries, and small animals.

Man, then, is the warrior. Some women like to pride themselves on their allegedly peaceful nature, but in the context of this discussion, to be the peaceful sex is to be the passive sex. Do the archaeological findings support this view of man as the initiator in the choice of partner, the protector, and the warrior, and of woman as the hesitant, passive pacifist?

When a grave containing swords and hunting tools is discovered, archaeologists see it as unambiguously male. On this issue there is widespread agreement. Women's graves contain household utensils such as pots, knives, sewing equipment, and jewelry.

Valkyries and Queens

A number of findings do, however, support an interpretation different from that of the weak, dependent woman. What follows is a discussion of three very different discoveries, all thought to be between 1,000 and 1,200 years old.

During the past 15 years an unusual discovery was made in Denmark: two skeletons buried alongside each other. One was small and slender, with stones on the chest to prevent the deceased from rising again. Buried with the body were a sword, a knife, and a needle case. The skeleton's dimensions—especially the width of the hips—together with the knife and needle case, all led to the same conclusion: the remains were those of a woman. But the sword was unusual in a woman's grave; thus this discovery was called the Valkyrie grave.

The second skeleton was that of a tall, well-built person—without doubt a man. The neck was broken as it would be after hanging. Possibly the body was that of a slave. He had neither a sword nor a knife to protect himself, and there were no stones to prevent him rising from the burial place. There are no conclusive theories as to why he was hanged and buried with the woman.

What is interesting in this context is that the woman has a sword. It did happen that women bore arms. Chronicles, such as those of Saxo, written 800 years ago, tell of women's participation in armed battle in much the same way as those that recounr the battles of the Greek Amazons. These accounts are usually regarded as myths. Contrary to this interpretation, however, the discovery of the female skeleton provided concrete evidence that women might bear arms.

Three brooches from the same period have also been found, two in Denmark and one in Sweden. The motif that decorates them is a mounted woman bearing a sword. She is being offered a goblet of wine, is being saluted, and is obviously of high rank and a warrior.

This picture of independent women from the same period in prehistoric Scandinavia is strengthened by a very important discovery, made as early as 1904: the Oseberg grave in Norway. Two people were buried (A.D. 834) in a well-equipped ship containing coffers, household utensils, and many other artifacts, including a fascinating small tapestry depicting sword-bearing women in a funeral procession together with men. The remains are believed to be those of a queen and her female servant.

Such discoveries make any simple interpretation of the relative strength of men and women during this period impossible. Not all prehistoric women were dependent on strong, protective men. Some were independent and equal with men, while others were queens or rulers of both men and women. We do not know how many such women existed, but it seems feasible that there were more than the interpretations of archaeologists would lead us to believe.

Sexing the Remains

Just as there is today, in prehistoric times there was a wide range of body sizes for both men and women—tall women who were larger than short men, slender women who were tinier than large men. Perhaps graves containing swords belong to women more often than we are told. It is difficult to classify remains as male or female merely by looking at the skeleton. When asked, all archaeologists and paleoanthropologists admit that there are no absolute deciding factors; they have only body height and breadth and hip width to judge by—all of which are very much open to inrerpretation.

Today's DNA analysis would appear to make such uncertainties a thing of the past. But DNA analysis of remains is expensive and is itself plagued with uncertainty. The slightest contact with the remains during excavation or examination can result in the modern scientisr's DNA code being taken instead of that of the excavated skeleton. Thus scientists can at best make only educated guesses about the sex of remains.

The findings discussed above raise imporrant questions about the inrerpretation of gender and behavior in prehistoric times. But unfortunately this questioning has had very little impact on the way in which prehistoric life continues to be presented. Time and again museum exhibitions in Scandinavia present a child's skeleton with a knife, and viewers are told, without a trace of doubt, that the skeleton is that of a little boy who was buried with his knife. Why not a little girl? As mentioned above, knives are among the most common tools found in women's graves. Therefore, a little girl—who was presumably taught by her mother—might have a knife at her side when she was buried. Perhaps archaeology is as blinded by contemporary images and expectations as Darwin's theory of evolution and gender. Perhaps it is thought unsuitable for a little girl to use a knife. Perhaps knives are more immediately associated in the modern mind with bold boys than with girls. Until physical analyses can accurately identify the sex of all human remains, we can only speculate.

The discoveries described above all come from the latter years of the Viking period of Nordic history. This period also marked the end of a paganism in which Nordic mythology formed the basis of religious beliefs. Cults of fertility were at the core of Nordic paganism, which elevated the status of women, associating them with Mother Earth and the goddess of fertility.

Goddesses and Priestesses

The worship of personified gods was apparently not practiced at the time in the same way that it is in contemporary Christian culture. Since the mid-1500s Protestantism has been the predominant religion of northern Europe—a religion based on male figures: the Father, his Son, and the Holy Spirit, with all their masculine characteristics.

Around the turn of the twentieth century there were a number of interesting archaeological discoveries, which have formed the basis for theories of widespread goddess worship in our past. Throughout Europe at this time small, full-bodied Venus figures were discovered. These statues pay tribute to women and are an homage to the female form. No male figures were discovered at the same sites; this would seem to point strongly toward goddess worship in our distant past.

In pagan times in the Nordic region the asa (pre-Christian) beliefs were central to all aspects of life. Sacrifices and other religious rituals are believed to have been as significant as the work of the individual in sowing and reaping crops. With fertility rituals it seems most logical that the religious ceremonies of the farming communities would have been led by women.

In Denmark in 1891 a large ancient silver vessel was found in a swamp. It was decorated with fantastic patterns, including images of women. The vessel is thought to date from around 100 B.C., and the decorative motifs, together with the techniques used, indicate that it was probably brought to Denmark during a migration from the Celtic regions.

The vessel is decorated with many relief images of animals and people—or beings that resemble people. There is no direct narrative in the pictures, which show men fighting with wild animals and marching with swords and shields. But the base of the vessel is decorated with a picture of a wounded bull awaiting the final merciful blow. The killer, a woman, is shown with her sword drawn behind the bull's back. The vessel was probably used for blood offerings, and the seven upper panels all show different people. The missing eighth panel probably continued the motif of the upper torsos of men and women. They could be male or female gods or priests and are the same size, indicating that they are of equal importance. The men, shown in four of these panels, have their hands in the air as if they are surrendering, while the women in the remaining three panels all have contact with their own bodies. One touches her breasts, while a man fights with a wild animal near her; one bears a small man in her arm whom she is about to suckle, while a dog lies beside her other breast, and a small woman stands arranging her hair. The last woman is flanked by two men with the characteristic raised arms.

This vessel is evidence of the cross-cultural exchange of religious representations, and it functions in the same way as the goddess status to show the high, or at least the equal, status women had in prehistoric religious rituals.

Despite evidence such as this, we are still given our knowledge of the past through myths of fore*fathers* and concepts of heroism attached to men. Dominant scientific traditions focus on prehistoric man. These traditions either refuse to take alternative evidence into account or else represent it as aberrations without meaning or relevance to an understanding of the life of Nordic peoples in prehistoric times.

Almost 15 years ago a group of women archaeologists in Norway formed the association Kvindelige Arkaeologer i Norge, KAN (Women archaeologists in Norway; *kan* means *can* in English). This association has the dual goals of bringing gender analysis to archaeological findings and spreading knowledge of the alternative interpretations that an awareness of gender can bring to the field. Similar organizations have yet to be established in Denmark and Sweden, but informal networks and multidisciplinary forums create an environment for research, interpretation, and representation with an awareness how projections from our present—particularly our gender roles and rules—can affect our understanding of the past.

See Also

ANTHROPOLOGY; ARCHAEOLOGY; GODDESS; HUNTING; PRIMATOLOGY

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ARCHETYPE

Archetype is a term occurring as early as Philo Judaeus (13 B.C. –A.D 45) and Irenaeus (c. A.D. 130–200), used by Plato (428–348 B.C.) and Augustine (d. 604 A.D.), and adopted by the twentieth-century psychiatrist and psychologist C. G. Jung to describe "universal images that have existed since the remotest times" (Jung, *Collected Works CW* 9:1, 4–5, para. 5). For Jung the archetype "is an irrepresentable unconscious, pre-existent form that seems to be part of the inherited structure of the psyche and can therefore manifest itself spontaneously anywhere, at any time" (1963: 380). Evidence for the existence of archetypes can be found in recurrent motifs in world myths, fairy tales, and religious texts, as well as in personal dreams, fantasies, hallucinations, and delusions at every time in history.

Archetypes symbolize the life of the nonindividual depths of the unconscious psyche that everyone experiences but that no one possesses. One feels the instinctual "drive-effects" of the archetype, its emotional patterns and images, but without experiencing the archetype per se, because "an archetypal content expresses itself, first and foremost, in metaphors." (*CW* 9:1, 157, para. 267). In order, then, to be in touch with the objective reality that archetypal symbols communicate, one must be wiling to work with the imagination and to trust it.

Archetypes have biological and psychological aspects, as well as form and content. The biological aspect denotes inherited modes of psychic functioning that are preformed, instinctual patterns of response, experienced psychologically in individual lives as goal-directedness of purposeful behavior, in patterns of emotional response and expectation, and in value systems. Jung describes this sort of primordial archetypal image as "the *instinct's perception of itself*" (*CW* 8, 136, para. 275). The archetypes, like the instincts, are part of the given structure of life, although their patterns may be modified over the centuries. Jung calls them "organs of the pre-rational psyche" (*CW* 11, 518, para. 845).

Archetypes are not determined as to content but are determined only in form. For example, one's experience of the mother archetype comprises one's actual relation to one's own specific mother and other maternal figures, both positive and negative, of one's culture's images of the mothering role, as well as the primordial images of the mother that arise in everyone spontaneously from the deep unconscious. Like instincts, archetypes underlie the feeling-toned complexes in individuals' psyches but are themselves purely formal, beginning only as a possibility of representation that is later to be filled in by one's actual living experience.

Important archetypal images of woman include mother, daughter, amazon, witch, wife, virgin, siren, spiritual partner, sister, hetira, and wise woman. In religion, such figures as Lilith, Eve, Kali, Kwan-Yin, the Virgin Mary, and Sophia personify archetypal images of feminine potency. The feminine modality of being makes itself known in human history in various archetypal forms, that is, in recurrent clusters of images and patterns of behavior associated with certain dominant types of the feminine. The fundamental archetypal forms of the feminine come from various combinations of one's basic instinctual traits, from the influence of environment and culture, and from one's adaptation to these factors.

These archetypal patterns are only a potential presence in individuals, never predetermined as to content. An individual woman must work out her personal relation to the conditioning images of her culture and the primordial images that address her from her own experience of the unconscious. Often a woman finds strength to defy and to influence cultural stereotypes of the female from the power that the primordial images in her own unconscious provide.

See Also

DAUGHTER; FAIRY TALES; FEMININITY; MOTHER; MYTH; WIFE; WITCHES: ASIA; WITCHES: WESTERN WORLD

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ARCHITECTURE

Buildings, neighborhoods, and cities are cultural artifacts that symbolically declare to society the place held by each of their members. This is true among all cultures throughout time, from the spatial segregation of women from men in the domestic architecture of almost all Islamic societies, to the segregation of rich and poor in luxury housing and public housing in North American cities.

Even though built space shapes the experiences of people's daily lives and the cultural assumptions in which they are immersed, it is easy to accept the physical landscape unthinkingly as a neutral background. But the spatial arrangements of buildings and communities are neither value-free nor neutral; they reflect and reinforce the nature of each society's gender, race, and class relations. They are shaped by social, political, and economic forces and values embodied in the forms themselves, the processes through which they are built, and the manner in which they are used. The built environment contributes to the power of some groups over others and the maintenance of human inequality.

Architecture thus defined is a record of deeds by those who have the power to build. Professional architects, be they women or men, generally have little to say about what actually gets built, where, how, and for whom. Most of these decisions are made by men, who are the majority of industrialists, financiers, building developers, engineers, politicians, real estate investors, and corporate heads. Individual buildings designed by architects as technologically and aesthetically unified works of art represent only a small percentage of this larger anonymous landscape.

While it is possible to critique architectural history, education, and practice, as well as built architectural work, from a feminist perspective, it is within the cultural context of built space that feminist criticism and activism have an especially important role to play. Therefore, this article will introduce the former and focus on the latter.

Women, Feminism, and the Discipline of Architecture

A feminist analysis of the built environment as a form of social oppression, an expression of social power, and a part of women's struggle for equality is relatively recent. The reason is that such an evaluation would logically be initiated by women architects, and there are simply fewer of them worldwide than there are women in other fields and fewer still who are committed to feminism and directing their work accordingly.

Entry into the architectural profession was historically accomplished either by gaining practical experience as an apprentice in the atelier of a master architect or by obtaining a formal architectural education. Both routes presented formidable obstacles for women. Whereas the personal prejudice of individual males made it difficult for women to obtain professional training through apprenticeship, discriminatory policies in the academy made it equally difficult for women to obtain architectural degrees.

Although the percentage of women practicing architecture varies from country to country, it has been consistently low. In 1989 in Great Britain, the proportion was 10 percent, in Norway 19 percent, and in New South Wales, Australia, 3.2 percent. In the United States in 1988, 14.6 percent of architects were women; in 1983, the figure in Spain was 3 percent. While the percentage slowly increased worldwide throughout the 1980s and 1990s (although in some countries it actually decreased) today women remain dramatically underrepresented in the field. The same is true in architectural education. Among the total number of architecture faculty members teaching in accredited degree programs in North American universities in 1990, women represented only 15.7 percent, and of this total, only 2.8 percenr were tenured. Moreover, although the enrollment of women students in schools of architecture in North America made up 30 percent of the bachelor's programs and 40 percent of the master's programs between 1993 and 1994, enrollment patterns are very uneven among schools; in some, women may number as high as 50 percent; in others, there are too few to count.

Throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s, the education and employment experiences of women in architecture paralleled those of other professional women in male-dominated fields. In the schools students were not taken seriously; there was a paucity of women professors, and among them the design studio "master" was a rarity. In architectural practice women made less money than men and in the large firms were clustered in lower-status ancillary specialities and were promoted less. Few had achieved associate or partner status; fewer still had their own practices.

The New Feminism versus the Old Professionalism

Beginning in the late 1960s, the "new" lessons of feminism caused significant numbers of women architects and architectural educators to shift their energies from proving that they could work in a man's field to challenging architectural practice itself. Advocates of change within the established profession sought to identify and eliminate various forms of discrimination and to develop an affirmative action plan; to promore careers for women in architecture and to help prepare women for professional licensing exams; and to revise the traditional office work structure to incorporate flexible and part-time schedules helpful to women with families.

Advocates of change outside the established profession began to form women's design collectives in which all members participated equally in decision making. The inherent conflict between the profit motive and the social responsibility of the architect was resolved by paying members only for work done and using the profits to subsidize projects beneficial to women. The professional practitioner identified with nonprofessionals as clients and collaborators by accepting and respecting their values, life experiences, and aesthetic preferences, even when they violated the canon of "architects' architecture."

Women and Environments

Beginning in the late 1970s, feminist architects, sociologists, historians, planners, geographers, and environmental psychologists joined forces to create a new cross-disciplinary field of research known as *women and environments*. Four dominant directions emerged to guide this ongoing work.

The first direction emphasized gender-based *spatial dichotomies* produced by industrial capitalism: the segregation of workplace and dwelling, cities and suburbs, and private life from public existence. Academicians analyzed how proscriptive residential zoning prevents the establishment of neighborhood-based commercial services essential to women and prohibits home occupations that would make the combination of work and family roles easier. Architects and planners proposed designing new forms of congregate and cohousing in neighborhoods that would encourage personal support, companionship, and the sharing of domestic tasks.

The second direction, *environmental fit*, provided empirical research on the compatibility between the activities that characterize women's daily lives and the design of dwellings, neighborhoods, and cities. For example, in North America, inner-city neighborhoods that are often labeled as deteriorating and disorganized by professional urban planners frequently provide precisely the kinds of services that divorced mothers need: child care, schools, public transportation, shopping, apartment houses, welfare, and social services.

The third direction, *environmental equity*, analyzed how women are unfairly disadvantaged and rendered invisible by public policies and practices relating to housing, transportation, and social services. For example, subsidized public housing policy in most countries is evaluated relative to its impact on the poor, not on women. Yet the vast majority of the poor worldwide are women and children. As a result, in the United States, for example, public housing is virtually a female ghetto, with women heading more than 90 percent of households.

The fourth direction, *female principles in architecture*, articulated the special sensibilities, attributes, and priorities women bring to architecture. For some that meant searching for a woman's cultural heritage and archetypal female imagery in architecture derived from sources in the matrifocal Paleolithic and Neolithic cultures. Others developed hypotheses about "female" and "male" principles in architecture based on different socially constructed gender roles for women and men.

Gender socialization in most cultures has historically encouraged women to consider the needs, comfort, and well-being of others in their decisions, while encouraging men to be self-expressive and intellectually independent. Among women and men who practice architecture, the manifestation of these differences appears not so much in the use of different spatial forms and building technologies, but rather in the different social and ethical contexts in which women and men are likely to conceptualize and design buildings and spaces.

In 1941 Henry Atherton Frost, the man responsible fot founding and running the first professional architecture school for women in the United States, the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (1917–1942), wrote: "The woman architect is interested in housing rather than houses, in community centers for the masses rather than in neighborhood clubs for the elect.... Her interest in her profession embraces its social and human implications" (Stevens, 1977: 91–95).

In an interview in Paris in 1929 the English architect and designer Eileen Gray compared her work with the "new" modern architecture with which her male contemporaries—masters of the modern movement like Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe—were obsessed:

> This intellectual coldness which we have arrived at and which interprets only too well the hard laws of modern machinery can only be a temporary phenomenon.... I want to develop these formulas and push them to the point at which they are in contact with life.... The avant-garde is intoxicated by the machine aesthetic. Their intense intellectualism wants to suppress that which is marvelous in life... as their concern with a misunderstood hygiene makes hygiene unbearable. Their desire for rigid precision makes them neglect the beauty of all these

> forms: discs, cylinders, lines which undulate and zigzag, elliptical lines which are like straight lines in movement. Their architecture is without soul. (1981: 71–72)

Gray was far ahead of her time in predicting the demise of the noncontextual, rational, and often sterile glass box buildings of the new international style. Her work, though designed with the same understated elegance as that of the modern movement and using the same materials and architectural forms, expresses an exceptional sensitivity to human comfort, the movement of the body, and the activities of daily life.

The Impact of Feminist Scholarship on Current Architectural Education and Practice

Convincing evidence now exists that women, to the extent that their roles differ from men's, use, perceive, and design environments differently and have different environmental needs. Yet there is little evidence that the fundamental challenge posed by feminist values and environmental design research has had any effect on the dominant mode of architectural thought. For the most part, architecture is still taught and practiced, and has its content determined and controlled, by men. The integration of feminist theory, content, and pedagogy within the standard architectural curriculum is entirely dependent on the feminist consciousness of those doing the teaching; and most architects, be they women or men, still practice in traditional ways, serving clients who commission projects that usually have little to do with social justice or benefiting women.

The obstacles women historically faced that hindered their careers as architectural practitioners have ensured that very few have achieved more than a modest reputation. Some notable exceptions include, from the United States, Julia Morgan (1872–1957), Marion Mahony Griffin (1891–1961, whose work is best known in Australia), Denise Scott Brown, Adel Naude Santos, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jane Thompson. The Iraqi-born architect Zaha Hadid lives in London; Jane Drew and Christine Hawley are also in Britain. Other well-known architects are Eve Laron and Christine Vadasz in Australia; Itsuko Hasegawa in Japan; Odilfia Suarez in Argentina; Sol Madridejos and Marta Maiz in Spain; Minette DeSilva, Eulie Chowdhury, and Elizabeth Ghuman in India; Edith Girard, Marina Devillers, and Lena Perot in France; Gillian Hopwood in Nigeria; Diana Lee-Smith in Kenya; Gae Aulenti in Italy; Karla Kowalski in Austria; Natalya Zakharina in Russia; Ada Karmi-Melamede in Israel; and Elizabeth Hatz in Sweden. In the coming decades, the numbers of nationally and internationally known architects who are women will no doubt increase considerably, as will the impressive collection of books written to date by women in architectural education and practice on a wide range of subjects and the numbers of biographies and monographs documenting their lives and work.

Woman-Made Space

Women peripheral to professional architectural practice have had a major impact on the design and use of built environments. Since the early 1900s women have written books of domestic advice that have influenced their countries' national values, attitudes, and home design; and have developed models of cooperative housekeeping in which kitchenless houses and apartment hotels with communal dining, laundry, and day care would free women to work outside the home by paying other women to provide domestic services. At the turn of the century, women established more than 100 settlement houses in the immigrant ghettos and slums of cities in England and the United States to reform inadequate housing, neighborhood blight, and inhumane institutions. Globally, women have also played a leading role in neighborhood beautification programs, urban sanitation and public health, historic preservation, the parks and recreation movement, and, more recently, the environmental conservation movement.

At the community level, women have organized to solve the problems that directly affect them, their families, and their neighbors. In the United States, Bertha Gilke in St. Louis and Kimi Gray in Washingron, D.C., formed self-management tenant organizations in some of the country's most shameful public housing developments, transforming these "projects" from places of neglect to homes that are safe and clean. Women worldwide have led tent strikes, formed housing committees, and sheltered one another.

Grassroots women's groups like the National Congress of Neighborhood Women in Brooklyn and the Women's Research and Development Center in Cincinnati have turned old, abandoned buildings into affordable housing with support services for low-income and elderly women. Canadian women have established numerous cooperative housing developments for women and formed an organization called METRAC—the Toronto Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children—that has raised awareness and affected public policy regarding the connections among transportation, safety, and women's participation in the workforce. The Pancha Carrasco Women's Cooperative in Costa Rica was formed by women, most of them housewives, who wanted to run small businesses from their homes so that they could look after their families and earn an income as well. The Nairobi-based organization Habitat International Coalition (HIC) Women and Shelter Network links people and organizations working on issues of women and shelter in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and North America.

In countries worldwide, women have created centers for day care, health care, and battered and homeless women and children. They have marched together to "take back the night," reclaiming public streets from pornographers and rapists; led sit-ins in public buildings and spaces to protest segregation; occupied vacant houses as urban squatters because their governments will not provide for them; and established peace camps at the sites of nuclear missile depots in defiance of the male war machine.

Housing, Development, and Social Justice for Women

Perhaps more than any other women's issue, the need for shelter has begun to unite women globally in a sisterhood of purpose that crosses the boundaries of race, class, and nationalism. Through international networking among women, there is an increasing realization that the needs of women in developing countries parallel those of low-income women in North America. From first world slums and public housing projects to third world squatter settlements, women live in appallingly overcrowded, hazardous, unsanitary dwellings that lack basic facilities—circumstances that worsen daily, exacerbated by global economic recessions, military spending, and debt crises that make affordable housing a low priority for many governments. Worldwide poverty among women means that many can afford only limited infrastructural services such as pit latrines, public water hydrants, open drains, and unpaved roads. Lack of adequate sanitation increases health risks. In Bangladesh and Middle Eastern countries, where the purdah system segregates the sexes, women who do not have private toilets are forced to defecate on rooftops and urinate only before sunrise or after sunset, which causes severe medical problems.

Women's generally low wages mean that fewer housing units are affordable and that household income is frequently insufficient to meet the eligibility criteria for subsidized housing. The high illiteracy rate among women worldwide limits their access to information on the availability of subsidized housing schemes, which is typically published in newspapers and public notices by housing authorities; the complexity of the application forms and required documentation further prevents women from being successful applicants. In many countries women's legal standing denies them the right to own property, which means they cannot protect themselves and their children from domestic instability and violence or provide collateral to gain access to credit or capital.

An estimated one-third of the world's households are now headed by women. In parts of Africa and many urban areas, especially in Latin America, the figure is greater than 50 percent; in the squalid refugee camps in Central America and the deplorable public housing projects of North America, the figure exceeds 90 percent. Yet the universal favoritism bestowed on the male-headed family guarantees that the selection process for recipients of affordable rental and subsidized housing will screen out female-headed households. Moreover, households headed by women are more likely than any other households to be involuntarily displaced from their housing.

Homelessness among women is a common and widespread occurrence in many third world cities and is burgeoning across the United States as increasing displacement and domestic violence force women on to the streets and into welfare hotels and shelters, where they are once again frequently the victims of sexual assault by males. In fact, gender violence is among the leading causes of homelessness among women worldwide. The number of shelters everywhere, especially in rural areas, is scandalously few relative to the magnitude of the need.

Between the 1960s and the 1990s major wars around the world have created a vast population of some 30 million refugees, 75 percent of them women and children. Women refugees, made homeless and widowed by political upheaval, are systematically subjected to rape in the camps while they await resettlement, an act that is surely a form of political torture.

Violence against women also affects their use of public space and their participation in community and civic life. If the fear of sexual harassment on the streets causes women stress, the fear of rape keeps women off the streets at night, away from public parks and "dangerous" parts of town, and unconsciously afraid of half the human race. Women living in shanty towns and rural areas are also vulnerable to assault when they are forced to travel to desolate places to satisfy such basic needs as sanitation, water, and garbage removal.

As women from first world and third world countries share their varied housing experiences and strategies, they increase their ability to control their housing and communities, thereby claiming greater control over their own lives, their future, and the welfare of their children. The increasing realization among diverse women of their common, urgent need for safe shelter is contributing to a growing solidarity among white women and women of color, and migrant, native, rural, peasant, displaced, and refugee women.

Architecture, Feminism, and Social Change

The built environment exists fundamentally as the expression of an established social order. It is not easily changed until the society that produced it is changed. The establishment of dwellings, neighborhoods, public buildings, and cities that embody values which support human rights for women and expand women's life choices holds the potential to foster healthy, nurturing communities where all women, men, and children can live productive, fulfilling lives in relationships of equality and environmental wholeness. To achieve a future in which all people and all living things matter, we will have to recognize the interdependence among all of humanity, the natural world, and the built environment and learn to think and act out of that recognition.

See Also

BUILT ENVIRONMENT; DEVELOPMENT: OVERVIEW; DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; HOMELESSNESS; HOUSEHOLDS: OVERVIEW; HOUSING; REFUGEES; VIOLENCE: OVERVIEW

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ARMAMENT AND MILITARIZATION

Definition of Militarization

The term *militarization* refers to a process by which a group of human beings organize their lives and their work in preparation for fighting other human beings in wars. The first half of the twentieth century was characterized by world wars that involved almost all people on earth in fighting or in supplying those who were fighting. The second half of the twentieth century was characterized by regional wars in which the battlegrounds were localized. The warring parties were both local people and people from other nations. The people supplying the combatants included all the local people and most of the people who lived in the other participating nations.

Militarization is occurring in most nations in the world, although it takes different forms depending on the culture and political organization of each nation. In a representative democracy, militarization is often not perceived by the general public. Soldiers in uniform are not usually seen on the streets; military officers who participate in high-level decision-making groups with civilian leaders often are out of uniform and not identified by their rank in press releases. In a military dictatorship, soldiers in uniform with visible weapons may patrol the streets. The national leaders usually appear in uniform and are referred to by their military rank. Variations in these two political extremes occur depending on whether the nation is in a war or a nonwar period, whether there is a draft or a volunteer military force, and whether there is a high rate of preparedness or a more steady state of maintaining the forces.

Militarization is a process comparable to industrialization, which becomes part of every aspect of the civil order, adapting itself to existing institutions and practices. Military values are expressed throughout the culture, with an emphasis on authority and obedience, on aggression and violence, and on the acceptance of hardship and sacrifice. The purpose of militarization is preparation or readiness for war, which results in decision-making power and public tax money for the military, often greater than that for nonmilitary purposes.

Definition of Armament

Armament is necessary for the process of militarization, whether in the stage of continual readiness for war or in war itself. The political and economic systems of a nation are involved in the production of arms or weapons; the scientific and technological systems are involved in the design and development of arms; the military system selects the people and trains them in the use of arms. The most militarized nations in the world maintain their global power by the exporr of armament, especially weapons, equipment, and training, to the military of other nations. Four countries (United States, United Kingdom, France, and Russia) account for over 80 percent of arms exports, supplying military forces and regional and civil wars with armament and technical military personnel.

The term *armament* refers to a nation's total military strength—its soldiers, sailors, and air force personnel; its weapons and equipment; its vehicles, airplanes, missiles, battleships, and submarines—together with all the industries, manufactured products accumulated, and raw materials needed for war. Briefly, armament can be categorized as (1) people, (2) weapons, (3) factories, and (4) raw materials: the concrete, specific objects necessary for the process of militarization to occur. People are involved in different ways on the basis of their age, gender, race, and class, as they enter military service, or as producers of weapons of war, or as taxpayers, or as investors in the corporations producing armament.

Nuclear weapons are a special category of armament because of the effort by certain nuclear-armed nations (such as China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States) to limit the export of nuclear weapons materials and technologies to other nations. As more nations acquire nuclear weapons and the capability of producing their own, the nuclear arms race is accelerated.

Feminist Theories and Perspectives

The women's suffrage movement before and during World War I produced theories and descriptions of militarization that are still relevant today. An essay on militarization and feminism by Ogden and Florence (1987) analyzed male despotism and patriarchy as the basic cause of militarism. They described how all aspects of social life were being directed by war and preparation for war, resulting in the continued subjection and oppression of women, and in the "perversion" of industry, religion, and education by militarism.

Current feminist theories on militarization also focus on male dominance in all societal institutions, especially the military and civilian government, corporations, and scientific and technical institutions. These theories are based on several disciplines, including economics, political science, social psychology, peace studies, and women's studies. The basic feminist thesis is that male dominance is inextricably linked to militarization. At the most fundamental level, men maintain their dominance by the threat or use of force: the threat to harm, injure, or kill, as well as actual harming, injuring, and killing. Feminist analysis describes militarization as the process that maintains male dominance or the patriarchy, in which preparation or readiness for war enables men to allocate most national resources to militarization and in which the actual conduct of war enables men to display the need for readiness and the need for all available resources. A war may defeat the enemy and at the same time reinforce the need for military supremacy in its own nation.

The Role of Women in Militarization and Armament

Women are central to the ongoing process of militarization and the production of armament. Women throughout the world take active and passive roles in militarization, depending on the nation in which they live, their class membership (upper, middle, or lower class), their race or ethnic identity, and their age. Their most active roles are as military personnel, enlisted or drafted into one of the military services, and as civilian personnel employed by the military services. Nations vary widely in the active participation of women, from those that prohibit military service for women to those that encourage young women ro join the military.

Many women participate in militarization as workers in the war (or defense) industries producing equipment, weapons, and services. Prostitution and other forms of sex work accompany the military wherever armed forces are, including peacekeeping missions. It sometimes seems that the military could not function without prostitution, both forced and voluntary, and a steady stream of women and girls are produced for this function and related functions through the destruction of these women's civil societies and traditional occupations. Some of the least visible participants in militarization are female children, who participate in the male military cultural values and symbols propagated by media, schools, and manufacturers of children's toys and clothing; and elderly women whose retirement funds are invested in corporations that produce goods and services for the military and whose votes or support are sought in elections or public demonstrations.

In the military services, women are generally limited to noncombat occupations such as health care, administration, personnel, and supply services. They may be excluded from certain units such as infantry, armor, special forces, and submarine warfare. In scientific and technical fields, women may be limited by their lack of preparatory education in science and mathematics, or may be unable to find employment after such preparation. In the industrial world, many corporations are multipurpose, manufacturing for both military and civilian markets. Many military processes require security clearances in order to work in these factories, and women may not qualify. Women are the largest part of the labor force in all countries, as home workers whose work is unpaid and as paid workers who may work inside or outside the home. In some countries, women, who are half of the labor force, are limited to certain occupations, such as nurses, teachers, clerical workers, waitresses, and domestic workers. These occupations in both the military sector and the civil sector are an essential part of the maintenance of the militarization process.

Women's participation also is characterized by hardship and sacrifice that directly affect their work as homemakers. The use of most social goods for militarization and armament means that basic needs for food, water, shelter, heating, clothing, health care, and schooling are unmet or partially met at subsistence levels. The lives of women everywhere are affecred by the meager proportion of national goods remaining from the militarization process.

See Also

DISARMAMENT; MILITARY; NUCLEAR WEAPONS; PACIFISM AND PEACE ACTIVISM; WAR

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ARMED FORCES

See MILITARY.

ART

See ART PRACTICE: FEMINIST and FINE ARTS, *specific topics.*

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

See REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES.

ART PRACTICE: Feminist

Feminist art practice is a generic term, created by the women's art movement in the 1970s, to describe the relationship between the work of contemporary women artists, the larger feminist movement, and feminist theory. Feminist practices in art have not been dependent on specific media (for example, painting, photo-text or scriptovisual work, performance, film, video, and so on). They have been manifest through all the media available to artists, as well as many nontraditional media (such as the incorporation of domestic objects or clothing into artworks). The term itself should be thought of in the plural, as feminist practices in art do not represent the use of a specific style, medium, approach, or uniform methodology by women artists.

This is a contested term, constantly under redefinition, and the short history of its use also reflects broader tendencies in feminist theory, specifically the debates over essentialism and antiessentialism, which dominated the 1980s. When considered against a background of critical and historical terms, feminist art practices are part of the equally contested field represented by a shift from modernism and late modernism to postmodernism. Feminist art practices cannot be described as an "ism" in the modernist sense of an identifiable group of artists with a manifesto, producing work that can be characterized through formal or stylistic features. Historically, the "norm" for women artists within modernism was to be positioned as the "other," and, therefore, subject to the feminine stereotype—analyzed by Griselda Pollock and Rozsika Parker—where the category "art" is defined and appropriated by men and art produced by women falls under the separate and "lesser" category of "women's work" (Parker and Pollock, 1987: 84–87). Feminist art practices begin with a critique of this value system. It is useful ro consider a feminisr arr pracrice as the resulr of a specific kind of intervention in meaning and method, drawing on analysis of the politics of representation and challenging conventional understandings in both art and feminism of "woman." Mary Kelly (1998) argued that the feminist critique of modernism also drew on many conceptual approaches to art in the 1970s, and that it offered a new means for women artists to contest the materiality, sociality, and sexuality of art and its values. Kelly used the term "the feminist problematic" to describe this field for challenging received ideas of femininity in feminist art practice.

In the mid-1980s, Craig Owens defined an apparent crossing-over between a feminist critique of patriarchy and the postmodern critique of representation in a group of women in New York whose work used postmodern strategies with imagery appropriated from the media and juxtaposed images and text to open up questions of intelligibility, subjectivity, and identification processes (Owens, 1985: 59). Feminist art practice could be characterized as a form of avant-gardism within the women's art movement, as it does not encompass all women artists' practice or all kinds of collective collaboration between women artists on art projects or exhibitions. Feminist activism on social and political questions was fundamental to defining art practices as feminist in the 1970s. In the 1990s, the work of many women artists has been concerned with different questions of identity politics and transgression, from "bad girls" to lesbian identity politics or cyberfeminism. There also has been a renewed debate about the relationship of contemporary women's artwork to the legacy of feminist art practice in the 1970s.

Feminist practices in art have emerged as a truly international phenomenon, with a critique of both sexism and double standards in the art world, as well as through the collective action taken by women artists to increase their visibility and contest the current and dominant forms of representation of women. Demands for integration and recognition followed the first critiques of sexism in the art world, and there is a 30-year history of outstanding women artists' exhibitions in many countries worldwide.

Feminist art practice is not, however, concerned with a celebration of all women's creativity in the visual arts or culture. Although feminist artists have been eager to educate and develop projects with groups of women, distinction remains between sustaining a career as a professional visual artist because of specialized training and contributing creatively to a project on the basis of one's experience or specified knowledge. The separation between the women's art movement—as part of the broader women's movement—and the establishment of a more specialized and professional understanding of art practices as feminist among women artists working in the contemporary art market is important. The distinction rests on answers to the question: To what extent does a work of art enable political, aesthetic, or cultural change? The conclusions are determined by different feminist camps: Marxist, socialist culturalist, liberal, conservative, or anarchist.

Political and Ideological Aspects of Feminist Art Practice

Some women in the campaigns of the 1970s rejected the notion that visual art could contribute to political or ideological change except as a form of propaganda. Other women argued that all women's creativity was to be fostered and encouraged. The idea that some women possessed special skills as artists, while others did not, was anathema to the spirit of the women's movement as an inclusive movement. These two ideas from differenr camps led many women artists to withdraw from the women's movement, since either art was thought of as a luxury subordinate to political necessity or their specific professional training or knowledge was not respected as possessing any value. In the late 1970s, this division was institutionally reinforced by the developing curricula of women's studies, where art was rarely taught, while feminist artists continued to work—albeit often marginalized—in art schools and departments. In the late 1980s, with the increasing recognition of specialization within the academy, the situation shifted and even feminist philosophers looked to the work of visual artists for insights on questions of representation, ideology, and transformative potential among women.

Women artists did start working together as a direct result of the women's movement in the 1970s. Women artists' collaboration in public debates from the 1970s has led to numerous analyses of whether there is a separate women's culture, a female or feminine aesthetic, and how this is different from a feminist aesthetic. Women artists working professionally in well-established conventions or forms of art practice, who could be seen as producing an identifiably feminine response to emerging tendencies, were often distinguished from feminist artists who had a specific cultural agenda to reform the conception of art itself, redefine who the audience for contemporary art might be, and challenge familiar or stereotypical representations of women. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the notion that feminist art was by women, for women, and about women became an abbreviation for this idea. The biological sex of the maker did not guarantee that her work or approach would be understood as feminist, nor was this credo a justification for personal expression of all women's subjective viewpoints. How to define a woman artist's work as feminist rested on how the work could be read and integrated into a new collective context for understanding social and political questions in antiessentialist terms. How the personal could become political and how family relationships and social and political questions could be used as a source or reference point in a work (and be related to or differentiated from other women's experiences) became part of an important discussion of the context for the social and critical reception of the work of art.

Griselda Pollock (1998) argues that this is a question of reading, not making. For feminist artists, however, this is a question about the relevance of their work to cultural change and how questions of identity and social, cultural, and political problems could be addressed and challenged.

Conclusion

Feminist art practice has introduced new subject matter into art, which came directly from the impetus of the women's movement's analysis of many social and political questions. Feminists introduced into art many new subjects: the representation, ideology, and iconology of rape, incest, violence against women, domestic labor, homeworking, and homelessness; a reevaluation of the labor of women; a critique of traditional femininity, especially in revived and critical uses of traditional women's crafts; the representation of motherhood, of relationships between mothers and daughters and between women as lesbians; women's images of men; questions of racism, xenophobia, and representing the colonized and colonizer; women's sexuality from vaginal imagery to menstruation to pregnancy to images of sexual pleasure; the representation of the identity of the woman artist in relationship to her peers or to the history of other women artists; and subjects that played with traditional mythology and fairy tales.

Feminist practices in art also initiated collaborative and sometimes collective methods of working, which sought to challenge the notion of art as a product of the individual genius, toiling alone in the studio, through the development of group workshops, and through group art projects or exhibitions developed with consciousness-raising techniques or with other specific techniques and approaches, like phototherapy. Feminist practices in art have not been confined to the gallery or museum; social actions, media-staged events, agitprop, street theater, site-specific work, and community-based projects were all developed to expand the audience for art and specifically to engage the participation of groups of women in social and political issues concerning them.

See Also

AESTHETICS: FEMINIST; CREATIVITY; CULTURAL CRITICISM; CULTURE: WOMEN AS PRODUCERS; ESSENTIALISM; FINE ARTS: CRITICISM AND ART HISTORY; FINE ARTS: POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION; POSTMODERNISM: LITERARY THEORY

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Katy Deepwell

ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

Assertiveness, according to Jean Baer, is making your own choices, standing up for yourself appropriately, and having an active orientation to life. Assertiveness training is the area of behavior therapy that concerns the skills of relating to people and the world around one (1976: 18, 20).

For a time in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the United States, many authors and trainers publicized assertiveness training programs as processes designed to enable women to change some of the limiting habitual patterns of their interaction. Directed primarily toward middle-class women, the training programs were popular among the many who read the books and practiced assertive techniques in workshops. Assertiveness training programs can help empower women to make appropriate choices for their families and their own welfare. While interest in the programs has decreased in recent years, such programs can still be useful in encouraging women to be courageous and to accept only dignified and respectful treatment. However, the programs also have critics.

In societies with double standards, assertiveness training can offer women alternative perspectives on negotiation techniques and communication styles (Winston, 1999: 50). Suzette Haden Elgin, a linguist, has developed a program to help people learn "the gentle art of verbal self-defense" (1997: 13). She criticizes the media's widespread acceptance of theories that women and men merely speak "different languages," and that communication problems between men and women can, basically, be solved if each learns the "other's" language. (These differing communication styles are described in popular terms in John Gray's best-selling series, which includes *Men Are from Mars and Women Are from Venus.*) Elgin points out that while the problems of physical violence are receiving increased attention, the problems of verbal violence have received relatively little.

Many programs suggest that women can be empowered to address their problems by changing their traditional behavior and thus changing the behavior of others. As a branch of behavior therapy, assertiveness training can educate women to be more expressive and candid. Baer's focus is primarily on life in the home, social relationships, and some workplace relationships. Pamela Butler uses the term "assertion," which she defines as "the freedom to state your feelings and opinions without anxiety or embarrassment, while at the same time allowing other people to have their own feelings and opinions" (1992: 3). Her focus is now on women's need to be assertive in expressing who they are as unique individuals rather on a basic style or behavior that needs to be altered.

Others have also been doubtful about the focus on changing individuals' behavior. While acknowledging that assertiveness training programs can provide guidance and support, these critics point out that the training can be largely cosmetic, helping some individuals at the expense of others. Assertive behavior involves an honest expression of one's feelings from one's own perspective. It does not attend to the other person's understanding of the truth. This method assumes that, if done properly, the interaction should not hurt the receiver (Janice, 1994: 71). However, often the suggested solutions can injure others, including other women. Also, the training programs usually pay little attention to the economics and social context of interactions. That is, the training may emphasize treating symptoms without acknowledging or working on the underlying problems of a society or considering the need for social change (Kramarae and Treichler, 1985: 59).

In a critique of the earlier assertiveness training programs, Nancy Henley (1979) wrote, "To focus on women's own minds and interaction styles as the source of their oppression is the most vicious sort of blaming the victim, right up there with curfews for women to save them from attack." Other critics have suggested that the programs reflect a notion—which seems characteristic of thinking in the United States—that major problems can be solved by individuals working through short training courses.

Some assertiveness training programs have been criticized as being based on traditional North American ideas of male leadership and behavior (Julia Wood, 1999). Today, as we are learning to live in a global environment, we need to be sensitive to a multicultural citizenry. We need to pay attention not only to the different expectations for and evaluations of women and women's behavior in the same culture, but also to the many cultural differences in how people worldwide express their honest feelings and exercise their personal rights without denying the rights of others.

See Also

COMMUNICATIONS: OVERVIEW; EMPOWERMENT; LEADERSHIP; MANAGEMENT; ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY

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ASTRONAUTS

See SPACE.

ATHLETICS

See SPORT.

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

See COMMUNICATIONS: AUDIENCE ANALYSIS.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL CRITICISM

The term *autobiographical criticism* describes a hybrid mode of scholarly writing now gaining increasing prominence, especially among American feminist literary scholars. Variously termed experimental critical writing, personal criticism, cross-genre writing, the new subjectivity, and narrative criticism, it is a politically and emotionally engaged, often belletristic mode that "freely mixes personal elements with research expertise" (Heller, 1992).

Although autobiographical criticism represents a radical shift in academic writing, its variants owe something to the essay tradition, with its writerly freedom; to the second-wave feminist tenet that the personal is the political; to a female psychology that allegedly favors "connected" over "separate" knowing (Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982); and to a feminist epistemology that sees social location (the nexus of one's racial, religious, gender, class, geographic, sexual, familial, and institutional histories) as necessarily implicated (and thus needing to be articulated) in one's research (Harding, 1991; Rich, 1986).

Autobiographical *literary* criticism, the most common and widely published form of autobiographical criticism, owes something, in addition, to the increasing presence of poets in the academy, to the proliferation of creative writing programs, to the historically hybrid nature of poets' prose, and to the fact that English departments house poets and novelists along with composition teachers, textual critics, and literary and cultural theorists.

Autobiographical criticism thus shares, for example, composition theorists' emphasis on writing as process, not product; reader-response theorists' attention to the reactions of readers; and some French theorists' penchant for "crossing over genre lines, cross-pollinating autobiography, fiction and theory, and challenging traditional dividing lines between subject and object, self and others" (Flieger, 1994). Autobiographical criticism may also be indebted to such first-person cultural traditions as the Latin American *testimonio* and the African-American narrative of liberation and literacy. Perhaps China and Japan, two cultures with a strong tradition of "I" writing, will be the next great producers of and influences upon autobiographical criticism.

A short list of autobiographical-critical scholars might include Appiah (philosophy and Africana studies), Behar (anthropology); Field (Asian studies); Lipton (art history); Ruddick (philosophy); Williams (law); and Anzaldua, Atkins, Brownstein, Freedman, Gallop, hooks, Miller, and Tompkins (literature, theory, pedagogy) in the United States. In the United Kingdom, the list would include Steedman (sociology and psychoanalysis) and Jouve, Roe, and Wandor (literature). Gould (literary criticism and theory) works in Canada. (See also Freedman et al., 1993.)

Autobiographical literary critics challenge "objective" notions of literary interpretation and evaluation; they claim to know themselves through literature and to know literature from the perspective of their lives. Many concur with the sentiment Jane Tompkins expresses in a much-reprinted essay, "Me and My Shadow":

> The criticism I would like to write would always take off from personal experience, would always be in some way a chronicle of my hours and days, would speak in a voice which can talk about everything, would reach out to readers like me and touch me where I want to be touched. (1987)

Autobiographical criticism—in whatever discipline—has its detractors. As more of these experiments are being published, some critics have branded the "personal" as outdated, essentialist, antitheoretical, and solipsistic. Defenders respond that although women's studies have long connected lived experience and theory, one's work and one's life, most academic feminists continued to echo establishment forms in their work even if they challenged expectations about subject matter and research methodology. As to the charge of its being antitheoretical, Jane Gallop suggests that one can think or theorize through the body, while others see personal criticism as an extension of what is meant by theory. Others support autobiographical criticism for its accessibility and inclusivity—its potential for engaging readers beyond the halls of academe, an important goal of women's studies. As the anthropologist Ruth Behar (1993) has asserted, rather than being self-absorbed, the best autobiographical scholarship reaches out to its readers, beginning with personal discovery but finally producing "a redrawn map of social terrain."

See Also

AUTOBIOGRAPHY; LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM

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Diane Freedman

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Autobiography is a literary term that refers to a writer's account of his or her own life. Used to define a literary genre, *autobiography* means the retrospective narrative of the author's life. Feminist critics, however, have sometimes used the term more flexibly to include memoirs and journals, perceiving the ways that genre and gender are inextricably intertwined. Genre, used as a set of rules to define literary texts, can preserve a hierarchy of texts that are like each other. The assumption that autobiographical subjects can present a unified and coherent narrative about themselves, which is also representative of their era or even of humanity in general, prevents much of women's autobiographical writing from being included within generic classifications. The study of women's autobiography has therefore required questioning the accepted definitions and theories of autobiography, along with the discovery of women's texts and the identification of their historical and literary importance. Autobiographical writing by women spans different eras, cultures, and literary modes and forms a rich and diverse field; on the other hand, feminist critics have also traced through autobiographical texts the difficulty for women of telling their own srory when culturally and historically they have been designated as object or "other" in forms of telling that assume a masculine subject. Approaches to autobiography have seen it both as a mode of witnessing or testimony to women's lives and women's experience and as evidence of rhe strategies of concealment, displacement, or splitting that women musr use in relation to their own lives and writing.

The study of women's autobiography has been incorporated into many different disciplines and has provided the impetus for the questioning of disciplinary as well as generic boundaries. For feminist historians women's autobiographies provide not just source material about lives previously overlooked but a way of thinking about subjectivity and its form and place within historical accounts. Social scientists have thought about the effect of their own life histories on their research methods as well as the problem of using other women's life stories as research data. Within feminist teaching the reading and writing of autobiography have been used politically as a strategy of empowerment, as a way for women to use their own experience and to recognize themselves as subjects. Autobiography has played an important part, too, in feminist thinking about the diversity of women's lives and the differences between women: its engagement with specificity, with a particular point of view, and with the materiality of women's lives has posed a challenge to theoretical generalizations.

Within feminist debates, autobiography occupies an important place between theory and practice and has been a site of questioning of the relevance of postmodernist theory to a feminist political agenda; at the same time, it provides a focus for the development of complex arguments about subjectivity and about the danger of collapsing the "textual" or the "literary" into too simple or direct a notion of "experience." Julia Swindells argues that in their autobiographies, nineteenth-century working women turned to the "literary," to inherited models of melodrama or romance, as a response to the difficulty of writing about what is gender-specific. An understanding of subjectivity depends on reading the "textual" or the intertextual and being aware of "slippages" (1985).

Shari Benstock, using Virginia Woolf as her primary example, has explored the division within the autobiographical subject between writer and written, *je* and *moi,* conscious and unconscious. The autobiographer aspires to a knowledge of herself which she can never have, and which writing itself constantly defers. This problem of autobiography is intensified for women who are doubly alienated, situated as "other" within the symbolic system. Woolf exemplifies this in questioning both the status of the self and the written in the very act of writing (1988).

Bella Brodski and Celeste Schenk, on the other hand, have argued that an acknowledgment of the textual and of the constructed nature of the subject should not be allowed to cancel out the "bios," the lived element in autobiography (1988). To allow this is to lose the possibility of addressing the social subject and issues of class, race, and sexual orientation. It is also to deny the validation of women's agency and visibility that autobiography can bring; it is to deny the importance of autobiography to a feminist agenda and politics.

See also

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL THEORY AND CRITICISM

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Linda Anderson

AUTOMATION

The term *automation* commonly refers to the partial replacement of human labor by machines. What makes this different from mechanization is that automation usually requires a combination of mechanical devices and systems for programming, monitoring, and control; this includes the capacity for a degree of self-adjustment in response to feedback.

Domestic central heating systems provide one simple illustration of this combination. The boiler and pump come on in response to an electric timer and to a thermostat set at a certain level; once the temperature in the house reaches this level, the heating switches off again. Examples in which automation is in use on a large scale include steel rolling mills, chemical processing plants, and major banks. In these contexts, automated systems are used to physically handle materials (a molten steel ingot, a batch of checks), and to monitor the processing of these within preset constraints (rolling the steel to a given thickness, sorting and recording written details within given formats).

There have been conflicting views about the scope and significance of automation; this article explores some of these with particular reference to gender relations, following a short overview of important features of the development of automated systems.

Automation: Historical Perspective

The principles that underlie automation can be identified in developments that began long before large-scale automated systems. For example, in the Jacquard loom, developed in France in the early 1800s, patterned fabrics were produced by using metal plates, punched with holes, to "program" repeating combinations of colored threads. There are recognizable similarities, here, with the later use of punched cards in the programming of early computers. As with many other aspects of the history of technology, much attention has been paid to the achievements of "great men" such as Jacquard. It has become difficult to distinguish the more diffuse processes through which large numbers of men and women have contributed to designing, implementing, and redesigning technologies. Similarly, the familiar landmarks in the history of automation tend to be located in what the novelist Doris Lessing has called the "north-west fringes" of the globe: northern Europe and North America. These landmarks include the following:

- 1920–1930s: partial automation of switching in telephone exchanges
- 1940s: introduction of automation in some areas of car assembly plants
- 1950s: development and use of the first automated machine tools
- 1960s: development of the first industrial robots
- 1970s: spread of word processing and other forms of office automation
- 1980s: development of "flexible manufacturing systems" (FMS), aiming to integrate computer-based systems that were previously separate, at shop floor, office, and management levels

Automation: Issues for Women and for Gender Relations

As with technology more generally, automation has been seen as bringing about both salvation and disaster. In 1964, for example, Robert Blauner's study predicted that automated systems would release workers from the drudgery of routine tasks; a decade later, Harry Braverman saw automation as part of a process in which technologies are used to "deskill" and degrade human labor, within a wider pattern of managerial control. Both views tended to see technology as a "cause" of change in its own right, rather than as an integral part of social and cultural relations. Both also saw women in the passive role of beneficiary or victim—rather than as active participants in technological change. But in practice, changes in the workplace, in mass communications, and in the home have proved double-edged and far more complex than either Blauner or Braverman could anticipate. Word processing, for example, has neither "freed" women clerical workers from routine typing nor destroyed women's employment in offices. Office computers can be used to speed up the large-scale production of standard letters and documents—intensifying the pressure of work for the clerical staff in a bank, for instance. Computers can also enable community or labor organizations to communicate rapidly across international boundaries, in order to share information and to develop political campaigns.

A number of studies by women have examined processes of automation from a gender perspective. Cynthia Cockburn (1983, 1985) has examined the ways in which technological systems—including automation—tend to be associated with masculinity in western societies; at the same time, she shows how processes of technological change and development can also create tension within established divisions of labor. Automation in printing or in garment manufacture, for instance, has brought an emphasis on keyboard skills rather than on crude physical strength. Cockburn describes the intense personal conflicts experienced by men contemplating the prospect of relying on skills previously associated with femininity—a blurring of previously clear-cut gender roles in the workplace.

Another dimension that has been of concern to feminists is the role of automation in countries that are currently becoming more intensively industrialized. Swasti Mitter (1986), for example, discusses the ways in which low-paid women factory workers and homeworkers, in countries such as India, are employed on casual terms by large multinational corporations. Both clerical operations and software production can be located "offshore" in this way, with potential long-term damage to local cultures, economies, and labor markets. The work involved in producing and checking silicon chips is a related concern: many women in the Pacific rim areas are employed in these activities, in which permanent damage to eyesight and other health risks can be involved.

Judy Wajcman's overview of feminist studies of science and technology (1991) illustrates the ways in which past studies of automation have tended to focus implicitly or explicitly on men's work (as with machine tools in engineering). She also casts a skeptical eye over the vision of the "smart" or "self-servicing" automated house that has emerged in some social science literature: more high-tech systems in the home will be as open to differing interpretations and possibilities as those in the office or the factory.

Some of the most thought-provoking feminist assessments of automation (and technology more generally) have been developed in fiction. In her novel *The Female Man,* first published in 1975, Joanna Russ created a "smart house" that not only cleaned itself but also provided a very responsive artificial lover: an imaginative leap somewhat beyond the confines of interactive links between computer, cooker, vacuum cleaner, and washing machine. Two novels by Marge Piercy, published in 1979 and 1992, explore the contrasting political choices embodied in automated systems: intensified surveillance and entrenched inequality or cooperative networks, in which both men and women can literally wire themselves up to the Internet, and in which automated systems are a shared sphere of activity rather than an external threat or promise.

See Also

COMPUTING: OVERVIEW; DETERMINISM: ECONOMIC; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY; NETWORKS: ELECTRONIC; TECHNOLOGY; TECHNOLOGY: WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

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Jenny Owen

B

BABY-SITTING

See CHILD CARE.

BATTERY

Broadly, the term *battery,* or *battering,* refers to some form of physical or sexual violence perpetrated by one or more individuals against one or several others. In most of the world, battering has the additional connotation of gender-related violence. Questionnaires on the prevalence of assaults, police records, court appearances, sentencing data, and prison censuses all confirm that most victims of battering are women and children, and that the majority of assailants are men. The term *battering* is ofren restricted to assaults that occur in private between individuals who know one another, rather than to violence in public or perpetrated by strangers. Most cases of battering involve the physical or sexual abuse of women by their husbands, partners, or other family members. (This does not deny the existence of battering by women—abuse of women, children, and sometimes men by women. Battering in lesbian relationships and other forms of women-on-women battering do occur, but male-perpetrated assault is many times more frequent.)

Inclusion of Psychological Abuse

In some parts of the world, typically in developed western nations, psychological abuse may also be considered battery; however, this is a more recent association. Emotional abuse is destructive. While no form of abuse should be tolerated, and ideally, all members of society should work to minimize their harmful effects on others, problems remain in extending the definition of *battering* to include psychological abuse. First, there is concern that if the term is utilized too broadly, its import will be lessened when it is applied to physical or sexual violence. Second, any variation in the definitions of battery would make it difficult to compare its prevalence from one location to another and would raise problems for determining social or other policies aimed at improving the situation.

Prevalence of Battering: Geographical and Temporal Parameters

As mentioned above, it is difficult to find comparable data concerning the prevalence of battery of women around the world. Additional challenges for determining the prevalence of assault include the fact that domestic violence is typically hidden. People are often loath to acknowledge its occurrence, and therefore instances are not reported. In addition, various social agencies, such as the police, courts, and women's shelters, each deal with only a portion of the victims of battering, making it difficult to assemble a comprehensive overview of the prevalence of violence in families from these agencies' records.

Despite these documentation problems, the extant evidence demonstrates that battering does occur in most societies. In the contemporary well-documented world, an examination of just about any newspaper reveals evidence of battering. In the case of cultures which are comparatively less well documented in print media, similar evidence is found in the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) cultural data archives, which are "a cross-indexed, cross-referenced collection of mostly primary ethnographic reports describing the ways of life of people in some 330 different cultural and ethnic groups from all regions of the world" (Levinson, 1989: 23). Levinson's study of these data demonstrates that "[w]ife beating is the most common form of family violence around the world. It occurs at least occasionally in 84.5 percent of the societies" in his sample. This is a disturbing finding for women, given that "[t]he sample is composed of 90 small-scale and peasant societies selected from the HRAF Probability Sample Files [which] is a stratified probability sample of 120 societies presumably representative of the 60 major geographical/cultural regions of the world" (1989: 31, 22). In other words, Levinson's research provides compelling evidence that battering is ubiquitous worldwide.

Documentation of the presence of battering is one thing; measuring its prevalence is another. The first methodologically rigorous attempt to do so was the American National Family Violence Survey of 1975. "This study [published by Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz, 1980] measure[d] intrafamily violence in a large, nationally representative sample. This survey found that individuals faced the greatest risk of assault and physical injury in their own homes by members of their own families" (Jasinski and Williams, 1998: ix). This finding corroborated the experiences of women working in frontline community initiatives such as battered women's shelters or refuges and rape crisis organizations. Many of these organizations began to mobilize in the early 1970s in the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and other nations. At approximately the same time, the feminist movement began gaining momentum. All of these developments shared connections, and "[t]he discovery of violence against women as a major issue in Europe and North America coincided with the early stages of *feminist* theory development. In other parts of the world the convergence of *development, human rights,* and *feminist* praxis produced the framework for discovering the nature, forms, extent and pernicious effects of violence against women" (Schuler, 1992: 2; emphases in original).

Women's Studies and Research on Battering

The development of women's studies programs combined with the grassroots mobilization of feminists and the publication, in 1979, of both Lenore Walker's *The Battered Woman,* and Dobash and Dobash's *Violence Against Wives* stimulated further research into violence against women. From these initial publications, a flood of books and articles rapidly developed: "the 1990 ISIS International Bibliographic Survey of documentation on violence against women in the 1980s identified some 650 entries from around the world" (Schuler, 1992: 1). This prolific output resulted in significant advances in understanding battering and its causes.

Explanations for Battering

The many theories advanced to explain battering can be divided into four groups based on their premises: individual models, sociological models, sociostructural models, and ecological models. Individual models comprise approaches based on unique behavioral attributes, usually attributes of the perpetrators, such as low self-esteem, substance abuse, mental illness, or inability to ascribe blame.

Sociological models move beyond an analysis of individual characteristics to examine social dynamics within the group, usually the family. In this approach, root causes are attributed to goal-directed aggression, intergenerational transmission of violence, or other stresses. For example, resource theory suggests that each partner brings material and nonmaterial resources to the relationship. If one partner lacks resources, that partner may use violence as a means to gain power in domestic interactions. Neither the sociological nor the individual models advance understanding of why women typically are the victims of violence and men are usually its perpetrators.

In contrast to the somewhat static processes envisaged in sociological models, sociostructural models are based on the dynamic powerful opposition between males and females within family units. Feminist or postmodernist researchers often theorize in this framework. For example, social scientists using patriarchal theory view domestic violence as the result of women's subordination to men.

The ecological models incorporate various aspects of the other groups, with the addition of environmental factors. An example might be research to investigate domestic violence in the specific cultural context of Indian Fiji. These final two groups of theories have been of greatest interest to women's studies. Indeed, it has been suggested that "one of the great achievements of feminism was to define wife beating as a social problem, not merely a phenomenon of particular violent individuals or relationships" (Klein et al., 1997: 1). Following this line of reasoning, many activists propose that the problem of battering is intimately linked with the issue of women's subordination to men, and as long as gender equality proves elusive, so too will peaceful egalitarian relationships between the sexes. This linkage has strong implications for public policy initiatives.

Legal Sanctions and Public Policy

According to this reasoning, social policy to decrease domestic violence should be directed toward the social, political, and economic advancement of women in order to achieve gender equity. By this means, ultimately, male aggression toward women would be diminished.

However, most public policy and legal sanctions dealing with family violence penalize the individual perpetrators with fines or prison sentences, or in some cases mandatory attendance at reeducation programs, or penalties with regard to child custody or access. There has been relatively little governmental recognition—in terms of concrete policy—of the gender inequities that foster domestic violence.

Economic Costs of Battering

In attempts to impel governments both to acknowledge the costs of domestic violence and to enact effective policies to lessen the prevalence of battering, various researchers have quantified the economic costs of intrafamily abuse. The idea is to demonstrate that funds put into preventative programs are ultimately cost-effective in terms of decreasing the amount spent on individuals' and families' recovery. A study by Gelles in 1987 (reported in Browne and Herbert, 1997: 294), for example, suggested that family violence in the United States resulted in individual economic costs of "175,500 lost days from paid work; [and] with regard to the economy of society as a whole, $44 million were spent in direct medical costs in order to provide the necessary services to victims of family violence."

The long-term solution to violence against women entails a commitment to gender equality, described in Article 5(a) of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979). The goal must be to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to eliminating prejudices and all practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women. Battery is a social problem which requires large-scale social policy such as ratification by individual nations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. However, it must also be recognized that long-standing gender imbalances will not be corrected instantly. While societies are working for more equitable gender relations, short-term approaches such as strong legal sanctions against the perpetrators of battery are necessary for the safety of its victims.

See Also

ABUSE; ANGER; DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; FAMILY: POWER RELATIONS AND POWER STRUCTURE; FEMICIDE; MISOGYNY; PORNOGRAPHY AND VIOLENCE; RAPE; SEXUAL VIOLENCE; VIOLENCE, *specific entries*

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BEAUTY CONTESTS AND PAGEANTS

Beauty pageants are popular cultural events that take many forms, have many goals, and generate a host of often disparate expectations. Though the actual structure of pageants varies depending on the context, most beauty pageants have a familiar, recognizable format: women contestants enter a competitive event where they are judged on beauty, personality, talent, and the elusive "poise." A panel of judges evaluates each contestant, and the woman who garners the most points in the various categories of the pageant—often including swimsuit, evening gown, talent, and interview competitions—wins and is crowned "queen" (Banet-Weiser, 1999).

The United States sponsors many different pageants each year including the Miss America pageant, the Miss U.S.A. pageant, and the two most famous "global beauty pageants," the Miss World and the Miss Universe pageants. However, there are scores of smaller local and international pageants that focus less on the glamour and conventional constructions of femininity displayed on stages of larger pageants than with cementing and legitimating local and cultural identity (Cohen et al., 1996). Beauty pageants have different meanings depending on cultural and geographic differences, and they are often important, significant cultural events, where "local values and imported foreign [western] ones collide on stage" (Wilk, 1996). Smaller, less corporate international pageants are often sites where contradictions, conflicts, and claims of diversity are simultaneously constructed and maintained.

Feminist protests against beauty pageants began in 1968 at the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, New Jersey. This protest is often noted as heralding the second wave of liberal feminism in the United States. At that time, feminists protested the pageant by throwing bras, girdles, and other "instruments of torture" into a "Freedom Trash Can" as a gesture of their refusal to be constrained by patriarchal society (Chapkis, 1986). Many feminists persuasively argued that pageants such as the Miss America pageant objectify and alienate women. Alice Echols (1997) added that this important argument calls attention to the way in which beauty practices and rituals constitute a particular kind of politics. The beauty pageant has often been understood in a feminist context as symbolic of the various regulatory practices and discriminatory acts of a sexist society. Objectifying and evaluating a woman's physical appearance—which constitutes the central focus of beauty pageants—has been interpreted as a microcosm of the way that patriarchal societies regulate and monitor women's bodies more generally.

Because of vocal feminist protests against the beauty pageant, the event itself has been fundamentally transformed. Beauty pageants continue to be a popular cultural form where women are evaluated on the basis of their physical appearance, but the pageant itself often appropriates liberal feminist rhetoric in terms of equal opportunity, access, and tolerance. Beauty pageants in the 1990s in the United States and elsewhere have been forced to confront and respond to demands that they accurately reflect racial and ethnic diversity, and that they adjust their format and goals to reflect the contemporary goals of women. However, because beauty pageants remain dedicated to the objectification of women's bodies, the goals of these events seem to remain contradictory and conflicted.

See Also

BODY; IMAGES OF WOMEN: OVERVIEW

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Sarah Banet-Weiser

BIAS

See DISCRIMINATION; HETEROPHOBIA AND HOMOPHOBIA; MISOGYNY; RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA; and SEXISM.

BIGAMY

Bigamy refers to the narrowly defined crime of having two wives or two husbands at the same time. While criminalizing marriage between individuals who already have a living spouse, bigamy does not address a wider range of behavioral practices that fall outside the boundaries of exclusive monogamous marriage: long-term consensual unions, adultery while residing with a spouse, premarital sex, and casual liaisons (Boyer, 1995). Although the term *bigamy* extends to marital behaviors of both men and women, in practice bigamy is largely understood as a crime committed by men who have two or more wives at once. The concept of bigamy as a crime appears to have its roots in Christian Europe, dating back at least to the Middle Ages.

Western colonial expansion and missionizing brought the European Christian belief in and practice of monogamy into conflict with the polygamous family relationships of many different peoples in the Americas, Africa, Australia, and Asia. Bigamy was a passionate issue for European colonialists and missionaries and often represented a lightning rod for the expression of tensions between indigenous and colonial ways of life (Hunt, 1991). Frequently, Europeans expressed the belief that plural marriages degraded women in the societies that openly practiced polygyny.

In the United States, controversy over bigamy peaked in the mid-nineteenth century and focused on the Mormons, whose church formally advocated polygamy until 1890. Opponents of Mormon polygamy claimed that plural marriages degraded Mormon women, that polygamy was lustful and immoral, and that the practice of plural marriages eroded the marital relationship. Antibigamy legislation, however, was used not to advance the position of Mormon women but to threaten Mormon civil rights and seize property of the church. During the antipolygamy campaigns of the late 1800s, many feminists, who equated polygamy with the oppression of women, were surprised to find Morman women publicly demonstrating in favor of the right to plural marriage as a matter of religious freedom.

In postcolonial times western and nonwestern feminists alike, who believe that polygamy erodes women's status and power, advocate its elimination. The liberation of women, especially in Muslim countries, is associated with the abolition of the practice of polygamy. For example, in 1957, after gaining independence from France, Tunisia attempted to establish formal equality between the sexes by guaranteeing women certain rights, among them the elimination of polygamy. The attempt to achieve liberation for women through the abolition of polygamy is not restricted to Muslim countries: in 1950 Communist China enacted a National Marriage Law that sought to enhance women's status by prohibiting a number of practices, among them polygamy.

See Also

ADULTERY; MARRIAGE: OVERVIEW; MORMONS; POLYGYNY AND POLYANDRY; WIFE

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Katherine T. McCaffrey

BIOETHICS: Feminist

Bioethics and second-wave feminism were both offspring of the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1960s, although they pursued different paths toward maturity. Persisting throughout many turns and twists in feminist thinking has been an unswerving commitment to identifying, analyzing, and subverting structures of power and authority that oppress women. However, few mainstream bioethicists have attended systematically to power imbalances in physician-patient and researcher-subject relationships or to the background conditions of such relationships. Bioethics has remained largely insensitive to hierarchical rankings that parcel people into more or less arbitrary groups—sex, race, ethnicity, age, and susceptibility to illness and disability. Feminist bioethics aims to rectify these imbalances.

The Emergence of Feminist Bioethics

Women have a long history of interest in health care issues extending back to midwifery and nursing before the medical profession took control of these practices. In the 1960s, women rose in protest over the increasing medicalization of their bodily functions, and interest in the fledgling women's health movement swelled. The first edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* appeared in 1969. By the mid-1970s, feminist scholars were decrying the erosion of access to abortion, supposedly secured by *Roe* v. *Wade*, and lamenting childbirth practices that sacrificed the humanity of the women to the convenience of her obstetrician and the presumably independent rights of her fetus. In the 1980s, feminists' interest in new reproductive technologies mounted, and the National Institutes of Health belatedly acknowledged the long-standing exclusion of women from clinical trials, the consequent dearth of research on diseases prevalent among women, and the differential effects of drugs on the female body. By then, work by feminist bioethicists was being widely circulated in feminist publications, and some was surfacing in bioethics journals. In 1981 Helen Bequaert Holmes and others published an anthology that was arguably the first book to link bioethics with systematic gender analysis.

It took almost another decade, however, before scholarship in feminist bioethics reached a critical mass. The feminist philosophy journal *Hypatia* devoted two special issues to feminist ethics and medicine in 1989, and in 1992 a collection based on these articles appeared as *Feminist Perspectives in Medical Ethics*. In the same year, the first book-length treatment of feminist bioethical theory appeared—Susan Sherwin's *No Longer Patient: Feminist Ethics and Health Care*. In the next year, works by Susan Bordo and Mary Mahowald appeared critiquing dominant medical and cultural attitudes toward women's bodies, and Anne Donchin and Helen Bequaert Holmes founded the International Network on Feminist Approaches to Bioethics (FAB). Recognizing the need for a cross-cultural perspective on bioethical issues that is responsive to nondominant social groups, FAB aimed to foster development of a more inclusive theory of bioethics.

As articulated in the work of feminist bioethicists and incorporated in FAB's aims, three goals have been central to development of feminist bioethics:

1. To extend bioethical theory to encompass women in all social locations as well as other social groups susceptible to harm through group identification and to assimilate the significance of race, ethnicity, and gender in bioethical theory and health care practice.
2. To reexamine the principles and legitimizing functions of bioethics insofar as they have been constructed from the standpoint of an elite group blinded to its own partiality. Dominant bioethical theory has overlooked such key components of moral life as context, partiality, and relational bonds and is often unresponsive to institutionalized injustices. Assimilation into theory and practice of these neglected moral dimensions can serve as corrective to the common tendency to regard patients only in their generality—as repeatable instances of generic care—ingnoring particularities essential to understanding the situations of sick and vulnerable individuals.
3. To create new strategies and methodologies that can interject the standpoints of nondominant people into policy-making processes, catalyze change within both developing and developed countries, and empower marginalized people to address their problems in terms of their own cultural beliefs and interests.

Recent Developments and Future Directions

In the 1990s, feminist bioethics began to catch the attention of think tanks, journal editors, and textbook publishers, and it is now a credible topic for graduate students' dissertations. However, although more women are turning to bioethics scholarship, their influence on the field is still limited. The format of most bioethics texts has changed remarkably little. As though women's expertise were confined to childbearing issues, women's contributions to the more established bioethics anthologies have been relegated primarily to the sections on abortion, maternal-fetal relations, and reproductive technologies. Despite diversification in bioethical theory, the prestige of theoretical approaches that rely on abstract universal norms and regard concrete individuals as instances of generic "man" still remains high. Feminist critiques of mainstream bioethical theory tend to be classified along with communitarianism and casuistry as "alternative" approaches or subsumed under an "ethic of care." And, although bioethicists are better represented on public-policy panels and in medical school faculties, they include few women and virtually no feminists.

In other respects, too, feminist influence on the direction of bioethics scholarship and teaching remains peripheral. As globalization extends first world technologies into developing economies, American bioethicists are now exporting the very same affliction feminist bioethicists identified in the United States: a focus on abstract individuals and universal principles that slight concrete people and their lives. Moreover, as formerly socialist countries shift toward market economies, along with a tendency to appropriate morally dubious western technological practices comes a proclivity to view women's bodies as (often faulty) reproductive machines. Nonwestern leaders, by coupling western technology with social power, can intensify control over women by the medical establishment and utilize women's bodies to reproduce their own distinctive cultural norms. In both developed and developing countries, the effects of biomedical practices on women still tend to be viewed as only incidental side effects that raise "women's questions" which can readily be deferred.

Feminist bioethics, then, still has a considerable distance to travel before it can overcome the mistaken assumption that feminists are addressing only "women's concerns"—a special ethics for women. Like the broader feminist movement, which also aims to rectify systemic injustices, feminist bioethicists look forward to a future when both theory and practice have been transformed, when the voices of the socially marginalized are fully recognized, and the needs of all peoples are incorporated into a system of health care justice that is responsive to the differing conditions of human lives across all the earth.

See Also

ABORTION; DISABILITY: HEALTH AND SEXUALITY; ETHICS: FEMINIST; ETHICS: MEDICAL; ETHICS: SCIENTIFIC; EXPERIMENTS ON WOMEN; FETUS; HEALTH: OVERVIEW; MEDICAL CONTROL OF WOMEN; MEDICINE: INTERNAL, *I and II;* REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS; REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES; SCIENTIFIC SEXISM AND RACISM

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Anne Donchin

BIOGRAPHY

The word *biography* was first defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1683. Since then, its central meaning has remained the same: the narrated life-course of a person. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, lives of women were used to evoke humility and modesty in their female readers, as in Mrs. Mary Pilkington's *Biography for Girls* (1799) and biographies of women such as Florence Nightingale (Vicinus, in Shortland and Yeo, 1996). Nineteenth-century positivist approaches, which made literary, artistic, and political figures popular subjects, affirmed the place of biography as a means of recording heroic achievements in the public sphere.

In the twentieth century, several debates about the writing of biography led to a departure from the simple collection and narration of "facts." Tension developed between history and fiction; for example, Virginia Woolf described her biography of Roger Fry as "all too detailed and tied down," in contrast to her *Orlando,* a study of Vita Sackville-West, which she considered a "writer's holiday" (Edel, 1984: 208, 190).

The increasing links between biography, sociology, history, and psychology have provoked much discussion. The interdisciplinary journal *Biography,* published at the Center for Biographical Research at the University of Hawaii, has provided a medium for such cross-fertilization. Biographers' incorporation of Freudian ideas in exploring powerful women's inner lives, as in Leo Abse's study of Margaret Thatcher (1989), have provoked questions about how best to apply such models in interpreting a life.

Feminist biographers have destabilized the voice of the authoritative biographer by challenging us to reconsider versions of lives that glorify individual greatness and mask the social context that has produced the subject (Stanley, 1992). By introducing the voice of the author, some explore their own relationship to the subject as part of the text (Modjeska, 1990). The notion of a coherent "self" with a life-course recoverable by another has also prompted post-modern critiques of biography as a form (Rhiel and Suchoff, 1996).

The consumption of biographies by the book-buying public has created a profitable genre within the publishing industry. In 1994, a poll on reading habits in Britain found that biography was the most popular genre of nonfiction (Shortland and Yeo, 1996). Deirdre Bair and Claire Tomalin both have made their mark in this industry, Bair with her biographies of Simone de Beauvoir (1990) and Anaïs Nin (1995) and Tomalin with studies of Mary Wollstonecraft (1974), Katherine Mansfield (1987), and Jane Austen (1997). The public's desire to glimpse secrets of the famous has led to an industry of works that, like Andrew Morton's biography of Princess Diana, can change the way powerful figures are perceived and alter their place in the public sphere.

In her study of the various biographies of the poet Sylvia Plath, Janet Malcolm claimed that a biographer is like "the professional burglar, breaking into the house, rifling through certain drawers... and triumphantly bearing [the] loot away" (1994: 9). In the way biographers appear to transgress on the privacy of the subject, ethical issues arise about whose interests are served in the process of biography.

On the other hand, the recording of life-stories can convey a history that often is hidden from the public's gaze. Women of color, indigenous women, lesbians, working-class women, and women with disabilities may not see their lives reflected in mainstream culture, and biographies can help them claim their place in history. Biography can convey a synthesis of public and private because it describes the shaping of a life-project through self-discovery. This genre remains a growing and exciting field in women's studies through its depiction of the experience of resistance and acceptance.

See Also

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL CRITICISM: AUTOBIOGRAPHY; CULTURAL CRITICISM; DIARIES AND JOURNALS; FICTION; HEROINE; HISTORY; JOURNALISM; LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM; LITERATURE: OVERVIEW; POSTMODERNISM: LITERARY THEORY

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Belinda Robson

BIOLOGICAL DETERMINISM

Biological determinism is the belief that human behaviors may be attributed to a person's underlying essential genetic makeup. Popularly discussed in debates about nature versus nurture or heredity versus environment, deterministic thinking has its roots in evolutionary theory and dates back to the middle to late nineteenth century. Deterministic theories rose to prominence after Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection was popularized, and they became widespread in the United States and Europe in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Applications of biological determinism to social and cultural problems have usually coincided with periods of social upheaval (Bem, 1993; Bleier, 1984). Biological determinism has been used to discredit social movements such as antislavery, women's rights, and women's suffrage. Theories rising from biological determinism include eugenics, social Darwinism, and sociobiology.

Francis Galton applied—actually, misapplied—evolutionary thinking to heredity when he invented eugenics. Although Galton appreciated the interaction of heredity and environment, he still thought that selective mating would result in a superior populace—one that did not include racial mixing (Pearson, 1996). The Nazis applied such biological ideas to social and cultural institutions in the mid-twentieth century (Birke and Hubbard, 1995). Biological differences assumed enormous significance and resulted in gender segregation in schools as well as a continuum of racial superiority, which placed some races below animals. This was the worst manifestation of biology as destiny.

Throughout history, women have been subjugated in various cultures because of their assumed inherent nature (Bem, 1993). Seen as passive, nurturing, and dependent, women have been denied higher education, the right to vote, and other means for social and cultural advancement. Education was thought to be damaging to women's reproductive system. Even many nineteenth-century suffragists used deterministic beliefs about innate racial differences to promote their cause.

The sexual division of labor has long been assumed to be natural and universal, although, for example, Indian women contribute widely to agriculture and dairy farming. Recent studies reveal that in rural India agriculture is the major occupation of working women (Shiva, 1995)—a fact thar aften does not appear in statistics because of sexist definitions of "work."

In the late nineteenth century, Herbert Spencer used evolution to justify a conservative political and social agenda known as social Darwinism. Spencer used biology to justify restrictive Victorian constraints on women's roles. Although social Darwinism is no longer popular in its original version, a new form became popular in the twentieth century—sociobiology (Bleier, 1984). In the mid-1970s, E. O. Wilson published his first book on sociobiology, which casts the world in biological universals largely free from the influence of environment, learning, or culture.

This persistent manifestation of biological determinism reinforces cultural and racial stereotypes under the guise of genetic predisposition. These stereotypes continue to cast women as passive, manipulative, and dependent (Bleier, 1984). In the wake of the modern feminist movement, feminist critiques of science have included both critics and adherents of biologically deterministic thinking (Bem, 1993). Though no one perspective of biological determinism appears to be totally correct, women and society continue to benefit from the ongoing critique.

See Also

DIVISION OF LABOR; ESSENTIALISM; EUGENICS; NATURE-NURTURE DEBATE; SCIENCE: FEMINIST CRITIQUES

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Barbara I. Bond

BIOLOGY

The impact of women's studies on the biological sciences can be best understood by exploring two distinct but related fields—"women in science" and "gender in science." The distinction between sex and gender, absent in scientific discourse, is a significant contribution of feminists and is central to feminist critiques of science. *Sex* generally refers to the biological categories male and female, whereas *gender* refers to the cultural categories masculine and feminine, shaped and defined by society.

Research on "women in science" includes the work of historians, philosophers, and sociologists who study the presence of women scientists and their political, social, and intellectual influence, past and present. Although a perusal of textbooks, Nobel laureates, and scientific "greats" would suggest a lack of women in biology, feminists have documented a long and rich history of women's participation in the field. This participation occurred despite strong social and political factors and speaks to the compelling interest, devotion, and commitment of women in the scientific enterprise.

In considering the factors that contribute to the continued underrepresentation of women in the biological sciences, two main arguments have been put forth. The first, largely from within the sciences, notes that with the increased visibility of women—thanks to women's movements—things have improved, especially in biology, a field that historically has had more women in its ranks, as contrasted with the physical sciences. Legal cases brought by women charging sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and unfair tenure and hiring practices have exposed unjust policies and opened the doors for the entry of more women. This camp argues that the problem lies not within science but in historical problems of women's "access" to scientific careers. Scholarships, fellowships, and aggressive affirmative action policies will provide access for women, and, once in science, women will be welcomed and included in the scientific enterprise. Many such arguments cite the increased participation of women in biology—in the United States, for instance, the proportion of women among employed biologists rose from 18.3 percent in 1978 to 41 percent in 1995.

The second argument is that science is a social enterprise and reflects a history of male domination in a "masculinist culture." Feminists supporting this view point out that although the overall numbers of women in biology have increased, women continue to be disproportionately represented in the lower ranks. These feminists argue that the problem lies in the "culture" of science and, therefore, programs to recruit women should work actively to retain women by transforming the culture of science rather than transforming women to fit into the culture.

Scholars have largely focused on white, western women scientists, but recent cross-cultural work suggests equivalent though culture-specific barriers for women scientists in other countries. Colonial and postcolonial policies have institutionalized western science across the globe in medicine, agriculture, and other fields in the guise of development replacing indigenous practices.

The greatest impact of scholarship in women's studies has been made by extensive work attacking the concept of science as gender-neutral and value-free. Influential figures include Ruth Bleier, Anne Fausto-Sterling, Donna Haraway, Sandra Harding, Ruth Hubbard, Evelyn Fox Keller, and Sue Rosser. Their work shifts the focus from biological sex and "human nature" to gender. Feminist scholars have argued that science constructs gender and vice versa, and that social policies use "scientific knowledge" to reinforce contemporary social stereotypes of masculine and feminine, thereby justifying the continued subjugation of women. They have found considerable evidence that science is socially constructed, citing various episodes in history when gender stereotypes of a culture were encoded into scientific theories. Thus, they argue, science constructing gender and gender constructing science have together proved a potent tool in maintaining the status quo—that is, social privilege is scientifically encoded into biological privilege.

Critiques of biological determinism are particularly significant because of its implications for women's lives and women's health. The view of women's biology as inherently inferior has a severe impact on the social and intellectual role of women in contemporary society. In addition to challenging the extension of data from men to women and the exclusion of women subjects from medical research, feminists have challenged the medical view of women as deviant from "normal" male biology—the "disease model" of women's biology, for example, premenstrual syndrome, menopause, and childbirth. Studies on sex differences span many disciplines where, it is held, complex traits have been reduced to being biologically determined by individual genes (like the fields of genetics, cell biology, and developmental biology); individual hormones (endocrinology); or structures in the brain or other organs (neuroscience and anatomy). Feminist critics have attacked these studies on grounds of poor experimental design, inadequate data, incorrect assumptions, poor controls, overstated conclusions, or extrapolation from studies of animals to humans (as in primatology and animal behavior). The mass media publicize these research studies because they validate the "status quo," but there are few data to support assertions that any group is biologically inferior.

Using close, careful historical documentation feminist scholars have argued that science has served the interest of white, western, heterosexual, upper-class men. Although scientific theories changed, the subordination of various groups remained, from eighteenth-century beliefs that educating women deprived the reproductive organs of blood (because the brain would need more) to current debates on mathematics and spatial ability. These theories seem Eurocentric and class-based and also illogical: if educating women reduces their fertility physiologically, why did racist and imperialist policies not involve mass education of all women of color?

If the history of science suggests that science mirrors society, how can we use this insight in the current practices and methodology of science? Feminist critics of science have developed a framework to explore questions of objectivity and subjectivity and new grounds for alternative epistemologies. An unfortunate historical fact is that many of the feminist critiques have developed outside the sciences, removed from the lives of women scientists, creating distrust between women scientists and feminist critics of science. It is increasingly evident that, over the next decade, women's studies needs to bridge this chasm with analyses beginning with "the question of where and how the force of beliefs, interests, and cultural norms enter into the process by which effective knowledge is generated" (Keller, 1987: 90).

See Also

ANATOMY; BIOLOGICAL DETERMINISM; EDUCATION: SCIENCE; ESSENTIALISM; HORMONES; NATURE-NURTURE DEBATE; PHYSIOLOGY; PRIMATOLOGY; PSYCHOLOGY: OVERVIEW; PSYCHOLOGY: NEUROSCIENCE AND BRAIN RESEARCH; REPRODUCTION: OVERVIEW; REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES; SCIENCE: FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY; SCIENCE: OVERVIEW; SCIENCE: FEMINISM AND SCIENCE STUDIES;

SCIENCE: FEMINIST CRITIQUES; SCIENCE: TRADITIONAL AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE; SCIENTIFIC SEXISM AND RACISM

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Banu Subramaniam

BIRTH

See CHILDBIRTH and PREGNANCY AND BIRTH.

BIRTH CONTROL

See CONTRACEPTIVES.

BISEXUALITY

The term *bisexual* has a checkered history and has undergone several shifts in meaning since its first recorded appearance in 1804. It originally meant "of two sexes," and it has often been associated with hermaphroditism or androgyny. However, most bisexual activists and theorists today use the term *bisexuality* to refer to sexual attraction to, desire for, or activity with more than one sex, and distinguish it from sexual attraction, desire, or activity directed exclusively toward one particular sex, which some bisexual theorists refer to as *monosexuality* (George, 1993; Rose et al., 1996).

According to some commentators, the convergence of second-wave feminism and the "sexual revolution" of the late 1960s and early 1970s created a climate in which bisexuality was regarded by many feminists as a sexual option, part of the sexual autonomy and freedom for women that were important feminist goals. This climate was short-lived, however, and the increasingly bitter "sex wars" of the late 1970s and 1980s saw the rise of feminist hostility toward bisexual women, who were often accused of undermining the women's movement by taking energy from women while putting their own energies into men, or of retreating behind "heterosexual privilege" when a political situation became too serious, or of simply lacking the courage to come out as lesbian (George, 1993; Rust, 1995). Feminists' negative attitude toward bisexual women was compounded by more general stereotypes of bisexuals as promiscuous, irresponsible, and—an effect of the "moral panic" regarding HIV/AIDS in the 1980s—carriers and spreaders of disease, either from gay communities to the "general" (that is, heterosexual) population, or, in some versions of the "moral panic," from men to lesbian communities (Rose et al., 1996). Bisexual theorists and activists coined the term *biphobia* to describe this kind of stereotyping and prejudice, which comes both from mainstream heterosexual society and from lesbian and gay communities (George, 1993).

Partly in response to biphobia of various kinds, bisexuality enjoyed something of a renaissance in the 1990s, although it did not immediately become clear to what extent one could speak of a coherent bisexual movement (Hutchins and Kaahumanu, 1991; Rose et al., 1996). Despite (or perhaps because of) the previously negative attitudes often encountered by bisexual women within feminism, some distinctively bisexual feminist analyses of gender, sexuality, and oppression began to emerge in the 1990s. These included a celebration of the sexual autonomy and freedom of choice represented by a sexuality not subordinated to gender roles or expectations, and an analysis of the specific forms of oppression of bisexual women as distinct from those faced by nonbisexual women and some men (George, 1993; Rust, 1995). Some bisexual feminists, more radically and ambitiously, claim that bisexuality subverts dominant constructions of gender and sexuality as binary or dichotomous (that is, divided into exactly two parts), and therefore has the potential to deconstruct the binary oppositions (conceptual pairings such as masculine-feminine, strong-weak, rational-emotional) that underpin sexism and heterosexism (Hemmings, 1993; Weise, 1992). Indeed, some argue that binary opposition and dualistic thinking underpin the whole tradition of western thought and that the mechanism of oppression itself is based on the hierarchical relations set up by this dualistic tradition; some bisexual feminists suggest that bisexuality may therefore have the potential not just to deconstruct current notions of gender and sexuality but even to deconstruct western dualism and hence the possibility of oppression itself (Rose et al., 1996; Weise, 1992). Although this perspective has many attractions and may gain popularity, it presents political and theoretical difficulties. Some formulations from within queer politics and theory suggest that gender and sexuality may not always be as straightforwardly binary or dichotomous as this perspective assumes, particularly in the light of transgendered sexualities (Nataf, 1996); in any case, it remains unclear, to say the least, how bisexuality is to make the leap from asserting itself as a feminist identity or practice to dismantling the entire edifice of western metaphysics.

Other recent work has investigated the ways in which bisexuality may covertly inform apparently nonbisexual lives, histories, and sexualities. One of the most common popular assumptions about bisexuality is that "everyone is bisexual really," meaning that all human beings are potentially bisexual; this view of bisexuality as potential is also current in psychology and psychoanalysis, from Freud onward (Garber, 1996; George, 1993). Many bisexual feminists now reject this as a myth, pointing out that not everyone is actually bisexual here and now and that human beings are probably neither more nor less potentially bisexual than they are potentially lesbian, gay, heterosexual, or anything else. Some have argued that bisexuality often functions as a subtext of other forms of sexual identity: as the excluded other that embodies the collective fears and desires of particular sexual groups (Rust, 1995), or as a sexual narrative which may emerge when sexuality is considered as a process in continuous flux rather than as a fixed state or identity (Garber, 1996). Such work suggests ways in which bisexuality may have importance for feminism, both as a concept and for the political goals and contributions of bisexual women.

See Also

AIDS AND HIV; EPISTEMOLOGY; HETEROPHOBIA AND HOMOPHOBIA; HETEROSEXISM; HETEROSEXUALITY; LESBIANISM; OTHER; QUEER THEORY; SEXUAL ORIENTATION; SEXUALITY: OVERVIEW; TRANSGENDER

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Web Sites

http://www.bi.org
http://www.bisexual.org

Merl Storr

BLACK FEMINISM

See FEMINISM: AFRICAN-AMERICAN and FEMINISM: BLACK BRITISH.

BLACKNESS AND WHITENESS

In sixteenth-century Europe, words for *black* had negative connotations of ill-fortune, impurity, and evil. Words for *white* had connotations of innocence, purity, and blessedness. When Europeans applied these terms to people, despite obvious physical inaccuracies, the words contributed to the perception that Africans and south Asians were the moral and physical opposite of Europeans: so different that they could be treated more like animals than humans.

In the late eighteenth century, western scientists linked color with cultural stereotypes to create the concept of race. In the first "scientific" racial taxonomy, the Swedish naturalist Carl von Linne divided people into four types:

Americanus or red—Tenacious, contented, free, ruled by custom
Europeanus or white—Light, lively, inventive, ruled by rites
Asiaticus or yellow—Stern, haughty, stingy, ruled by opinion
Africanus or black—Cunning, slow, negligent, ruled by caprice. (Corcos, 1997, p. 17)

Even after early twentieth-century scientists objected to the idea of biological races, color-specific concepts of race remained a central, if mutable, feature of western ideology and discourse.

Definitions of *white* and *nonwhite* have changed over time and across national boundaries. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century slave owners in the United States categorized people with "one drop" of African blood as legally black, but people with mixed Native American and European ancestry could be legally white. American and northern European governments have at times considered Arab, Latino, Irish, Italian, and Jewish people white, and at other times nonwhite (Allen, 1994; Morsy, 1994; Sacks, 1994). Whereas colonial powers constructed race in binary terms, Latin American countries such as Brazil developed over one hundred words for racial identity and skin color (Rodriguez, 1994). Ruth Frankenburg observes that "'white' is as much as anything else an economic and political category maintained over time by a changing set of exclusionary practices both legislative and customary" (1993: 11–12).

Despite the racist ideology inherent in western concepts of race, oppressed minorities and colonized nations often constructed positive interpretations of racial identity. As Audre Lorde writes, "It is axiomatic that if we do not define ourselves for ourselves, we will be defined by others—for their use and to our detriment" (1984: 45). In the 1960s, the African-American "black power" movement consciously transformed the derogatory label *black* into a positive term, signifying strength, beauty, and unity. Native American activists similarly adopted the term "red power." These movements allied themselves with anticolonial struggles around the world and challenged western representations of the "other" with native articulations of ethnic pride and self-determination.

Patricia Hill Collins argues that Africans have identified with the social construction of blackness and race not only as a response to white racism but also because the concepts encompass "individual and group valuation of an independent, long-standing Afrocentric consciousness" (1991: 27). In contrast, contemporary white Europeans and Americans seldom describe whiteness as salient to their sense of self, and they often deny the cultural specificity of their worldviews (Garza and Herringer, 1987). Postcolonial scholars have described the absence of expressed white identity as a consequence of imperialism: western constructions of bounded, namable, subordinate "others" dialectically created whiteness as an empty, unmarked, normative category (Trinh, 1986/1987). In the last two decades of the twentieth century, feminist scholars and political activists devoted increasing attention to the investigation and articulation of relationships between gender identity and racial or ethnic identity, including whiteness (see, for instance, Davis, 1981; Frankenberg, 1993; Lorde, 1984; Moghadam, 1994; Moraga and Anzaldua, 1981; Trinh, 1986/1987).

See Also

ANTIRACIST AND CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS; APARTHEID, SEGREGATION, AND GHETTOIZATION; EDUCATION: ANTIRACIST; ETHNIC STUDIES; EUROCENTISM: OTHER; RACE; RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

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Lori Blewett

BLENDED FAMILIES

See STEPFAMILIES.

BLUESTOCKINGS

The term *bluestocking* has been used since the beginning of the nineteenth century as a derogatory label for any woman whose ostentatious display of learning makes her behavior arrogant and immodest, hence "unfeminine." Although the primary objection is to the woman's appearance rather than to the improvement of her mind, the kind and degree of improvement are also at issue: the bluestocking typically dabbles in male pursuits such as mathematics, science, or philosophy. The term rapidly came to be used in a negative sense; but it originally had a positive connotation, referring first to intellectual men and then more specifically to a group of celebrated women in late-eighteenth-century London. Although the term has been applied to women actively engaged in promoting salons and intellectual culture in various countries, it properly refers only to the British group. The subsequent generalization and pejorative use of the term coincided with reaction against the French Revolution, as such reaction affected assumptions about gender, the social role of women, and changes in the political temper at the turn of the nineteenth century.

The Bluestocking Circle was the group of London hostesses whose imitation of the Parisian fashion for salons created for them a degree of fame. But, unlike the Parisian *salonières,* these women were less interested in re-creating a court atmosphere at home than in creating an outlet for female intellectualism during the London season. Dominated by Elizabeth Montagu (1720–1800), who became known as "queen of the Blues," this circle of intelligent and educated women created in their London mansions a social space for men and women to gather and engage in intellectual and literary debate. The original group included the hostesses and their close friends: Elizabeth Montagu, Elizabeth Vesey, Elizabeth Carter, Catherine Talbot, Mary Delany, Hester Chapone, and Frances Boscawen. Soon a younger and more literary generation of women joined: Hester Thrale, Fanny Burney, and Hannah More (whose poem "Bas Bleu; or Conversation," immortalized the group).

Montagu, Carter, and Vesey were the formative group whose friendship and correspondence began the exchanges in the 1760s that resulted in holding the London salons. Although their own use of the term *bluestocking* was originally in reference to male intellecrualism—indeed, Vesey apparently coined the term for their philosophically minded friend Benjamin Stillingfleet, because he wore worsted blue stockings instead of white silk hose—they gradually began to use the term to refer to the kind of literate "conversation" they cultivated, finally calling it "blue stocking philosophy" to each other. Such conversations often included their favorite pastime, the promotion of women's education and intellectual endeavors. Elizabeth Carter's own classical scholarship, including her translation of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus (1758), provided Montagu in particular with a model of what female intellectualism could achieve. The Blues proved themselves women of letters with the publication of Carter's *Epictetus* (the first edition of which was printed by Samuel Richardson) and *Poems* (1762), in addition to her contributions to *Gentleman's Magazine;* Montagu's work of literary criticism *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare* (1772) and her three *Dialogues of the Dead;* Catherine Talbot's *Reflections on the Seven Days of the Week* (1770) and *Essays on Various Subjects* (1772); and Hester Chapone's *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind* (1773) and *Miscellanies* (1775). They also supported women writers such as Charlotte Turner Smith, Mary Collyer, Sarah Fielding, Hannah More, Fanny Burney, Ann Yearsley, and Montagu's sister Sarah Scott. They were friends with men such as Samuel Johnson, David Garrick, Samuel Richardson, George Berkeley, George Lyttelton, Laurence Sterne, Horace Walpole, and Joshua Reynolds.

The salons were made possible by Edward Montagu's will, in which at his death in 1775 he left his estate to his wife. Elizabeth traveled to Paris, heard Voltaire speak at the Académie Française, and was herself received as an author. She was able to build a large house in Portman Square in London and entertain with "conversaziones" where aristocrats, intelligentsia, and artists mingled, as well as Parisian-style salons. While Montagu favored assemblies where debate was emphasized, Vesey developed a more informal style for which she became famous. The small rooms and spaces in Vesey's house encouraged her guests to gather in various groups for multiple conversations.

In addition to the creation of the London salons, the Bluestocking Circle also contributed much to making women's education acceptable, and to disarming the conventional and disabling association between women artists and sexual laxity. But with Montagu's death in 1800 the Bluestocking Circle was broken.

Even before this, younger women of intellectual inclination found little encouragement of the kind Burney and More had experienced when they were first introduced to the circle. By the late 1790s "bluestocking" had become a term of disapprobation and eventually misogyny. It began to mark a woman who was ungainly in society rather than a suave and sophisticated society hostess; the blue was by this time a woman unaware of how her learning detracted from her person by making her mentally and politically suspect. The blue was a bit mad, and possibly more than a bit jacobin à la Mary Wollstonecraft. By the time Jane Austen wrote *Pride and Prejudice,* the ungainly and unattractive sister Mary was cast as a bluestocking to oppose her essential antisocialism to Elizabeth's sociable but narrowly educated native wit.

The best-known visual rribute to the Bluestockings' importance remains Richard Samuel's painting *Nine Living Muses of Great Britain,* exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1779. The painting, now at the National Portrait Gallery, shows Elizabeth Montagu surrounded by other luminaries such as Charlotte Lennox and Catherine Macaulay, with Hannah More standing behind her. Montagu is shown sitting in critical judgment; this prominent placement in the composition is testimony to her centrality in the promotion of culture in London, and of women's intellectual and literary achievements.

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Elizabeth Fay

BODY

The female body as a general concepr and actual individual women's bodies represent, of course, a very complex subject that can be approached in many ways and as part of many disciplines—anatomically, physiologically, historically, socially, aesthetically; in terms of health, of art, of literature, of economics; and on and on. This essay will discuss certain aspects of the body as a current sociocultural phenomenon.

The emergence of the feminist movement and the development of feminist theory have called into question the idea that biology is destiny. Social thought has been reoriented toward the study of the body as a social construct. Feminism, lesbian and gay politics, and the work of theorists such as Michel Foucault have led to an increased sensitivity to subtle forms of power that control and mold the body.

The ideas that any society develops regarding the human body can be thought of as receptors, organizers, and ordering codes that can project themselves into the social and physical spheres surrounding the body. In western societies, for instance, genital and reproductive distinctions between biological men and women have been considered a sufficient explanation for different identities, needs, and desires. Recent evidence suggests that our bodies are, in a sense, constructed of a complex web of beliefs, habits, ideologies, and social practices, although the relationships between these have yet to be investigated. We know, for example, that the dichotomy between mind and body is not as clear-cut in African cultures and traditional cultures as it tends to be in many other places. We also know that in some Asian cultures, sex is considered an integral part of healthy living and a way to achieve divinity.

The way we think shapes the way we live. There are many different and often contradictory discourses defining our bodies. Individual bodies are shaped and shape themselves in relation to preexisting sets of meaning, which regulate and control perceptions and behavior according to consciously and unconsciously accepted rules.

In western societies, the body, sexuality, and gender are intertwined and are heavily influenced by the fact that children, on the basis of their physiological characteristics, are assigned a gender at birth. This constitutes a set of cultural mandates that will order their sexuality and behavior. Gender, the social condition of being a woman or a man, and sexuality, the cultural way of living out our bodily experiences and desires, will be inextricably linked from that point on. Gender can be thought of as the corporeal locus of cultural meanings, both received and reconstructed, and sexuality as a way of fashioning one's identity in the experience of a body that is constituted from and around certain rules for socially accepted behavior.

In contemporary Judeo-Christian societies, the male body and male sexuality remain the norms by which we judge women's bodies. Despite all the debate that has taken place in recent decades, female sexuality continues to be a problem. Women's bodies are understood and acted upon by science, which involves a male-based model of social and natural reality. With regard to the female body, modern medicine concentrates on menstruation, reproduction, and menopause and may use metaphors based on these aspects of femaleness—while female sexuality is seen as an enigma. Since the late nineteenth century, the conventional image of female sexuality has been that it is basically passive, brought to life only through some sort of reproductive instinct.

Michel Foucault's idea of control of the body can give insights into how normative discourse about the human body has moved from religion to science. The modern female body has been constructed and given a name by biomedicine, which uses terms such as "natural" and "unnatural" or "healthy" and "sick" bodies and speaks of "differences" in sexuality.

Many women continue to have a sense of fragmentation and lack of autonomy because masculine gender norms imply a model of autonomy that denies the body. The modern idea of rationality implies a dichotomy between mind and body, in which the mind is the master that "controls" the body. This need to control one's own body reveals itself as estrangement from one's very existence. Simone de Beauvoir identified our cultural tradition as one in which men have been associated with the transcendent features of human existence and women with physical, "natural" existence. Thus women are defined by a masculine perspective that places them in the bodily sphere—the sphere that must be controlled. This mind-body split is a condition that forces a woman to "live in" her body in a special sense: the body is her essential, enslaving identity. Because society's perception of the human body is an androcentric view that separates flesh from spirit, women are led to deny their own bodies. The androcentric perspective of the human body has led many men and women to despise their body and its functions, to see the body as an enemy. For women it also has meant an estrangement from eroticism and sexuality, both of which are experienced as dangerous.

By the end of the twentieth century, health had become a prominent concern, even a vogue, in much of the western world, and various trends related to health popularized the concept of "body awareness." In part, this development was a result of increased preoccupation with old age and chronic illnesses. Body awareness, then, has transformed the body into an object that can be shaped and "preserved" by specific practices, such as aerobic activity and carefully controlled nutrition. Control of women's sexuality and eroticism is also very much a component of the new concern for the body; thus the concept of health continues, at least in part, to be an image of a lean body that appeals to men's sexuality precisely because it is lean.

The androcentric concept of the mind-body split is deeply imbedded in these new vogues because it makes the body an entity that must be "shaped," "monitored," or brought under control. During the 1970s, the feminist movement provoked discussion of the political implications of culturally constructed sexuality. It also drew attention to the idea that control of women's bodies is at the center of social organization and social domination, and that women's appropriation of their own bodies can be a point of departure for modeling new social relations. Even though the recent preoccupation with the body has, overall, had a positive impact on health, women still need to appropriate their own bodies. Males' naming of females' functions and desires has driven women away from their bodies; there is still a need for women to name their own bodily experience and their own sexuality. Women must develop knowledge based on systematic experimentation with body functions, sexuality, and eroticism.

In this process, the concept of "body consciousness" is important. Such consciousness can be achieved in various ways; for example, one exercise simply involves lying in a darkened room, breathing deeply, being still, feeling one's emotions and desires, being in contact with bodily processes, and listening to the body's needs—which may be as basic as needing to stay home and rest from the rush of being an "active woman." Body consciousness also has wider implications: it can be a process through which women seek and find identity, control, and power.

See Also

ANDROCENTRISM; BIOLOGICAL DETERMINISM; EROTICA; ESSENTIALISM; FEMINISM: OVERVIEW; GENDER STUDIES; IMAGES OF WOMEN: OVERVIEW; NAMING; SEXISM; SEXUALITY: OVERVIEW

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Irma Saucedo Gonzalez

BODY IMAGE

See ADVERTISING; BODY; EATING DISORDERS; and IMAGES OF WOMEN: OVERVIEW.

BOOK PUBLISHING

See PUBLISHING.

BOOKSHOPS

"Look, there's a women's bookshop!" There is incredulity in the voice. From inside the shop, the staff and regular customers silently respond in any number of ways: "Yes, and you'd better get used to it." Or "Where've you been—this is the twenty-first century." Or "It's a niche market like any other." Or "Well, then, sir [and occasionally madam], you've just had a learning experience."

Origins and Raison d'Être

The first wave of feminism concentrated on political action to win women the vote. The launch of the second wave of feminism is often credited to the publication of *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir (1949), *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan (1963), and *The Female Eunuch* by Germaine Greer (1970). *The Seven Demands of the Women's Liberation Movement* (Ruskin College, 1970) and further communication of ideas and consciousness-raising helped sustain this second wave. The slogan "The personal is political" was at the heart of the revolution.

The gatekeeping of knowledge was again, as access to education before it, a prime site of political struggle. Women's voices were demanding to be heard, and women realized that if this were to happen, they had to take control of their own communications. Authors and readers were there, but the means of linking them were often in indifferent or hostile hands. Women's publishing companies—including Daughters Inc. and Feminist Press in New York, Virago Press and Onlywomen Press in London, Naiad Press in Tallahassee, and Argument Verlag in Germany—led the way in changing this, and women's bookstores followed. Because many first world feminists are fortunate enough not to have to spend many of their waking hours securing life's basic needs, such as food and clean water, women's bookstores developed first, and are still located primarily in, English-speaking first world countries.

The objectives of most women's bookshops are much like those expressed in the mission statement of Silver Moon Women's Bookshop in London: "To make available to the widest audience the works of women writers, feminist books and periodicals, many of which are not generally available due to the unsympathetic nature of the large distributors and the traditional policies of most bookshops." Working from this principle, women's bookshops the world over have listened to and created a demand for women's voices and politics. Women's voices are now heard and even sought at the highest levels. Maya Angelou, unpublished in the United Kingdom until Virago Press championed her, now has world renown. When Toni Morrison visited Silver Moon Women's Bookshop after publication of *Beloved,* other major bookstores were not much interested in the future Nobel laureate. Katherine V. Forrest's works are stocked in every lesbian section. Jeanette Winterson, now studied in schools and universities, was first presented by the feminist publisher Pandora Press and built a word-of-mouth following among lesbian and feminist booksellers. Voices of women in India have been gathered and recorded by the publishing house Kali. Without all this groundwork, the large publishers would not have recognized or pursued the talent of women such as Arundhati Roy or Michele Roberts. By taking on the infrastructure of distribution and controlling it, women's bookstores together with the publishers have connected the writers to their readers. They have created a circle that has produced a magnificent flowering of women's literature and knowledge of women's lives and concerns.

Women's bookstores do much more than sell books. To quote again from the mission statement of Silver Moon Women's Bookshop, the aim is "to provide a safe and comfortable forum where women may hold community and cultural events ... [and] to provide a secure and welcoming meeting place." Everywhere, but particularly in the third world, women's bookstores are fundamentally a community resource. Women's bookstores make a huge effort to supply information such as legal advice, health and political information, and community news through notice boards and newsletters; to provide support for school projects and dissertations; to offer literacy classes; and so on. As destination stores they may also be tourist information centers. In many cases they are the first safe haven and contact for help for a woman in distress from violence or sexual abuse. Women's bookstores are counselors for women coming out, for parents and daughters of lesbians, and for people in the caring and legal professions who are updating their attitudes and knowledge. Very much more than just a place to buy books!

As you can see, women's bookstores are not your garden-variety capitalist enterprise. For the women who start and run them, they are a mission, but one that must balance economic viability with a political commitment to feminism. The passion, dedication, and personal sacrifice of women's bookstore owners and workers all over the world are immense.

The grassroots and political origins of women's bookstores have also meant that probably all are undercapitalized, and many have also challenged traditional business organizational structures. Certainly in the 1970s working collectively and sharing skills were de rigeur among British feminists. Working in this different way was part of challenging patriarchal and hierarchical methodology. Mostly this theoretical position did not survive the pressures of the marketplace.

Different Contexts

Cultural specificity has given feminist bookstores quite different patterns of development. In the United States, Canada, and Australasia, the absence of any profound socialist or communist politics has meant that feminist bookstores broke new community ground. These areas have many bookstores in both large and small cities, which were founded exclusively as women's bookstores. In France, Spain, and England, which have longer centralized histories and stronger socialist traditions, women's bookstores have developed in a different pattern. Having spent years in the labor movement, many feminists in these European countries did not readily adapt to the entrepreneurial and capitalist spirit of American feminism. Furthermore, the established networks of radical booksellers sold feminist titles in their shops. Thus the openings for exclusively feminist shops were fewer. Those that exist are located in the capital cities. Italy and Germany have had yet another model of the development of women's bookstores. Both countries have strong socialist histories, but their citizens maintain local loyalties to their city, state, and *Länder* that go deeper than their fairly recent (mid-nineteenth-century) nationhood. Their pattern of bookstores looks American but derives from different roots. India's feminist bookstores Streelekha and those in Japan—Shokado in Osaka and Grayon House in Tokyo—are a tribute to the personal dynamism and courage of their founders. At one point, *Feminist Bookstore News* counted 500 feminist bookstores in the United States, Canada, England, continental Europe, Australia, New Zealand, India, Japan, and Kenya.

The Future

Women's bookstores have been a huge success, but at the time of this writing many faced an uncertain future. Thirty-five percent of North America's feminist bookstores had closed, and Sisterwrite in London and Des Femmes in Paris were no more. Politically and culturally, women's bookstores have changed the world of reading and ideas. In the first world this success has brought two negative consequences. First, the assumption that feminists have achieved everything they wanted has depoliticized many young people. The battles won after so hard a fight—and those yet to be taken on—are accepted, forgotten, and subsumed in lifestyle, not political action. Second, the vibrant market for women's books is now an attractive target for ordinary commercial players. Book chains with deep pockets are cherry-picking the most profitable bits of the feminist market. The chains still ignore difficult politics and most lesbian works, but nevertheless they endanger the overall profitability of many feminist bookstores. And the chains provide little in the way of community resources or services.

In North America and Europe, there is considerable competition for market share in the book trade. This is not specifically an antifeminist backlash: all smaller and independent bookshops are imperiled. In North America, 40 percent of independents had gone out of business in the five or six years before this writing. Globalization and new technology, and the dominance of the English language in both, are creating volatile and challenging circumstances.

See Also

ENTREPRENEURSHIP; MANAGEMENT; PUBLISHING, *all entries;* WOMEN'S CENTERS

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Jane Cholmeley

BORDERS

Borders are usually defined as territorial lines that demarcate one sovereign nation-state from another, or, within the nation-state, one legal jurisdiction from another. Given men's virtual monopoly of government decision-making historically, one could say that borders are lines men have drawn. Rather than view borderlines as fixed and immutable, scholars increasingly treat borders as politically constructed, in order to explore when, why, and how they are drawn, and the consequences of peculiar borderlines. In *Imagined Communities* (1983), Anderson transformed thinking about nations, seeing them as "imaginations" that were made coherent by schools, languages, and compulsion.

Increasingly, borders are used in metaphorical ways to differentiate cultural and linguistic identities. Sometimes these identities are imposed on people (under apartheid, South Africa corralled its "Bantu-speakers" into "Bantustans"), but at other times people claim an identity for themselves (such as Chicanos and Chicanas or Latinos and Latinas in the United States, versus Hispanics or North Americans). Identities are likewise imposed on or claimed by diverse women, either within nation-states or across territorial and cultural borderlines.

Until relatively recently, few scholars theorized about or pursued research on women's containment within or agency across borders. Research on women, gender, and feminism blossomed only a quarter century ago, and when it did, writers often operated within disciplines that necessarily relied on territorial borders as units of analysis. Just as political science focuses on nation-states, their territorial borders, and relations between, among, and within them, the subfields of comparative politics and international relations (IR) also confined their analysis to nation-states, and IR paid little attenrion to women. (On the discipline, see Staudt and Weaver, 1997.)

In comparative women's studies, writers often take the nation-state as the unit of analysis. Many fine collections exist, including the 43-country study *Women and Politics Worldwide* (Nelson and Chowdhury, 1994). These works are important for contextualizing global movements and ideologies; *The Challenge of Local Feminisms* (Basu, 1995) is an example. Some collections have focused on women's participation in transitions to democracy, for instance, in Latin America and Eastern Europe (Jaquette and Wolchik, 1998).

Thanks to feminist theorizing in international relations, gender has become visible in constructions of nationalism. For example, in wordplay involving domestic imagery and the stark language of apartheid, Christine Sylvester situates women's homelessness and the homelands men have made (1994). Women assume agency in the nuanced constructions of *Feminist Nationalisms* (West, 1997).

Where does this leave women's transnational political agency across borders? At one level, those who analyze global movements and international organizations provide the broadest panorama (see, among many, Baden and Goetz, 1997). But the scope of such analysis does not extend to everyday transnationalism, such as migration and regional "free trade" schemes as some issue-oriented (Pettman, 1996) and regional political economy analyses (Staudt, 1998) have done. Conceptually, analysts need to attend more to cross-border networking and organizing with regard to specific issues and areas.

The European Union (EU) and North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) provide manageable regional units of organizing within transnational political units ranging from narrow (NAFTA) to broad (EU) in policy and legal leverage. These regional communities show how new borders are drawn for finance, commerce, and occasionally migration, and old borders lose some of their traditional meaning. Still, national capital-to-capital organizing offers challenges regarding cultural, linguistic, and national identities that continue to affect women. Electronic communication, especially bilingual communication, eases cross-border exchanges, but the machinery is selectively available—that is, available mainly to the privileged. Ultimately, it is the person-to-person, cross-border organizing among women regarding health, immigration, human rights, and social justice that demonstrates the challenges and opportunities of contesting the national political machinery that men have made. Borders are policed, even militarized, with some ferocity, and immigration policies continue to draw real and metaphoric lines between "natives" and "foreigners."

Analysts cannot assume that women's solidarity will transcend borders. Rather, women are implicated in nationalism (McClintock, 1996), along with actions that seemingly protect jobs, encourage cheap consumer goods in the global economy, and mute or affirm national and cultural differences. Meanwhile, globalization in the new millennium will probably continue to be associated with simultaneous bordering, debordering, and rebordering (Spener and Staudt, 1998).

See Also

GLOBALIZATION; INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS; MIGRATION; NATION AND NATIONALISM; POLITICS AND THE STATE: OVERVIEW

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Kathleen Staudt

BREAST

In many modern cultures, women's breasts are a target of lust, mockery, and objectification. Although women's sexuality may be arguably as important as physiology, we seem to have lost sight of the breast's main purpose: secreting and transporting milk for infants. A clinical perspective can provide insight into the importance of the breast as well as into breast health and the proper care of breasts.

Anatomy

Breast tissue extends from the collarbone to the inferior portion called the bra line, and from the breastbone to the middle of the armpit. In depth, breast tissue extends from the skin to the muscles of the chest. There is very little muscle tissue in the breast—only a small amount around the nipples.

Breasts come in all shapes and sizes. They may be symmetrical, but it is considered normal for the breasts to be different sizes. Usually, there is one nipple in the middle of each breast. It may protrude or lie flat or even be inverted; all these forms are generally considered normal. A change in the appearance or shape of the nipple, however, would warrant a visit to a health care practitioner for an examination. Some women have more than one nipple on each breast, or a nipple that is unusually placed. These extramammary nipples are not a sign of disease but rather a variation on the norm. Nipples contain spongy tissue that fills with blood. They respond to touch, cold weather, and a baby's suckling, and usually become taut or erect under those circumstances. The pigmented area around the base of the nipple is called the areola. The tiny pores or lumps on the areola are openings for the oil glands that lubricate the nipple and the areola itself during breast feeding.

Each breast is divided into 15 to 20 sections or lobes that are separated by Cooper's ligaments—bands of strong, flexible tissue that give the breast its support. Fat cells lie between and around the lobes and provide cushioning and shape to the breast. The fat cells, fibrous tissue, and other parts of the breast that do not produce, transport, or store milk are called the stroma. The milk-related parts of the breast are called the parenchyma.

Function

Within each lobe lie lobules that look like tiny bunches of grapes. Tiny gland cells lining the acinus (sac) at the end of each "grape" extract the ingredients needed to make milk from nearby blood vessels. For a few days after the birth of a baby, the gland cells extract water, sugar, fat, protein, and salts to make colostrum, the fluid that is nutritionally best for a newborn. As the infant grows, the formulation changes because the mother's hormones communicate to the gland cells that these cells are to make a different mixtures of ingredients. The milk is squeezed into the acinus and then into a small duct. These small ducts join to become larger ducts and transport the milk to a reservoir under the areola, where it stays until nursing time.

The breasts are rich in blood vessels that bring not only the ingredients for milk production but also hormones from the brain and ovaries as well as energy for the breast to do its work. The lymph system removes wastes from the breast and even recycles some of them. Lymph vessels connect the breasts and also drain each breast. Lymph nodes along the lymph channels filter and trap cells that cannot pass through.

Each month from adolescence through menopause, a woman's breasts physiologically prepare for a possible pregnancy. During the menstrual cycle, estrogen flows to the hreasts from the ovaries and the adrenal glands. This estrogen reaches its peak during the middle two weeks of the cycle, counting from day one of the menstrual period. Estrogen tells the breast cells to prepare for milk production and transport.

When the ovary releases its egg, usually at midcycle, it begins to release progesterone. The blood supply to the breast then increases to prepare for the potential pregnancy. This increased blood supply plus some additional fluid may cause a sense of fullness, tenderness, discomfort, and sometimes even pain. This is a very typical premenstrual symptom for many women.

If no pregnancy occurs, the breasts begin to change again right after the menstrual period. The extra fluid returns to the body's general circulation through the lymph system. If pregnancy does occur, preparations for milk production begin to accelerate. The gland cells multiply, the lobules enlarge, the ducts lengthen, and the blood and lymph vessels become larger. By the end of a full-term pregnancy, the hormonal influence causes the glandular tissue to crowd out almost all the fat tissue. After pregnancy and lactation, the breasts and lymph system undergo a considerable adjustment of cells and structures for the breasts to revert to their prepregnancy state.

Life Changes

Women's breasts change not only during each menstrual cycle, pregnancy, and lactation, but also with age, body weight, and menopause. As women grow older, and especially after menopause, the proportions of parenchyma and stroma in the breasts keep changing. At some point, there is no working or lactating tissue left and the breasts become more fat and less glandular tissue. This fatty tissue makes it much easier to read mammograms. If a woman uses hormone replacement therapy after menopause, however, the breasts will still be influenced by hormones, although to a lesser degree than during the reproductive years.

Breast Conditions

Unusual breast conditions that are not cancerous are called benign problems. They include normal physiological changes such as minor tenderness, swelling, and lumpiness; mastalgia, or breast pain; infections and inflammations; discharge and other problems of the nipples; excessive lumpiness or nodules; and dominant lumps. For a woman, a dominant lump tends to be the most frightening discovery. Fortunately, most of the time the lump will be either a cyst or a harder benign lump called a fibroadenoma.

Some dominant lumps may in fact be cancerous. They tend to be harder but also can be minimal lumps that feel like a thickening. A cancerous lump can have other changes associated with it, such as swelling, dimpling, changes in skin color, visible blood vessels, enlarged pores, and changes in the nipple; nipple discharge; and microcalcifications or other observations visible on mammograms.

Caring for the Breasts

Three important methods are used to detect breast changes: self-examination of the breasts, mammography, and regular examinations by a health professional. No one method of detection is perfect, but the three work together. Each method has advantages and weaknesses. As science and medicine progress, new methods of breast cancer detection will evolve and improvements will be made.

One of the more meaningful risk factors for breast cancer is having a first-degree relative with breast cancer. Five to 10 percent of breast cancer cases occur in true "breast cancer families," in which mutated copies of the tumor suppressor genes BRCA1 or BRCA2 are passed from generation to generation. Since we receive genetic information from both parents, however, not every female in an affected family will inherit these genes. If a woman inherits the BRCA1 gene, her genes must still undergo other mutations that occur over a period of many years before cancer could occur, but these mutations may never happen. A woman born with a copy of a mutated gene does face an estimated 56 percent chance of developing breast cancer by age 70. BRCA1 is probably present in about 80 percent of families with a major history of both premenopausal breast cancer and ovarian cancer. Mutated BRCA2 may appear in up to 50 percent of all breast cancer families. A woman with mutated BRCA2 faces a chance of developing breast or ovarian cancer similar to the chance faced by a woman with mutated BRCA1.

Assertive prevention strategies become of vital importance for women with these inherited genes. Such strategies include adopting dietary habits that have been scientifically associated with lower rates of breast cancer (low fat, low animal fat, high fish fat, soy, fruits, vegetables, fiber, flaxseed, fewer calories); making changes in lifestyle that reduce risk (less alcohol, more exercise, less stress); reducing body weight; reducing exposure to estrogens (as from hormone replacement therapy, certain pesticides, some plastics, and chlorinated organic compounds); and reducing exposure to radiation. There are also pharmaceutical options for prevention (antiestrogen), as well as surgical options. Although more research is needed, there may also be some nutrients and herbs in supplement form that can reduce the risk of breast cancer, such as green tea, fish oils, flaxseed, vitamins C and D, and melatonin.

Empowering women to take charge of their health involves providing education and resources and improving self-esteem and overall quality of life. Depression, low self-worth, social degradation, poverty, poor-quality relationships, and violence are among the most damaging influences on women and women's health. For some women, breasts may be an integral part of these problems; some women may become depressed, for instance, because they do not believe they are sexy enough, or because they have received mistreatment related to sexuality and breasts. Low self-esteem is closely related to ways in which women are physically degraded because of their bodies, including their breasts. Relationships may be poor because they are oversexualized. Some women have been the victims of child or adult sexual abuse. As women gain more powerful positions in society, as men treat women more as equals, and as women grow and evolve with regard to self-care and power, the well-being of all women, including their emotional and physical health, is more likely to be achieved.

See Also

ANATOMY; BREAST FEEDING; CANCER; COSMETIC SURGERY; HORMONES

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Tori Hudson

BREAST CANCER

See CANCER and ENDOCRINE DISRUPTION.

BREAST FEEDING

Believed by many to be objects of sexual attractiveness, breasts in fact are intended by nature and actually used in most societies to provide milk to babies and small children. As western scientists reassess their opinion of what have sometimes been regarded as merely decorative appendages, they consider the following data:

- Colostrum, the first milk after the baby's birth, helps protect the baby from infection and disease. Colostrum is a laxative and helps clear the meconium out of the newborn's bowels. Breast-fed babies have fewer problem with allergies, constipation, ear infections, respiratory infections, diarrhea, and skin disorders than formula-fed babies (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 1988; La Leche League, 1991).
- Human breast milk contains fats, carbohydrates, and proteins in the proportions and forms ideally suited for optimal absorption and metabolism by the baby (Kitzinger, 1989). The long-chain fatty acids (fats) in human milk are not duplicated in cow's milk, and fat intake (type and quantity) in infancy is critical to brain development. Minerals and salts from human milk are absorbed in a way that is healthiest for the human infant; for example, although human milk is low in iron, it is absorbed much better than is iron in cow's milk.
- Breast feeding reduces the health risks associated with being born in poverty, at least for the time that the breast feeding continues. Unless a woman is severely malnourished, her breast milk is as nutritious as that of an afflu-

ent, well-nourished woman. (However, the cost to a malnourished woman's health of repeated or closely spaced childbearing and nursing is considerable.)

The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, among other major agencies, have made increasing the incidence of breast feeding—as well as increasing its duration—critical goals. All over the world, formula makers provide samples of their product to expectant families or families with newborns. Using the samples instead of nursing can cause the mother's production of milk to stop; also, poor families may have to overdilute the formula or use contaminated water in the formula, which they then must continue to buy. Even when families can afford formula, it may be difficult for them to prepare and store it under sanitary conditions, with serious or even fatal results to children's health (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 1998; La Leche League, 1991).

Even women who are secure in their decision to breast-feed can be intimidated by the reactions of others. Although it is clear that a nursing mother is simply feeding her baby, not engaging in a public display, there are those who can see prurience even in the act of nourishing an infant. Women whose milk letdown is inhibited by anxiety or nervousness may find it easier when breast-feeding to wear clothing loose enough to drape around the breast and the baby's head to cover the nipple during feeding; to go to another room to let the baby latch on, then rejoin the group once nursing has begun; and to nurse in areas in which it is possible to turn away from other people (Huggins, 1990). Women whose letdown is not inhibited may choose to nurse in public and simply ignore inappropriate attention.

Although breast-feeding women face pressure from advertisers and disapproving strangers, many women who prefer not to breast-feed or who are unable to do so feel another kind of pressure. A few women do not have sufficient glandular tissue; many others run into problems with nursing that are not resolved quickly. Long periods during which milk production is not adequately stimulated by the baby's sucking can lead to premature, involuntary weaning. (However, a high-quality breast pump, used frequently to mimic the baby's feeding patterns, may be used to maintain milk supply until the nursing problem is resolved.) A pacifier can reduce a baby's need to suck at the breast and can have a detrimental effect on milk production. Working inside or outside the home may make it difficult for a woman to breast-feed, and choosing formula may make her life much easier. Women who would like to breast-feed but cannot, or families for whom breast feeding is not the option chosen, should be assured that whether a child receives human milk or formula, love, security, and trust are the most important things consumed by the child during feeding and during life.

See Also

BODY; BREAST; CANCER; CHILDBIRTH; MATERNAL HEALTH AND MORBIDITY; MOTHER; MOTHERHOOD; NATURE-NURTURE DEBATE; SEX AND CULTURE

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Brinlee Kramer

BRIDEPRICE

See DOWRY AND BRIDEPRICE.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism has been of particular interest to feminists in recent years for many reasons. It is a major religion, with 2,500-year-old traditions, which has spread beyond its homeland into very different cultures; throughout its history, Buddhist texts have included conflicting statements about the status of women; and within the male dominance of Buddhism, many women have lived as nuns or have become well-educated laypeople. Recently many western women have become dedicated Buddhists; they expect to study and practice along with men; to participate fully, and to take responsibility for propagating Buddhism.

Basic Tenets of Buddhism

Buddhism came into existence in the sixth century B.C.E. when a prince was born into a small tribal clan at the foot of the Himalaya mountains, in what is now Nepal. He was known as Prince Siddhartha. Soon after his birth, his horoscope was read, and it predicted that he would become either the "king of kings" or the "world renouncer." King Sudhodhana, his father, obviously preferred the first prediction and in order to make it come true provided the young prince with all worldly comforts. Yet when the prince was exposed to the realities of life—sickness, old age, and death—he became deeply concerned. His question was: How are we to rid ourselves of this human suffering? That question was the beginning of Buddhism. When his own son was born, the prince decided to go forth to seek the answer to his question, to save not only himself and his newborn child but also the human race.

After six years of both physical and mental journeys, the prince found his own spiritual path and became enlightened. He became known as the Buddha—the Enlightened One.

His first sermon, given to five ascetics, was in fact an exposition of what he had discovered in answer to his question about human suffering. He made two significant points before the actual sermon: first, he was self-enlightened, that is, the knowledge was not handed down to him by an outside factor; second, teaching is the middle path between the two extremes of idealism and materialism.

The sermon focused on the Four Noble Truths: Dukkha, Samudaya, Nirodha, and Marga. Dukkha—the First Noble Truth—is the realization that everyone born into life is subject to human suffering, in the form of sickness, old age, and death. Buddhism can help to free one from the suffering that is caused by clinging to the self as real or eternal. But suffering does not occur of its own accord. Since it is the result of something else, it must have a cause. This is the Second Noble Truth.

The Third Noble Truth confirms that even though there is suffering, it can be overcome. This is the cessation of suffering. The Buddha and his enlightened disciples were living proof of this truth.

The fourth Noble Truth asserts that there is a path to end this suffering. The Buddha prescribed, like a good physician, an Eightfold Path to be followed by those who realize suffering and desire to be free from it.

This, very briefly, is the message of Buddhism.

Oppressive and Liberating Factors for Women

In order to appreciate the liberating factors some women have experienced in Buddhism, one needs to understand the social context from which Buddhism arose. It started in India, amid a cultural background heavily laden with a patriarchal worldview. Some of the earlier social norms of Indian society can be found in Manu Dharma Shastra, the authoritative Hindu ethical code written after the beginnings of Buddhism. In this text women are treated as commodities belonging to male members of the family. Women, considered impure, are not allowed to study the Veda, which is the most sacred Hindu text. Offerings by women alone are not accepted by the gods. In this vicious circle, women have no right to seek spiritual salvation. The only hope for salvation for women is through Bhakti (devotion), submission, and service to their husbands.

Buddhism, however, denies the absolute authority of the Vedic texts and does not recognize the caste distinctions so important to Hindu society. The Buddha was the first religious leader in the history of major world religions to proclaim the equal spiritual potential of both men and women.

It is important to distinguish between supramundane and mundane teachings in Buddhist literature. Supramundane teachings deal directly with the question of how to become enlightened. One becomes enlightened not as male or female. Enlightenment is beyond gender differences.

However, the teachings on the mundane level deal with life in society. It is at this level that social values play a prominent role. Early Buddhist society was Indian society. Oppressive elements prevalent in Indian society can be seen throughout Buddhist literature. Reading through that literature, one needs to be constantly reminded of the contextual history and must be able to sift Buddhism from the Indian social values handed down unconsciously. There are many liberating elements that are the real contribution of Buddhism to women in Indian society. Under Buddhism, women are free to strive for their own salvation without depending on their husbands or sons. Women, single or divorced, enjoy full rights to work out their own salvation. Spiritual life is allowed for women, and many of them have taken this opportunity.

Role of Women in Society

Women played very active roles in the Buddha's time and shared with men an equal responsibility to bring about the growth of Buddhism. The Buddha assigned this responsibility to four groups of Buddhists: monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen. Laypeople are expected to provide the monks and nuns with four requirements: food, dwelling place, robes, and medicine. The monks and nuns, in return, should readily give spiritual guidance to the lay community. In the Buddha's time some laywomen were very advanced in the study and practice of Buddhism. Hence, they were in a position to offer advice to the ordained sangha (community of monks and nuns). The nuns were often well advanced in their practice and proved themselves equally qualified in propagating Buddhism.

At present, in some countries women are mostly seen as playing the role of supporters to the sangha; in some countries there are only monks, no nuns.

Contemporary Attempts at Emancipating Buddhist Women

In the past three decades women have become more active in Buddhism. The flow of Buddhists out of Tibet since 1959 is partly responsible for this phenomenon. More western women have been exposed to Buddhism, and many have chosen to follow the Tibetan lineage. Zen Buddhism as it is now commonly practiced in the West offers an opportunity for women to practice without emphasizing issues related to ordination.

In 1987 Sakyadhita, an international Buddhist women's association, came into existence after Buddhist women met for the first time at Bodh Gaya, India, where the Buddha attained enlightenment. This association promotes Buddhist education for women in general and supports full ordination of women in other countries. Sakyadhita is registered in the United States. The association organized five conferences, in India (1987), Thailand (1991), Sri Lanka (1995), Ladakh (1995), Cambodia (1997), and Nepal (2000), to bring about awareness of the status of women in Buddhism in each country where it is practiced. This heightened awareness should improve the role and status of Buddhist women.

Revival of Buddhist Nuns

In Buddhism, unlike Christianity, the order of fully ordained nuns (bhikkhuni, bhikshumi) was instituted by the founder of the faith, the Buddha; hence, the movement to revive the heritage of fully ordained nuns should be easier. In reality, however, Catholic and Buddhist sisters, particularly in Theravada countries, are not very different, particularly regarding the struggle to ordain women. Buddhism is traditionally divided roughly into two major schools: Theravada, the southern school, in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia; and Mahayana, sometimes called the northern school, in China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Vietnam. (Theravada tends to follow the letter of the teachings whereas Mahayana is more progressive and more assertive in social involvement) For the sake of convenience, Tibet is also included in the Mahayana category. The lineage of fully ordained nuns went from India to Sri Lanka in the third century B.C.E. during King Asoka's period and later spread to China, Korea, and elsewhere.

After the lineage in Sri Lanka died out, people in southeast Asia who practice Theravada were never ordained. Instead of the fully ordained nuns, there are local nuns in each country who hold much lower positions than monks.

In the last three decades of the twentieth century there were attempts to revive the nuns' lineage from abroad. Taiwan has been a stronghold for the revival of nuns. In 1988 Hsi-Lai Temple in Los Angeles, California, ordained 200 women from various traditions. In 1998 the same organization provided an international ordination in Bodh Gaya, India, for 135 nuns from various countries. In March 2000 there was another international ordination in Kaohsring, Taiwan. Full ordination can be obtained from Hsi-Lai Temple in Los Angeles or in Taiwan, where each year more women than men receive ordination.

Ordination is not a status to be claimed for purposes of equality only. Rather, it is a path in which one walks with full responsibility to develop one's spirituality and in that process help others along the path as well.

Feminist scholars have been interested not only in the differing treatment of women and men in Buddhist traditions, but also in the similarity of the Buddhist figure known as the Perfection of Wisdom to the Goddess of Wisdom, Sophia, in other traditions; and in the comparison of Buddhist explanations of suffering with principles of women-dominant religions where illness is not considered inevitable and where healing procedures are practiced as effective solutions to human suffering.

See Also

CASTE; FAMILY: RELIGIOUS AND LEGAL SYSTEMS—BUDDHIST TRADITIONS; HINDUISM; HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES: SOUTH ASIA; HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES: SOUTHEAST ASIA; NUNS; SACRED TEXTS; ZEN

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Chatsumarn Kabilsingh

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

"Feminist approaches to the built environment" covers a wide range of topics within gender studies. Fields covered include any that are related to human-made (built and unbuilt) environments, on any scale (geographical, architectural, and so on), for example, geography, urban planning, urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, history of architecture, and environmental psychology. The introduction of gender into the study and interpretation of the environment has not changed the epistemologies of these disciplines but rather has raised new theoretical questions, shifted angles, and revealed new perspectives and hypotheses.

Scholars have suggested the following hypotheses, aimed at "degendering" the environment: "Women's social experience is notably absent from the human-made environment and mechanisms by which this absence is perpetuated" (Boys et al., 1984: 1–2). "Women in design can use Social Science information in new and different ways." (Howell, 1983). "The man-made environment, through its production process, expresses or reinforces the social construction of genders, or, vice-versa, the social construction of genders is reproduced or reinforced through the human-made environment as a lived experience" (Tentokali, 1989). "Gender srratification is reinforced by spatial segregation. Gendered spaces that create distance between women and sources of masculine knowledge have the strongest association with gender stratification" (Spain, 1992: 27).

The theoretical corpus of gender studies of the environment can be divided into two general directions. The first theoretical direction, which deals with the construction of gender, explains the differences and similarities between human males and females within the environment. Gender is explored and interpreted in relation to its reciprocal links with the environment. Emphasis is placed on the ways of changing either the urban environment or gender relations. This direction includes two antithetical approaches (Borden, 1995): (1) An approach as a functional critique, which focuses mainly on the ways of changing the urban environment as a means for changing gender relations—or, more correctly, for changing social relations in general—to achieve a more equitable society. (Dolores Hayden's pioneer work belongs here.) (2) An approach as a more experimental and personal standpoint; instead of trying to change the fabric of the city according to a set of rules or provisions, it articulates ways of changing gender relations, exploring more libertarian ideas about what living in cities is (or should be) like. (The work of Elizabeth Wilson belongs here.)

The second theoretical direction consisrs of conceptual approaches, whose intenr is not only to understand the architectural discourse but also to speculate on the meanings and representations of gender. These approaches incorporate the logocentrism of Derrida into the architectural discourse. As a consequence, they consider the notions of gender and space as texts and focus not only on what is present but also on what is not present in the text. "The logic in the system of architecture represses sex in two different ways: sex is understood in positive and negative terms, and woman [are] assigned the negative term (phallocentrism)" (Agrest, 1988). Under the constraints of Derrida's deconstruction, while philosophy, literary criticism, and psychoanalysis deal with the architectonics of the text, architecture adopts philosophical, literary, and psychoanalytical methods or concepts. The work of Mark Wigley and Beatrice Colomina belongs here.

See Also

AESTHETICS: FEMINIST; ARCHITECTURE; ENGINEERING; HOUSING; INTERIOR DESIGN AND DECORATION

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Vana Tentokali

BULIMIA NERVOSA

Bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder characterized by recurring episodes of binge eating alternating with episodes of fasting or purging behaviors intended to prevent weight gain and undo the effects of the original binges. The health advocacy organization Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders, Inc. (ANRED), classifies bulimia nervosa as a diet-binge-purge disorder and links it to anorexia nervosa (the relentless pursuit of thinness), anorexia athletica (compulsive exercising), and binge eating disorder (compulsive eating). The American Psychiatric Association classifies bulimia nervosa as a severe disturbance in eating behavior closely related to anorexia nervosa, but different from binge eating disorder, which does not include subsequent purging or fasting (American Psychiatric Assocation, 1994). Researchers are studying the physiology, psychology, and treatment of bulimia nervosa, but medical insurance companies in the United States do not pay for its treatment.

Bulimia nervosa occurs most frequently among white females in western cultures and affects young women about ten times more often than it affects young men. Onset occurs most often during the teenage years and early twenties (Academy for Eating Disorders, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, American Anorexia Bulimia Association). Statistics about prevalence are unreliable, however. Many girls with bulimia are able to maintain a normal or nearly normal body size, in contrast to girls with anorexia (whose bodies often show evidence of starvation and wasting) and girls with binge eating disorder (whose bodies show evidence of obesity). Many girls with bulimia conceal their eating disorder from their parents and doctors (although not necessarily from their peers), and doctors are not required to report cases of bulimia nervosa to public health authorities.

Bulimia Nervosa and the Body

Many girls and women are preoccupied with issues related to diet, exercise, thinness, and body image (Bordo, 1993; Thompson et al., 1999). A girl with bulimia nervosa experiences these preoccupations to the point of pathology, with signs and symptoms that include appetite disturbances, enforced fasts, enforced exercise sessions, insatiable hunger, and a sense of being unable to control her own behavior. During a bulimic binge, she stuffs her body with food. During a bulimic purge, she uses laxatives, diuretics, and self-induced vomiting to get rid of the food she has gorged, or she fasts or exercises relentlessly to get rid of the extra body weight that she fears. She may use stimulants, psychoactive drugs, and alcohol to cope with the anxiety, depression, and mood disorders that frequently accompany bulimia. She may experience side effects that include dehydration, electrolyte imbalances, neuroendocrine disturbances, menstrual irregularities, irritation of the esophagus, and erosion of dental enamel. Many researchers report a link between bulimic behaviors and episodes of shoplifting, obsessive-compulsive patterns that are not related to food, and self-mutilation (cutting). Whether the physical and emotional disturbances that accompany bulimia are a cause or an effect of repeated cycles of bingeing and purging is still unclear, but a powerfully reinforcing feedback loop does seem to be at work in either case.

Psychiatrists diagnose bulimia nervosa if cycles of bingeing and purging cycles recur, on average, at least twice a week for three months (American Psychiatric Association, 1994); many girls with bulimia report that their episodes occur as frequently as several times a day. Treatment may include antidepressant medication, family therapy, and cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy aimed at reducing impulsive behaviors, reducing relapses, and improving body image and self-esteem (Fairburn and Wilson, 1993; Tobin, 2000).

Bulimia Nervosa and Patriarchal Culture

Binging and purging are often accompanied by shame, secrecy, and self-loathing. These behaviors also appear to be linked to such important cultural issues as addictions, adolescent sexuality, food and nurturance, diet, pressure to be thin, body size, body image, power, and control (Bordo, 1993; Thompson et al., 1999). Princess Diana of Great Britain joked in public about having her head down the loo (the WC or toilet); and the actress Jane Fonda, who promoted and sold exercise videos, reported more than twenty years of bulimic behavior that sometimes involved binging and purging as frequently as twenty times a day.

Hilde Bruch linked the development of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa to disturbances in the mother-child dyad (Bruch, 1985), and Marian Woodman expanded that theory to encompass repression of feminine power at the archetypal level (Woodman, 1980). According to this interpretation, when female power is stigmatized, thwarted, and legislated against in patriarchal cultures, the bingeing and purging characteristic of adolescent girls with bulimia nervosa can be interpreted as a ritual that represents alternating cycles of rebellion against and compliance with patriarchal requirements. During the binge portion of a bulimic episode, the girl's covert behavior resembles theft, as she consumes oversize amounts of forbidden foods. During the purse episode that follows the binge, the girl vomits up evidence of her crime or her sin and flushes it away, so that she seems outwardly to be in compliance with social rules once again. Acting out the binge-purge cycle returns the girl to a calmer homeostatis (stability); but as the pressures of being a young girl in a patriarchal culture build up again, another destabilizing binge-purge episode is likely to follow. On this theory, it is not surprising that most researchers who study bulimia nervosa and other eating disorders report very high relapse rates. As long as patriarchal culrures continue to thwart and repress female power, there seems little likelihood of a reduction in rhe prevalence of bulimia nervosa among young women.

See Also

ANOREXIA NERVOSA; BODY; DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE; EATING DISORDERS; FOOD AND CULTURE; PSYCHOLOGY: COGNITIVE *and* PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND PSYCHOTHERAPY; SEXUALITY: ADOLESCENT SEXUALITY

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Faye Zucker

BUREAUCRACY

"Women in bureaucracy" covers a number of topics or themes:

1. Women in bureaucratic types of organization, where the issue concerns whether "bureaucracy" as a type of social organization is inherently patriarchal, or whether this has been a historical circumstance of the development of this organizational form that can be altered.
2. Women in management positions in complex, bureaucratic organizations, both public and private, where it is assumed that organizational change of various kinds is needed for women to be adequately included in these positions.
3. Women in *public* bureaucratic types of organization, and the gender division of labor within the modern administrative state (see Siim, 1987; Yeatman, 1990: chapter 5).
4. A closely related topic, *femocracy*. *Femocrat* is the name that has been given to second-wave feminists in Australia and New Zealand who take up policy-related positions in government, which either directly promote the interests of women or promote generic policies such as equal opportunity that provide critical support for the promotion of women's interests.

The bureaucratic organizational form has underpinned the development of both the modern state and the modern capitalist firm (see Weber, 1968). The bureaucratic organizational form is fundamentally characterized by an ethos of "impersonality" as evidenced especially in the separation of the bureaucratic office from the private-domestic life and obligations of officials. This has been a peculiarly modern-western phenomenon, which has influenced—but not supplanted—the kinship-oriented organizational order of many nonwestern states. The issue is whether bureaucracy is inherently patriarchal, and, if it is, whether this also allows for a play of internal contradictions.

There have been three types of response to this question. The first type is liberal reformist (for example, Kanter, 1977; for discussion, see Savage and Witz, 1992: 13–18): the argument that bureaucratic organizations become less patriarchal the more they include women, that there is nothing inherent in the bureaucratic form itself that precludes gender equality. The second type is radical feminist (see Ferguson, 1984), arguing that the kind of rationality that structures the bureaucratic form is inherently masculine and patriarchal, requiring its practitioners to think and work in ways which bracket out their embodied and domestic existence, an option that is simply not available to women as a group. Also, the bureaucratic type of organization is structured in terms of highly specialized jobs ordered in a hierarchical relationship to each other; in this hierarchy, masculine-patriarchal styles of operating are privileged, at the expense of the more cooperatively oriented and holistic approaches favored by women as a group. The third type is poststructuralist (for example, Pringle, 1989): this is the view that the bureaucratic type of organization is not as simple as it seems, that its dominant style of operating in terms of patriarchal rationality already contains, because it depends on, its opposite—what are typecast as feminine qualities of nurturance, sexualized or embodied presence, and informal patterns of cooperation. Just what *is* the bureaucratic order in any one particular organization is a dynamic and contested site of struggle between quite different interpretations of how this order should work.

Each perspective has insights as well as limitations. The liberal reformist view implies that the formal universalism of the bureaucratic organization may work to facilitate, even to invite, strategies that are oriented toward developing equal participation for not just women, but all social actors. The fundamental orientation of the bureaucratic form toward merit-based principles of selection and promotion encourages participation regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, and so on, even as it raises debates over what "merit" means and how it should be interpreted. The radical feminist view, by contrast, argues that the bureaucratic organizational form depends for its very existence on an internal gender division of labor: the typical bureaucratic style of disembodied, specialist, calculative rationality depends on a large number of poorly paid subordinates who do the bureaucrat's housekeeping both *inside* the organization (for example, secretaries, office cleaners) and *outside* (wives).

Thus, when some women are selected, on "merit," to become bureaucrats, they are contradictorily positioned as actors who are asked to assume a patriarchal-masculine style of organizational being but are also located within this category of society's housekeepers. The weakness of this view is that it cannot explain why some bureaucracies have proved to be more open to women's participation than others: for example, Australian femocracy indicates the relative openness of the Australian state to feminist participation and agendas between 1972 and 1987 (see Dowse, 1988; Sawer, 1990; Watson, 1990; Yeatman, 1990). If the radical feminist view tends to naturalize the masculine-patriarchal character of bureaucracy, the virtue of the poststructuralist perspective is its insistence on more open-ended dynamics of contested agendas and contradictions within any actual bureaucratic organization. This literature, however, is not cross-referenced with the traditional sociological critique of the Weberian model of bureaucracy for its neglect of the *informal*, nonbureaucratic relationships and styles of working on which the bureaucratic formal order depends.

None of these views locate their perspectives in relation to mainstream organizational theory and management policy literatures (see, for example, Mintzberg, 1979; Perrow, 1986). Nor do they respond adequately to the implications of the late-twentieth-century restructuring of the public sector in the liberal democracies for the bureaucratic form. Managerialism, devolution, and privatization have all fundamentally changed the organizational dynamics and structures of the public sector. Organizations tend now to be less hierarchical ("flatter"), less rule-bound, and more outcomes-oriented; less defensive in relation to outsiders; and more proactive in relation to what they perceive as a constantly changing context for their policy and management. This requires their personnel to become more flexible, intelligently proactive, strategic, multiskilled, and democratic. These developments do not fit the classical Weberian picture of bureaucracy. Because it favors more collegial, democratic, and intuitive styles of working, as well as requiring tough-minded and analytical policy skills, this new type of "postbureaucratic" organization has both "feminine" and "masculine" features. There is an emerging debate about how the postbureaucratic type of public sector organization (see Barzelay, 1992) relates to the older bureaucratic form: Does the former supplant or does it sediment over the latter? (For this debate, see Yeatman, 1994.) Certainly there is no suggestion by the exponents of the postbureaucratic type—such as Peters's and Waterman's antisytems models of management—that the ethical virtues of the bureaucratic type are jettisoned in today's business environment. These virtues are impersonality and due process. The democratic values of natural justice, equality, and accountability are fundamentally dependent on these virtues.

There is an inadequately elaborated and scattered literature on the participation of women in the development of the administrative state over the course of the twentieth century. There is a small literature on the participation of women in the staffing of the administrative state's services to the national citizenry in their early inception—the post office, for example (see Deacon, 1989; Zimmeck, 1992). This literature has not been cross-referenced with the sector-specific literatures on the participation of women in the staffing of a universal school system or in the various state administrative policy bureaus that underpinned the early development of welfare states (for example, the Children's Bureau created in 1912 under the leadership of Julia Lathrop in the United States). The Australasian literature on "femocracy" is concerned with the reform-oriented Australian and New Zealand social democratic administrations of the 1970s and 1980s. This literature is neither situated historically in relation to past patterns of women's participation in the administrative state, nor, as yet, reevaluated in terms of the implications of public sector restructuring for this participation. At the same time, there is a great deal of talk of a "glass ceiling" for women in private and public sector management, and this perspective is valid for most large organizations, especially global corporations. Information technology enables these organizations to centralize their strategic management, and to rebureaucratize the controls this central mind exercises over the many operations and functions it devolves or contracts out. Some individual women may cross the glass ceiling and become central organizational executives, but there will be a greater distance between them and women workers who staff service operations such as call centers. A good deal of new empirical research needs to be done on women in the context of these new organizational and bureaucratic forms.

See Also

FEMOCRAT; GOVERNMENT; HIERARCHY AND BUREAUCRACY; ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY

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Anna Yeatman

BUSINESS AND BUISNESSWOMEN

See ECONOMY: HISTORY OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION; ENTREPRENEURSHIP; FINANCE; LEADERSHIP; MANAGEMENT; and MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS.

BUTCH/FEMME

Butch and femme are two unique articulations of lesbian gender and desire. As a couplet, butch/femme (or butch-femme) is erotic dynamics cultivated through gender difference, between a masculine woman and feminine woman. It is a way of knowing and embodying desire through behaviors, mannerisms, deportment, style, and the negotiation and orchestration of sexual relations and practices. Butch/femme as gender and sexual identities produces its own particular social and erotic vocabularies, which facilitate desire and give expression and legitimation to lesbian genders and sexualities. Although gender difference is eroticized, it cannot be simply read as reproducing or mimicking heterosexuality and traditional gender roles. Butch/femme deploys and subverts traditional gender representations associated with heterosexuality by self-consciously appropriating and recontextualizing both masculinity and femininity and in the process radically transforming them both.

Although butch and femme share an important history as allies and companions, it is important to understand them as separate and distinct identities with different trajectories, unique childhood narratives, and distinct defining and developmental experiences. In order to have a richer understanding of what butch/femme means as erotic dynamics, it is crucial to understand who and what butch and femme are as separate identities.

Femme is a set of codes and behaviors that articulate desire in a seemingly traditionally feminine way. In actuality, however, femmes turn traditional femininity on its head. Although femmes may present a feminine appearance and mannerisms, they are not so easily dismissed. Femmes are women who vehemently reject the limitations imposed on them by a patriarchal society that seeks to control and manipulate women's bodies and sexualities. In directing their erotic impulses away from normative heterosexual relations, femmes take their desires into their own hands and, in the process, reshape femininity to satisfy their own wants and needs. Femmes reappropriate femininity and tease out its most dangerous and subversive elements. How femme femininity is articulated also has much to do with other variants such as race, class, religion, and region. Femme diversity is also manifested in the sexual arena. As many femmes may be attracted exclusively to butches, some are attracted to other femmes, and still others are also attracted to men and consider themselves bisexual. Femme variation, in addition to femme strength and bravery, has enriched lesbian communities throughout the twentieth century.

Butch is also set of behavior and codes that articulates and facilitates desire. Butches are born physically female but are more comfortable presenting and embodying a masculine gender and sexual identity. Many butches experience differing degrees of gender dysphoria, which means that they feel a certain amount of discomfort with the gender they were assigned at birth, based on their anatomical sex. To rectify their discomfort, butches appropriate and remake aspects of male masculinity to satisfy their own needs and desires. Many butches appropriate masculine clothing, haircuts, hobbies, and jobs in order to facilitate their masculine identification. As butches take masculinity out of its traditional context, they transform it into something new and unique. Masculinity layered over a female body disrupts conventional notions of gender as a natural outgrowth of anatomical sex. Butches threaten normative masculinity by usurping male privileges, particularly the right to conduct sexual relations with other women. Rather than see butchness as merely male mimicry, it is perhaps more accurate to understand it as resembling some aspects of male masculinity but as still being its own unique and separate gender expression. Butch masculinity, like femme femininity, is nuanced by other variables such as race, class, religion, and region. There is a diverse range of butch sexualities; for example, some butches may be exclusively attracted to femmes, some are attracted to other butches, and some may occasionally be attracted to gay men. These rich and diverse butch identities participated in the construction of lesbian communities throughout the twentieth century.

The historical development of butch/femme communities occured during the course of the twentieth century. During the 1910s and 1920s, groups of expatriates, artists, and upper-class women in New York, Paris, and London began living in romantic and sexual unions that resembled butch/femme relationships—perhaps the most-famous (or infamous) example was British author Radclyffe Hall and her lover Una Troubridge. The term butch/femme would have been categorically inconsequential, however, and incomprehensible to these women. As such, the terms and identities of butch and femme did not exist in these early milieus. Butch/femme emerged as an intelligible identity and signifier during the 1930s and 1940s, mostly in urban centers in the United States. Aided by historical forces such as the fundamental technological changes engendered by the second wave of the Industrial Revolution in the 1890s; the social, political, and artistic upheavals caused by the Great War; and the long process of steady urbanization that had begun a century before, new social and sexual landscapes were being formed. During World War II, which took many American men overseas, many women enjoyed access to better-paying jobs and less familial policing. It was during this period that butch/femme communities really flourished and carved a permanent—albeit often precarious—place for themselves on the urban landscape. In the 1930s and 1940s communities of primarily working-class women began organizing themselves around butch/femme erotics. For most of these communities the primary site for socializing was the bars, which afforded a sense of community and refuge from the hostile world outside. White working-class women and working-class women of color often socialized together, although there were bars that catered more specifically to each crowd. However, because bar space was limited, especially in the early days, women of color and white women were often thrown together by circumstance. The heyday or "golden age" of butch/femme culture was the 1950s and early 1960s. During this period, butch/femme communities grew in size and number and flourished despite constant harassment, raids, and vicious assaults by the police and thugs. Butch/femme eroticism was the primary way in which working-class lesbians organized their sexual and romantic relationships and friendships. Tacit rules and etiquette provided instruction on courtship, romance, and sex, as well as friendship. Butches were expected to be the aggressors in sex and romance as well as in social situations. Butches also were expected to be attracted only to femmes and never to another butch; and, finally, butches were supposed to be sexually untouchable, or "stone." Femmes were expected to be more sexually receptive, gentle, and accommodating. Femmes were supposed to direct their sexual desires onto butches and never to other femmes; and, finally, they were not supposed to want to touch their butch lovers genitally. Although these were the rules and one could be ostracized for any publicized infraction, not everyone followed them all the time or interpreted them stringently. Many women found the rules perfectly compatible with their personalities and desires. Some women, however, did find them stultifying and felt trapped by them. The latter voices would hear their grievances elaborated and championed in the next decade.

As the 1960s progressed, liberation struggles and movements for social change took the center of the political and social stage. The black civil rights struggles, student movements, and antiwar movements bombarded popular consciousness with demands for social justice and change. It was in this climate that the women's liberation movement and lesbian feminism were born. During the course of the 1970s, lesbian feminism radically refigured what it meant to be a lesbian, which was predicated less on erotic preference and more on political allegiance. Any woman could be a lesbian as long as she placed the political and social causes and concerns of women above everything else. Butch/femme was rejected by lesbian feminists as derivative of heterosexuality and, therefore, inherently oppressive to women. Butch/femme relationships were reviled and devalued by the burgeoning lesbian feminist movement, and many butch and femme women were ostracized from these communities. Made to feel ashamed of their relationships, communities, and identities, butches and femmes were ridiculed and silenced by lesbian feminism. Many butches and femmes fought back and refused to be pushed out of lesbian communities; however, many others felt forced out and isolated.

With the start of the "sex wars" in the early 1980s—after a decade of forced silence and exile—butch/femme reemerged as a viable and desirable way to organize sexual relationships and gender and sexual identities. Academics, activists, and community members began to actively challenge lesbian feminist assumptions that butch/femme sexuality merely mirrored heterosexuality. Instead, they argued that butch/femme as a couple or as individual identities were unique and radical subjectivities that persisted, and sustained lesbians, throughout the twentieth century. Butch/femme pride was not only respected; it was actively encouraged. New scholarship and writing glorified butch/femme and lauded it as being instrumental to the construction of modern public lesbian identities. With the advent of queer theory in the late 1980s and 1990s, butch/femme identities were celebrated as sites of gender subversion. This revaluation and visible rearticulation of butch/femme have led to its renaissance in many lesbian communities around the United States and western Europe. Although butch/femme has remained a viable and common identification in working-class lesbian communities, it also has become more acceptable among younger middle-class lesbians.

Outside the United States and western Europe, there exist thriving sexual economies that resemble butch/femme but are distinct and unique to their particular cultures. Like the American butch/femme communities of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, many of these communal formations are divided along class lines and have created their own unique language and codes to signify desire. In Greece, very masculine homosexual women are called *dalikes.* They are predominantly working-class and conduct romantic relationships with other very feminine working-class women called *carnivelesque women.* In the Philippines, masculine homosexual women are often referred to as tomboys or T-birds. More feminine women seem to be identified in relation to tomboys; they are the "wives" or "girlfriends" of tomboys. In the Philippines, masculine/feminine gender dynamics in female homosexual relationships are evident among the working and upper classes. These sexual unions and gender expressions resemble American and western European butch/femme couples but must be understood within the context of their location. Across cultures divergent attitudes toward gender, sexuality, and religion profoundly shape the worlds in which we live.

See Also

FEMINISM: LESBIAN; FEMINISM: RADICAL; GENDER; LESBIAN SEXUALITY; LESBIAN STUDIES; LESBIANISM; QUEER THEORY; SEXUAL DIFFERENCE; SEXUAL ORIENTATION; SEXUALITY: OVERVIEW

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CANCER

Physical, social, and economic factors influence a woman's experience of cancer. The kinds, causes, and treatments of cancer, the means of its prevention, and the incidence of mortality and morbidity are determined not only by the physical differences between men and women but also by the particular conditions in which they live. These conditions vary considerably by region and reflect disparities in political, economic, and medical resources available to women around the world in the fight against the disease.

General Definition

Cancer refers to several diseases with one common trait—the rapid, unrestrained growth and spread of cells that do not react to the body's normal mechanisms for limiting cell replication. Healthy, benign cells have specialized functions, and the body stimulates and regulates their rate of replication in order to restrict their growth to contact with other cells. Cancerous, or "malignant," cells lack what is called contact inhibition and so invade the surrounding tissue of other cells. This lack of inhibition causes solid tumors or lumps called carcinomas, which begin in the lining of organs and account for nearly 90 percent of all cancers. Other cancers affect the blood (leukemias), the lymph system (lymphomas), and bone and connective tissues (sarcomas). Cancerous cells can invade surrounding cells and enter the circulatory or the lymphatic system—the two systems that supply nutrients to the body's organs and carry away waste. When cancerous cells enter the circulatory or lymphatic system, they can spread to any tissue or organ in the body in a process called metastasis. The spreading of cancerous cells kills normal cells by depriving them of nutrients, thereby hindering or completely inhibiting the normal functioning of organs and glands and causing a host of debilitating symptoms and often death.

A Global Disease

Cancer affects people in all parts of the world. No reliable statistics exist on the number of cancer cases or the number of deaths from cancer worldwide, since many countries have no cancer registries. But available figures reveal that cancer is a major health problem everywhere. Dramatic increases in life expectancy and profound changes in lifestyles have caused the total number of new cancer cases to soar. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that by 2020 there will be 20 million new cancer patients each year, more than 70 percent of whom will live in developing countries. Although mortality rates in developing countries are still higher for communicable diseases that have been eradicated in developed nations, more than two out of three of the world's cancer patients will come from a developing country.

As global development increases, two factors will make cancer the leading cause of death worldwide: higher life expectancy and environmental contamination. Cancer is partially a disease of aging, and as life expectancy rises around the world, the number of cancer cases rises as well. In addition, as cancer-causing pollutants, particularly endocrine-disrupting chemicals, are released into the environment, the incidence of cancers that affect the reproductive organs of both women and men will increase.

Specific behaviors, such as eating certain kinds of food, drinking alcohol, and smoking cigarettes, also increase the risk of certain cancers. Cultural or economic encouragement of such behaviors influences the incidence and kind of cancer cases within a region. Such links help explain regional variations; for example, breast cancer has been relatively uncommon in Japan, but its incidence is now rising as the Japanese adopt western-style foods rich in saturated fats, a shift encouraged by commercial food manufacturing. Tobacco chewing in India explains why cancer of the oral cavity is more common there than in other countries. Factors associated with cancer include the following:

• Low fiber intake	Colon cancer
• High intake of salt-cured, smoked, and nitrate-cured foods	Esophagus and stomach cancer
• Tobacco chewing	Mouth and throat cancer
• Heavy drinking	Liver cancer
• Heavy smoking allied to heavy drinking	Mouth, throat, laryngeal, and esophagal cancer
• Overexposure to the sun	Skin cancer
• Cigarette smoking	Lung cancer (and as many as one-third of all cancer cases)

Other generally acknowledged risk factors are excessive exposure to X rays and, in a small number of cases, genetic inheritance (for example, there is evidence that genetic factors account for 5 to 10 percent of breast cancer). Hypertension, or stress, can be a factor as well and may have political, economic, or cultural causes specific to a region or lifestyle. Although personal choices and cultural context influence both the cause and the prevention of cancer, environmental and social factors also play a role in determining a community's ability to prevent or treat the disease. Historically, powerful corporations manufacturing chemicals and pesticides or dumping toxic wastes have downplayed the evidence linking these activities to cancer. As more affluent communities in the developed world organized against such dangers, companies began exporting toxic waste, pesticides, and chemicals, harming communities less economically able, or insufficiently politically organized, to defend themselves against such practices.

In an effort to account for specific trends related to cancer, some researchers distinguish between cancer in developed and underdeveloped nations and between cancers predominant in affluent countries and those common in poorer, generally less developed countries.

Women's Experience of Cancer

Cancers afflicting women conform in large measure to this pattern. Breast cancer is the leading cancer among women in developed nations (often called "the North"), with the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Netherlands having the highest rates. By contrast, cervical cancer—the most preventable cause of death in women of reproductive age—is the leading cancer among women in developing regions (called "the South" or the third world), particularly east and central Africa, some areas in Asia, the Caribbean, and tropical South America. The factors contributing to such cancers are distinct and reflect the varying priorities of women from these different regions and from developed as opposed to developing countries. For breast cancer, contributing factors include late childbirth and few or no children; for cervical cancer, factors include early childbirth and multiple pregnancies. In addition, women from poor communities in the developed world may be susceptible to cancers typical of both developed and underdeveloped areas, and their mortality rates may be higher than those of more privileged women. For example, the incidence of cervical cancer is 2.5 times higher among African-American women than among white women, and while the incidence of breast cancer among African-Americans of all age groups is rising, the incidence of breast cancer among white women under age 50 is falling. Overall, 34 percent of indigenous women around the world and 38 percent of African-American women survive for five years after a diagnosis of cancer, compared with 50 percent of white women.

Although ethnic differences and class distinctions profoundly influence the risk of cancer and the chances of survival among women, gender itself unites women's experience of cancer and can serve as an important criterion for examining and combating the global increase in the disease.

Gender inequality and sexism are significant factors in the prevention and treatment of cancer. Cancers that affect women occur mainly in the reproductive-genital system. Worldwide cancer cases among women rank in the following order: breast, cervix, uterus, ovaries, vagina, placenta, and fallopian tubes. Such cancers affect the health and survival of women more severely than cancers of the male reproductive organs affect men. Among Latin American and Caribbean women, deaths from cancers of the reproductive organs are double or even triple those for men, and the female-to-male ratio for healthy years of life lost is 7 to 1. In the United States, the incidence of breast cancer is 1 in 2,000 for women age 20, 1 in 40 at age 50, and 1 in 8 at age 85.

Cancer afflicts women differently from men. A major risk factor is the prolonged presence of estrogen in the body, including estrogen that is produced naturally. The link between estrogen and cancer involves issues of reproductive health that are exclusive to women, including late childbirth and few or no children, early menstruation, late menopause, and no breast feeding. In addition to the natural link between estrogen and cancer, several factors compound this risk in one or more reproductive organs:

- Pesticides, drugs, fuels, and plastics that mimic the action of estrogen or alter the hormone's activity
- Alcohol, which increases estrogen production
- Long-term use of estrogen-heavy oral contraceptives
- Fat and obesity (because estrogen is produced not only in the bloodstream but also in fat cells)
- DES (diethylstilbestrol), a synthetic estrogen prescribed to prevent miscarriages, which gives the user's daughter an increased risk of cervical or vaginal cancer and the user herself a higher risk of cancers of the breast, uterus, cervix, and ovaries. DES, a drug made under about two hundred brand names, is banned in the developed world but is still prescribed in some developing countries.

Environmental pollutants and toxins, processed foods, alcohol, and undertested medicines inctease the general risk of cancer for all, but they increase a woman's risk in ways that require distinct preventive measures.

In attempting to prevent cancer, a woman may need to make choices about cancer risks that are unique to her health needs. For example, a woman for whom estrogen is prescribed, perhaps to protect her from osteoporosis, must weigh her relative risk of osteoporosis, reproductive cancer, and other illness or disability in light of her own, and her family's, medical history. These choices affect the specific way a woman will experience cancer or the threat of it in her lifetime.

Society's views of women play a role in determining a woman's risk. The tendency of the pharmaceutical industry and the medical establishment to view reproduction as a mechanism and the female body as a machine that can be tinkered with has increased women's risk of certain cancers. Examples include the long dismissal of the dangers associated with the earliest oral contraceptives, the experiments in hormonal manipulation to regulate the ovulation of premenopausal women, and the attempt to induce false pregnancies in teenagers to counter the "incessant ovulation" blamed for breast cancer. These experiments illustrate that medical practices are susceptible to cultural misconceptions of women that increase women's risk of cancer.

Another example is male dominance in the private sphere. Because men often control the decision-making process in sexual relations, many young women have sex at an early age, and cervical cancer is associated with early sexual activity in women. In addition, men often make the decision whether or not to wear a condom, which could protect women against the cancer-related health risks associated with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Because societies often expect or even encourage male promiscuity, many women are at risk for STDs as well as for the HIV virus, which impairs or destroys their ability to resist disease. Crucial to cancer prevention is a woman's ability to control high-risk behaviors in her own life.

Women's Cancer Prevention

Women in many countries have organized to fight the preventable causes of cancer and are acquiring a greater claim to the economic and political resources for cancer prevention and treatment around the world.

A woman's most effective strategy against cancer is early detection. With early detection, some female cancers can be cured or put into remission, the temporary but sometimes long-term disappearance of symptoms. The Pap smear is a low-cost diagnostic tool for cervical cancer, which is almost 100 percent curable if detected early. Chances of surviving breast cancer also are greatly increased by early detection because deaths from breast cancer result not from the localized tumor in the breast but from metastasis, the spread of cancer beyond its primary site to the blood and lymph systems. Annual mammograms and examination of the breasts by a medical professional, together with monthly breast self-examination, are the most effective tools in early detection. Mammograms are sometimes considered not "cost-effective" for women under the age of 30 because "only 20 percent" of breast cancers occur in that age group; but it can be argued that this assumption disregards women who develop breast cancer at a young age, and particularly African-American women, a large proportion of whom develop breast cancer before age 40. Routine health examinations are an inexpensive yet often effective intervention—but they are not available to all women around the world.

Women also can initiate effective and personally empowering actions to enhance cancer prevention, detection, and survival. These include adopting lifestyle habits that detoxify the body, correct the metabolism, and strengthen the immune system, such as regular exercise and a diet high in fiber, low in saturated fats, and rich in vitamins A, C, and E as well as minerals and enzymes. It is important to maximize the body's capacity for self-healing by reducing hypertension and by incorporating emotional and mental health in preventing and caring for disease.

Women have made medical research increasingly sensitive to women's health issues. Because conventional chemotherapy has been less effective in treating several female reproductive organ cancers than in treating some other types of cancer, alternative therapies have been developed, with some success. Researchers have discovered a gene that may suppress tumor growth in breast and ovarian cancer and have developed a drug that controls cell division in metastatic ovarian and breast cancers which are unresponsive to chemotherapy. Research has also found that timing treatmenrs to the body's natural daily rhythms reduces the toxicity of chemotherapy. Research continues on alternatives to radical procedures, such as masrectomies, that can cause severe physical and emotional damage to women's reproductive and sexual health.

In designing a global strategy of cancer prevention, consideration for the specific needs of regions and countries is crucial. Understanding the diverse patterns of cancer in the world helps tailor national prevention programs to the epidemiological and economic situation of a specific country. There is still a widespread misconception that noncommunicable diseases such as cancer do not afflict the developing world, that they are burdens of affluent societies only. As a result, many developing countries face an increased incidence of noncommunicable diseases along with their persistently high rates of communicable diseases.

Inexpensive but effective interventions, such as encouraging healthy eating and pressuring food manufacturers to decrease fat and increase fiber content in their products, can help prevent both cancers and cardiovascular diseases. As cancer-causing industries confront organized opposition in the developed world, they must not be allowed simply to migrate to developing countries. For example, WHO estimates that there are 200 million female smokers in the world, and tobacco industries are increasingly targeting developing regions as developed countries organize against cigarette smoking. In developed countries, 25 percent of women smoke, compared with 7 percent in developing countries. If prevailing trends continue, however, and the tobacco industry continues to target the developing world, it is estimated that by 2020 more than 1 million women will die each year from tobacco-related illnesses—twice the number in 2000. In India, for example, rates of tobacco-related cancers are already higher among women than the rate of breasr cancer.

Access to resources is critical. One-third of all cancer cases are curable by applying current knowledge and technologies. Yet in many parts of the world, the population has no access to the basic cancer-fighting medical practices available in more affluent regions. The need for these effective resources will grow because the number of curable cases is expected to rise to one-half of cancer cases by 2025.

On a global scale, more must be done to bridge the gap between well-organized and well-financed women's advocacy groups in developed countries and the women of the poorest countries who have the fewest material resources for preventing and surviving cancer.

See Also

ENDOCRINE DISRUPTION; GLOBAL HEALTH MOVEMENT; HEALTH CHALLENGES; HEALTH EDUCATION; HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY; LIFE EXPECTANCY; MENOPAUSE

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Andaiye

CAPITALISM

Capitalism usually refers to a form of economic or social organization characterized by the pervasive commodification of property, labor, and knowledge. It has been a focus for feminists in many different ways. In the 1970s, when Marxist vocabulary was a kind of lingua franca among left-leaning intellectuals, socialist feminists rried to construct a theoretical understanding of patriarchy by using the concepts associated with the Marxist analysis of capitalism as a theoretical template. Alongside this fairly abstract analysis, those concerned with shifts in gender relations, including women's place in economic organization, have necessarily had to understand changes in the relationship between local economies and the world market. These and other aspects of feminist analyses of capitalism and its relation to gender are usefully reviewed in Barrett (1988) and Andermahr et al. (1997), among others. However, for a number of reasons analyses that focus on capitalism fell out of favor in the 1990s.

Marxist Analysis of Capitalism

In classical Marxism, capitalism has a twofold character. Although it is defined by a unique type of exploitation—the construction of human labor as a commodity for which the worker is paid, but at less than the value of that labor—it also has a progressive role in the evolution of human historical development. Because production under capitalism is organized around the continuing accumulation of capital, as against other social or spiritual goals, it tends to revolutionize the forces of production through scientific and technological development. As it expands, it subordinates other, earlier modes of production, either appropriating their surplus or replacing them with capitalist forms of production. According to orthodox Marxists, however, the means of production created by capitalism will eventually outgrow their foundation in the exploitative capitalist relations that gave birth to them. Thus although capitalism alienates human labor and blocks the free development of human potential, class conflict engendered by the oppression of the proletariat would lead the working classes to join forces to overthrow bourgeois rule and create a socialist society in which the fruits of capitalist development could be enjoyed by all.

Ambivalence about capitalism in Marxism was also present in the ways it envisioned the relationship between capitalism and what second-wave feminism came to call gender relations. On the one hand, in the *Communist Manifesto* Marx drew a parallel between the power relation between wives and husbands as social categories and the oppression of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, seeing the monopolization of property ownership as crucial in both cases. But Marxists have also tended to see capitalism as sweeping away all preexisting hierarchies and divisions, including women's oppression, and in nineteenth-century Europe the new economic independence of women employed in the factories spawned by the industrial revolution seemed evidence that this was occurring. Since then many theorists, feminist and other, have tried to posit a relationship between capitalism and sexuality. Marcuse (1964), for instance, initially assumed that capitalism required the repression of sexual pleasure but later argued that sexuality was deployed by capital in the interest of expanded consumption. In contrast, others have argued that because modern urban capitalist development has made it possible for individuals to lead lives outside marriage, it is linked to the development of modern homosexual lifestyles and communities. In the 1990s, analysis of the commodification of sexuality also made reference to the expansion of capitalist investment into new spheres (Hawkes, 1996), but here (as was increasingly the case elsewhere) capitalism has tended to be defined in terms of commodification and market exchange rather than in terms of the social relations of labor.

Feminist Analysis of Capitalism

To begin with, second-wave feminist theory in the West turned to highly abstract analyses of capitalism as a mode of production with its own laws of development. The most influential text, initially, was Engels's late nineteenth-century work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1972), which argued that modes of production incorporated systems of *re*production as well as systems of production, thereby creating a space for feminists to bring the analysis of sexual partnerships between men and women within Marxist theory. Feminist theorists extended the concept of reproduction to include not only biological, generational reproduction but also women's domestic labor, which reproduced the labor force on a day-to-day basis. They also drew heavily on the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser's analysis (Althusser and Balibar, 1970) of capitalism's dependence on its political and ideological levels, not merely its economic laws, in reproducing itself as a mode of production. Thus even though women may not have been as involved as men in capitalist relations in the workplace, their position in society was nonetheless determined by capitalism. The state, which was seen to reflect the interests of capital, played a particularly important role in cementing women's dependence on, and subordination to, men. However, the question whether the patriarchal basis of women's oppression was an aspect of capitalism or a separate but interacting system (dual systems theory) was much debated. Though it would be hard to say that the exact nature of the relationship between different aspects of gender relations and capitalism was ever resolved, these debates, which now seem rather arcane, put the situation of women at the center of theories of social formation rather than at their margins.

Since the collapse of the socialist regimes in eastern Europe and the marginalization of Marxist social theory more generally, capitalism as a focus for analysis has faded into the background. Even feminist researchers concerned with workplace issues have argued that the concepts Marxists developed to understand women's entry into industrial production under capitalism, such as the concept of the reserve army of labor, are not well suited to understanding women's concentration in reproductive labor or the service sector (Benhabib and Cornell, 1987). Studies of large-scale change have deployed concepts like globalization or post-Fordism (Fordism being a technological system that increases efficiency by breaking down and interlocking production operations, as on an assembly line, to mass-produce goods) or postindustrialism rather than focusing on capitalism as such. As examples one could compare writing from the 1970s and early 1980s on what was called "gender in development," in which the expansion of the capitalist world system was seen as a crucial determinant of transformations in gender relations (for example, Young, McCullagh, and Wolkowitz, 1985, first published in 1981; *Signs*, 1981), with later work (for example, Marchand and Parpart, 1995).

The marginalization of capitalism as an analytic focus has been particularly pronounced in western feminist thought, where the "cultural turn" privileging of the local, the personal, and the textual as against the structural and economic, play and choice as against constraint and oppression, has been particularly pronounced (Barrett, 1999). Foucauldian definitions of power, which refuse to see it based in any one sphere (such as the economy), have also turned attention away from relations of production. This analytic refocusing obviously has complicated roors and is linked to economic and social changes, not just shifting intellectual currents. But although calls for a feminist revival of materialist analysis as against cultural studies—for example, Ebert (1996)—may be justified, real changes in economic life and women's roles in it make a simple return to the analysis of gender and capitalism where it left off very unlikely. For instance, the proliferation of cultural and intellectual activities and their centrality to economic life make it difficult to contrast the cultural and the economic in any simple way. Indeed, the centrality of commodification to the expansion of feminist culture—through the purchase and sale of commodities such as books, journals, theater and cinema, and the development of electronic communication—suggests that feminist theory will have to take note of how feminism is itself linked to, if not dependent on, developments in late capitalism.

See Also

COMMUNISM; ECONOMY: OVERVIEW; ECONOMY: HISTORY OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION; MARXISM; SOCIALISM

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Carol Wolkowitz

CAREGIVERS

Women's role as domestic caregivers—maintaining a household and the people in it—may be a source of both strength and oppression for them. Although women do most of the world's household work, domestic caregiving has varied over periods and cultures. Food preparation, cleaning, child care, and even nursing infants may be allocated among groups of women, children, and men. The distinction between domestic and nondomestic activities may be blurred or clear.

In industrialized countries the middle-class norm strongly associates domestic caregiving with mothering (Ruddick, 1989). Yet the extent to which women mother, and how mothering and other domestic tasks are arranged, will depend on social and economic conditions. When women move into paid work, domestic caregiving may be restructured; for example, cooking may be replaced by the purchase of prepared foods, older children may be assigned to child care. Kin and neighbors may participate in the division of caring labor. Same-sex households can divide caregiving without reference to gender roles. More affluent families often hire poor women to do some, if not most, domestic caregiving (Colen, 1989). As more women have entered paid work and feminist ideas have spread, men have been pressured and encouraged to share domestic caregiving.

Organization of Caring Activities

How societies organize caring activities greatly influences women's domestic work (Fisher and Tronto, 1990). Where a free-market economy prevails, women with money may buy caring services, whereas poorer women perform their own caring work or do without it. Where caring is organized into private or state bureaucracies or offered through community-based agencies, domestic caregivers must connect members of their households to caring services; for example, they must take a child to a child care center, help a disabled relative go to a clinic, or get home care for an aged parent. Because women are concentrated in the underpaid "caring professions," women domestic caregivers often find themselves pitted against women who work as paid caregivers (a mother against an overworked elementary-school teacher, a daughter against a nurse who is on strike). Without an increase in women's economic power, support for women as both paid and unpaid caregivers, and, perhaps, the full integration of men into domestic and nondomestic caring, such tensions are likely to continue.

See Also

CHILD CARE; DOMESTIC LABOR; ELDERLY CARE, *all topics;* HOUSEHOLD WORKERS; HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES: OVERVIEW; HOUSEWORK; LONG-TERM CARE SERVICES

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Berenice Fisher

CARTOONS AND COMICS

Women have worked in cartooning almost since its inception. Many women published cartoons in the early twentieth century, but several pioneers stand out.

Pioneers

In 1909, Rose O'Neill created her adorable, androgynous Kewpies. First featured in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, the "Kewpies" became a national craze and remained a staple of women's magazines and newspaper funny pages for decades. Nell Brinkley's glamorous Brinkley Girl became a pre–jazz age cultural ideal. Grace Drayton used the characters in her "Dimples" cartoon strip as models for her Campbell Kids, who appear on soup cans to this day. In England, Mary Caldwell Toutel's "Rupert Bear" series began running in 1874 and was still popular in the early twenty-first century. The strip "Bib and Bob," created by May Gibbs, Australia's first female cartoonist, ran from 1924 to 1967.

The first "continuity strip" to be penned by a woman was Edwina Dumm's classic boy-and-his-dog strip, "Cap Stubbs and Tippie," which began in 1918. Dumm also worked as an editorial cartoonist, for the *Columbus Monitor*, before women got the vote. Mary Orr's "Apple Mary," which later evolved into "Mary Worth," first appeared in 1932. Inspired by Brinkley, Dale Messick created "Brenda Starr, Reporter" in 1940, and this adventure strip with its implausibly glamorous heroine was still in syndication in 2000. Tarpe Mill's "Miss Fury," was the first major costumed action heroine and the only one created by a woman. Clad in a panther skin, Miss Fury fought crime from 1941 through 1949. Marge Henderson Buell's venerable "Little Lulu" first came into being in the 1930s.

Mainstream Publications

For most of the twentieth century, women cartoonists were absent from the pages of comic books and as creators of single-panel "gag cartoons," with the notable exception of Helen Hokinson, whose gently ironic portrayals of society matrons (cowritten with a man) ran in the *New Yorker* in the 1940s and 1950s. Despite the work of the pioneers, women cartoonists have also been underrepresented in the daily funny pages. Newspaper editors, many of whom are men, apparently assume that whereas material by men is of interest to all, a woman-centered strip is a special-interest niche, and they tend to carry only one woman-penned strip; the rest are by and often primarily about men.

This situation is changing, but slowly.

In wide-circulation magazines and in the daily newspapers, women cartoonists remain the exception rather than the rule. The Pulitzer Prize–winning editorial cartoonist Signe Wilkinson is a rarity. The *New Yorker*, the primary venue for single-panel gag cartoons, publishes only a few women, notably Roz Chast, Australia's Victoria Roberts, and, occasionally, Carol Lay.

"Brenda Starr" was for years the only woman-penned strip in the funny pages. It was finally joined in the 1970s by "Cathy," Cathy Guisewite's comic strip about a self-depreciating single working girl, and later by Lynn Johnston's reality-based domestic strip, "For Better or for Worse." In the 1990s, women-oriented strips such as Jan Eliot's "Stone Soup" and Barbara Brandon's "Where I'm Coming From" were picked up by the big syndicates. Brandon's was the first cartoon by an African-American woman to be nationally syndicated.

For the most part, however, comics and cartoons by women remained ghettoized in nonmainstream venues such as small-press comics, zines, alternative weekly newspapers, and the Internet.

Alternative Publications

In the 1960s, with the advent of underground comics, women were inspired to tell stories that, in the words of the cartoonist Trina Robbins (1999), "were more valid to my generation than...Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos." Although the underground movement liberated cartoonists with respect to subject matter, publication remained very much a "boys' club" in which male underground editors published comics primarily by men. *National Lampoon* in the 1970s was a rare exception, including Shary Flenniken's "Trots and Bonnie" as well as work by M. K. Brown and Mary Wilshire. Women cartoonists began founding their own underground publications, such as Robbins's "It Ain't Me, Babe," the first all-woman "alternative" comic book. The collectively published "Wimmen's Comix" first appeared in 1972. Joyce Farmer and Lynn Chevely's "Tits 'n' Clits," a comic book series about female sexuality, came out at this time, as did Roberta Gregory's "Dynamite Damsels," the first lesbian comic book. In 1976, Diane Noomin and Aline Komisky-Crumb pioneered "Twisted Sisters," a comic book showcasing work that was, in Noomin's words, "personal, self-depreciating, ironic, crude and in-your-face." Two influential "Twisted Sisters" anthologies followed. Also at this time, in France, Claire Bretecher began to pen her groundbreaking multipage comics, mixing acerbic feminist humor with insightful social commentary.

Excluded from mainstream venues, women cartoonists such as Nicole Hollander ("Sylvia") and Lynda Barry ("Ernie Pook's Comeek") were able to reach an audience by self-syndicating their work to alternative weekly newspapers. They became so well known that they were staples of bookstore checkout counters. Others who went this route were Nina Paley ("Nina's Adventures"), Marian Henley ("Maxine"), and Carol Lay ("Story Minute"), as well as Alison Bechdel, whose "Dykes to Watch Out For" appeared in countless feminist and lesbian papers. All are strongly feminist, uncompromised voices.

Others, like Diane DiMassa ("Hothead Paisn, Homicidal Lesbian Terrorist"), self-published their work in zine form.

In the late 1990s, several editors and small presses began to specialize in publishing women cartoonists, among them England's Cath Tate and "Fanny Knockabout Comics," Italy's Luciana Tufani, and North America's Roz Warren and Deb Werksman (Hysteria Publications).

Also in the 1990s, the Internet emerged as a venue where women artists could easily and inexpensively publish their work, sidestepping the gatekeepers—the many male editors—to reach and build an audience. However, women artists continued to be underrepresented in the far more lucrative mainstream venues. Without the influence and financial rewards of mainstream syndication and publication, talented women cartoonists will continue to face major obstacles.

See Also

MAGAZINES; PUBLISHING; ZINES

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Roz Warren

CASTE

Caste is a hierarchical, hegemonic ranking of social groups found predominantly on the Indian subcontinent. A word of Portuguese and Spanish origin, *casta* in the early sixteenth century had several meanings, one of which was "purity of blood." By the eighteenth century, it designated two levels of groups on the subcontinent: the *jatis*, roughly 3,000 or more, loosely grouped into four *varnas*, systematically elaborated in the Brahmanic scriptures of the Vedic period.

Organization of the Caste System

In the upper-caste Brahman construction, which is elaborated in the Hindu Dharmasastras as part of a tradition of universal law, caste has its origin in the *varna* system, which was constituted by four orders: Brahman (priests), Kshtriya (warriors), Vaisya (traders), and Sudra (artisans, workers, peasants, and the like). Of these, the first three were the *dvija* (twice-born "clean") castes, the men of which are entitled to initiation into Hinduism. A fifth order, the panchama, or untouchables, made up of the slaves who performed menial chores (cleaning villages, washing clothes, and in general being engaged directly in production and connected closely to organic life), was included later.

Within this framework, women and slaves figure as subjects. Women are considered by nature fickle and unchaste, so their sexuality, bodies, and minds must be reined in by the dharma; the Manusmriti epitomizes this view. Evidence from the eighteenth century points to the vulnerability of all women, irrespective of *jati*, to enslavement for infringement of moral codes.

The panchamas, the untouchable castes, have for centuries been ghettoized in *vadas* (colonies), enslaved to the other four *varnas* in perpetual bondage. For women of these castes, the additional implication is sexual slavery. The word *asprsya* (literally "untouchable") was first used in the Visnusmrti, which calls for death for any member of these castes who deliberately touches a member of a higher caste. However, this proscription on physical contact did not extend to sexual relations between upper-caste men and untouchable women, because sexual labor was regarded as part of the physical labor provided by slave women and appropriated by the upper-caste owner or master.

With few exceptions, the caste system is patrilineal and patrilocal. There is evidence that seems to indicate the brief coexistence of patrilineality, patrilocality, and egalitarian gender relations in the early Rig Vedic period. Historical evidence also points to extremely fluid social groups with shifting occupational status and widely varying dietary practices among the four *varnas*: Sudra kings and Brahman military commanders, beef-eating Vedic Brahmans, and so on. Formal education, however, remained the preserve of the Brahman. Endogamy (specifically, the absolute proscription on upper-caste women engaging in marital or other physical relationships with lower-caste men), ritual purity, commensality, and slavery defined the caste system.

Critiques of Caste

The critique of caste has its origin in the work of Jotirao Phule and Savitribai Phule in Maharashtra in the nineteenth century, E. V. Ramaswami Naicker "Periyar" and Tamil Nadu in the early twentieth century, and B. R. Ambedkar in the later twentieth century.

Phule and his associates founded the Satyashodhak Samaj (Truth-Seeking Society) in 1873. The overarching theme of Phule's addresses at meetings of the Samaj was the character and unity of the working classes, the unequal division of labor between women of different castes, and the vital contribution of peasant women to production. Tarabai Shinde's Stree Purusha Tulana (1882), also part of the Satyashodhak tradition, confronts Brahmanic patriarchy as well as patriarchy within non-Brahman castes.

In mapping a non-Brahman worldview through the Self-Respect Movement, launched in 1925, Periyar stood the caste system on its head. The new social order could emerge only through a radical transformation of structures of feeling and material conditions. This immediately freed women and Adi Dravidas (Dalits) from caste-bound traditions, created a moral ground in which women exercised choice and consent in matters of both marriage and sexuality, and eliminated the priesthood and the chanting of Vedic hymns in marriage solemnities.

Ambedkar, an intrepid advocate of formal rights for the untouchables, belonged to the untouchable Mahar caste. He coined the word *Dalit* (literally "downtrodden") to designate untouchables as a political entity. During the struggle for independence in the early part of the twentieth century, Ambedkar's concerns centered on finding ways in which independence could bring freedom to the oppressed. As an architect of the Indian Constitution, he instituted constitutional safeguards for the depressed classes against exclusion (social boycott) and active discrimination by majority upper-caste Hindus in independent India. Significant among these provisions was the right to substantive equality through reservations in education and employment.

Articulations of caste by the Dalit Panther movement in Maharashtra and elsewhere in India since 1972 illustrate the intermeshing of gender with caste, although the connections are not made explicit. Dalit writing defines social location in terms of centrality in production processes. Dalit literature also articulates the playing out of nationality and citizenship on the bodies of women of lower castes, by juxtaposing, for instance, the fine of 50 rupees for molesting a Dalit woman against the fine of 300 rupees for disrespect to the national flag. This echoes the concerns of Pandita Ramabai, who, in the late nineteenth century, drew a parallel between English rule in India and the rule of high-caste men over low-caste men and women down the ages.

The National Dalit Women's Federation, formed in 1995, brings together the various perspectives in Dalit assertion and resistance, encapsulating a two-hundred-year history. The federation questions both upper-caste, Brahmanic hegemony in intercaste relations (particularly the antagonistic, often violent relations between upper castes and Dalit women, in a climate of increasing right-wing nationalism) and Dalit patriarchies from within. This approach by the federation brings into sharp focus current debates on the place of Dalit women in quotidian politics: Should Dalit women have a quota within the quota earmarked for reserved categories, or a quota within the quota reserved for women? That they might have a right to both is rarely acknowledged.

See Also

CLASS; HINDUISM

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Kalpana Kannabiran

CATHOLICISM

See CHRISTIANITY and FAMILY: RELIGIOUS AND LEGAL SYSTEMS—CATHOLIC AND ORTHODOX.

CELIBACY: Religious

The term *celibacy* comes from the Latin *caelebs* ("unmarried") and denotes the state of remaining unmarried and abstaining from all sexual activity, whether through personal choice or force of circumstances. In the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christian churches, "consecrated celibacy" designates the special state of persons who make a vow not to marry when they join a religious order. Male institutional celibates are present in many societies, but female celibacy is somewhat less common. This article addresses female celibacy in formal contexts.

Celibacy as a state of life is alien to the Old Testament tradition and Judaism. With their strong belief in the divine mandate to marry and have children, the Jews regarded willful celibacy as reprehensible. Thus, in the Bible, Jephthah's daughter bewails her virginity, and Hannah, mother of Samuel, grieves over her barrenness. It was rare for a Hebrew to embrace lifelong celibacy as an expression of exclusive devotion to God.

Celibacy in Christianity

Jesus departed from this tradition by modeling a life unfettered by family ties. According to Matthew 19:12, Jesus positively counseled that celibacy be chosen freely "for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven." Since Jesus's time, the challenge to be celibate has inspired Christians to follow his example of total bodily surrender to the demands of faith. Nevertheless, it is clear that Jesus and his disciples (several of whom were married men) did not enjoin this state on all Christians.

Virginity as a state of religious power was already recognized in Rome, where the purity of the vestal virgins was a symbolic guarantor of the virtue and stability of the state. During the first four centuries after Christ, so many young women took vows of virginity that church authorities began to view the trend with alarm and addressed it at the Synod of Elvira (c. 306 C.E.). Some early Christian sects required that all their adherents be celibate, but, depending necessarily on a constant stream of converts, they were unable to persist. At first, Christian celibate communities included both men and women, but anxiety over possible scandal led to the sexes being separated.

In the Middle Ages, a monastic life for women came to fill social as well as religious needs. Convents offered a respectable, useful life to women who remained unmarried by choice, because their families could not provide adequate dowries, or because of a surplus of females in a population; many middle-aged widows also became nuns. Free from the demands of childbearing and child care, they devoted themselves not only to prayer but also to healing, teaching, and serving the indigent.

Protestants in the Reformation turned away abruptly from clerical celibacy, but the long equation of female virtue with celibacy retained some influence, and women celibate by choice were often accepted as church functionaries and teachers of children. All members of the Shaker sect, founded by Ann Lee in the eighteenth century and later widespread in the United States, were celibate.

Celibacy in Hinduism and in Taoism

On the Indian subcontinent, Hindu women did not begin entering the monastic life until the late nineteenth century. Buddhists, by contrast, have a long tradition of nuns who renounce attachment to worldly life and devote themselves to seeking enlightenment through restraint of the senses and meditation. Such women were not required to be virgins before joining their community but had to remain celibate thereafter. In some divisions of Buddhism, nuns (called *bhikshunis*) can preach and perform ritual functions as monks do. In the Jain religion, the Svetambara sect has a preponderance of celibate ("renunciant") nuns over male monastics; the other sect, the Digambara, discourages female renunciants but still includes a few.

Taoism, the indigenous religion of China, developed a monastic pattern during the Tang dynasty (618–907 C.E.), and there were female orders. Celibacy was recommended in at least some of these, but apparently not in all. In the modern period before the establishment of the People's Republic of China, a large number of women joined the Quanzhen order, which emphasized celibacy and meditation; it is not clear to what extent it has managed to survive under the current regime.

Celibacy in Other Religious Traditions

Beyond these major religious traditions, there is little evidence of female celibacy by choice on a large scale. Both Islam and Zoroastrianism reject the notion. In many cultures, however, women are expected to remain celibate before marriage and sometimes in widowhood. Ritual purifications throughout the world usually require that people abstain from sex in order to devote themselves to higher aims and to avoid contaminating holy times, places, and acts.

In the modern western world, consecrated celibacy is widely devalued in comparison with marriage. It is, however, gaining unprecedented meaning as a countercultural option against the backdrop of the market economy. Women may choose celibacy as a reaction against being commodified, reified, and bartered because of their sex. Their surrender of the body to their faith signals a decision in favor of human dignity, womanly freedom, and femininity liberated from the dictates of a patriarchal culture. As Mary John Mananzan has written, the meaning of celibacy today lies "in the freedom of the heart that is needed to be truly available to the many" (1993: 144).

See Also

CELIBACY: SECULAR; NUNS; RELIGION: OVERVIEW; SEXUALITY: OVERVIEW; SEXUALITY, *specific topics;* VIRGINITY

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Sr. Irene Dabalus

CELIBACY: Secular

In Victorian times women were regarded as deviant if they enjoyed a genitally active sex life. Today women invite pejorative labels if they do not enjoy such a life. Some say that our orgasm-fixated society considers no sexual activity freakish except *no* sexual activity.

Historical Background

The original and primary meaning of celibacy was "the state of living unmarried," derived in the seventeenth century from Latin *caelibatus,* from *caelebs.* A secondary meaning is "abstention from sexual inrercourse, especially by resolve or as an obligation."

The ancient view of celibacy in the West and elsewhere was positive singlehood conferring wisdom, health, and spiritual power. This idea of celibacy as a more elevated ideal than genital activity significantly contrasts with the centrality in many twentieth-century societies of heterosexuality and reproduction.

Chastity as an element of celibacy has been shrouded in myth in most religions. Christians are taught that Christ and Mary were virgins and that virginity was a holier state than sexual engagement. Catholics are taught to revere sexual abstinence. The European monastic movement offered its own example of celibacy as the highest purity. In medieval England the proportion of celibate men was as high as 5 percent of the male population and the proportion of celibate convent women only slightly lower.

In the nineteenth-century United States, three post–Civil War utopian societies—the Shakers, the Koreshans, and the Sanctificationists—substituted celibacy for sex, as a symbol which empowered their promotion of theoretical sexual equality and female social power (an early form of feminism). In these three religious groups, the support of women's economic and personal independence accompanied their acceptance of celibacy.

In nineteenth-century Britain, female celibates were denigrated as "prudes," a term that became a weapon for attacking suffragists and feminists who challenged men's abusive sexual behavior or who spurned heterosexual relationships.

Western European societies have long preached lifelong celibacy or delayed marriage, and non-European groups have also observed lengthy restrictions on sexual intercourse. A highly abstemious society is the Dani of Irian Jaya, Indonesia, who require a four- to six-year postpartum period of sexual abstinence, which is invariably observed and seems to lead to no signs of stress or misery in celibate abstainers.

Buddhist monastic life of poverty, chastity, and self-abnegation in places like Burma is remarkable for its firm renunciation of the society of women and "lustful" desires and for the degree to which it is part of ordinary people's daily lives.

In China in the 1960s and 1970s, a campaign to limit population growth was largely a campaign in favor of celibacy. Chinese adolescents were not expected to engage in any sexual activity. It was considered degenerate for girls not to control their sexual impulses; signs in factories stated, "Sex is a mental disease." By contrast, the current ethos is that celibacy is a mental disease.

Celibacy in Modern Societies

In the West at the turn of the twenty-first century, women are encouraged to engage in sexual—preferably heterosexual—activity, which, together with diets, beauty products, low wages, pornography, and violence, is part of a culture that limits women's progress and power. The multimillion-dollar pornography industry, which exists alongside a cosmetic surgery industry aimed at persuading women that it is healthy to be starved, snipped, and stitched in pursuit of a prolonged sexual shelf life, upholds an ideology that suggests that anyone who lacks interest in sexual activity must be in need of a cure. Given this oppressive climate, it is not surprising that women are deciding to abandon the sexual treadmill and find other, more fulfilling ways to express themselves. Many of today's celibates, then, are neither virgins-in-waiting nor the reluctantly single; they are women, married and single, heterosexual and lesbian, who have often found in celibacy the freedom and autonomy to redefine and celebrate their sexuality.

Research by the present author for her book *Women, Passion, and Celibacy* (Cline, 1993) found that a "genital myth" which prescribes genitally active behavior is accepted by women across social classes, cultures, ages, and sexual orientations. Celibate women today are labeled frigid or asexual despite an honorable male tradition that historically saw celibacy as a prestigious ideal.

Whereas the patriarchal definition of female celibacy is genital abstention, women are now redefining celibate identity and behavior as a mode of sexuality. Celibacy may be a choice to be without a sexual partner for positive reasons of political, personal, or spiritual growth. Women see it as a sexual independence that enables them to retain intimate connections yet define themselves autonomously. Though without the power struggles of a genitally active relationship, it remains a form of sexual practice. It focuses on women's personal development, and it is *not* about relating to other people.

"Ascetic celibates," who eschew any form of genital expression, see themselves as different from "sensual celibates," who enjoy masturbation, touching, and some physical intimacy. Some religious women today seeking spiritual growth, together with nuns, accept celibacy as a vocational requirement. Evidently, however, more women choose passion without possession, a key determinant of contemporary celibacy, for positive reasons of autonomy, a need for solitude, a search for passion, platonic companionship, time for their careers, improvement in communication with their partners, or antipathy toward possessiveness within partnerships. Some women become celibate as a consequence of widowhood, illness, disability, fear of AIDS or violence, dislike of penetration, sexual anxiety caused by childhood sexual abuse, or dislike of the unequal power dimension they perceive in genital relationships.

"Partnered" lesbian women experience less pressure about turning to celibacy than do partnered heterosexual women. All celibates in couples find it more difficult than single celibates to express their celibacy publicly, for fear of stigmatizing their partners. Still, many women find that celibacy enables them to view men as friends instead of lovers or enemies.

New definitions of contemporary female celibacy—which include defining it as a form of sexuality—change the philosophical meaning of the word. In the area of sexuality, women are not only breaking new ground philosophically but also making a cultural shift in the perception of celibacy, linguistically and practically.

See Also

CHASTITY: RELIGIOUS; MARRIAGE: OVERVIEW; SEXUALITY: OVERVIEW; SINGLE PEOPLE; VIRGINITY

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Sally Cline

CENSORSHIP

Censorship is an exercise of the critical faculty that is sanctioned by institutional authority. Authorities use censorship to control the power to name: the power to define what is true and what is right. Efforts by authorities to censor fallacious or dangerous ideas are integral and often palpable parts of their efforts to proclaim and propagate factual or felicitous views. Sense is made by censoring nonsense.

All societies, from ancient Sumer and Egypt to the corporate states that make up the emerging global cultures of the microchip, practice some form of censorship. Censorship not only assumes different forms—for example, official, subterranean, and self-censorship—but also frequently operates under other names, for example, patriotism, reason, competition, good taste, or national security.

Censorship is the knot that binds power and knowledge. Social order is created, and bodies of knowledge are assembled and organized by marking boundaries between conformity and deviance, reason and chaos. In some societies these boundaries are codified into law and enforced by formal administrative agencies, censorship boards, police, judicial officers, or their representatives. Every social group supplements or supplants formal controls with social pressures, conventions, rituals, and institutional practices that discourage dissent. Censorship is therefore a pervasive, intractable, and sociologically significant constituent of all human communities.

The Received History of Censorship

The word *censorship* and the practices conventionally associated with it are, however, usually more narrowly conceived within the discourses of contemporary scholars, jurists, and human rights advocates. Censorship is commonly thought of as a historical development that accompanied the rise of the modern state and the invention of the printing press (Lahav, 1989). Conversely, the great victories against censorship and for freedom of expression are regarded as outcomes both of the scientific revolutions that occurred in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and of the western Enlightenment that followed in the eighteenth century (Bury, 1913).

The emergence of liberal democracies is associated with these developments. The American and French Revolutions were, in part, precipitated by restrictions on press freedom. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1791) is regarded as a benchmark in the history of free expression. For the first time, a government formally barred itself from making any laws restricting freedom of speech, press, or religion. Subsequent legal controversies about censorship in the United States have therefore been largely restricted to: (1) issues of state or local censorships of books, the arts, and pornography; (2) questions related to the abuses of free speech and freedom of the press—for example, slander and libel; and (3) controversies about the forms and limits of press censorship during wartime and other national emergencies, as well as controversies that permit some prior censorship of the writings of government employees and former government employees. In western democracies, such as the United Kingdom, where church and state retain formal ties, publications or practices that are deemed blasphemous may also be proscribed by government regulation.

Etymology supports this historically circumscribed, Eurocentric understanding of the term. *Censorship* derives from the root *cense,* from the Latin *censure:* to estimate, rate, assess, be of the opinion, judge, reckon. Historically, the title "censor" was first used to designate two magistrates in ancient Rome who were responsible for the census, the official registry of citizens, as well as the supervision of public morals. Censorship was common in both Greece and Rome, but it was not systematically administered until technology extended access to the written word beyond nobles, aristocrats, and clerics. The invention of movable type by Johannes Gutenberg in Mainz, Germany (c. 1450), was followed almost immediately by a papal decree that established and enforced book censorship throughout all of Europe until the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation did not abolish censorship. Protestant reformers such as John Calvin set up far more rigorous censorial regimes than any envisioned by the papacy.

In reaction to what they regarded as the licentious corruptions of the Roman Catholic clergy, Protestants, especially the Puritan sects, instituted far more comprehensive regimens for disciplining the body than had prevailed under Catholicism. In the United States, fundamentalist Protestant groups continue to play leadership roles in organized efforts to prohibit or restrict sex education in public schools, to limit scientific inquiry in areas where science and Scripture conflict, to ban controversial books from public schools and libraries, and to influence textbook selections for public schools.

Women's Studies, History, and Censorship

From the perspective of women's studies, the received history of censorship is western, and patriarchal in origin. It recounts a familiar western myth of a progressive, almost oedipal, struggle of the forces of truth, justice, freedom, and enlightenment over tradition, superstition, ignorance, and punitive authority. All the featured players in this story are European men, and virtually all the action revolves around their struggles with one another.

Within this historical narrative, the Reformation marks an epochal triumph for freedom of conscience and reason. The fact that this freedom was achieved within cultures that regarded women, slaves, and servants as property, not as rational human beings, passes without comment. Liberal histories record the democratic revolutions of the eighteenth century as narratives of progress. They remain silent about the fact that the franchises for freedom of expression and freedom of the press secured by these revolutions were limited franchises extended only to citizens: free, white males who owned land, or, in the case of freedom of the press, those who owned printing presses, publishing house, or newspapers. These histories chronicle the daring deeds of great men. In short, they suggest that all the significant victories for freedom of expression took place in "a world without women" (Noble, 1992).

From Cato the Elder (234–149 B.C., Roman) to Anthony Comstock (1844–1915, American), the censors vilified in liberal histories of censorship were, to a man, defenders of the morals and manners of patriarchal gender orders. Their adversaries, the champions of free expression, posed no fundamental threats to that order. Indeed, with the exception of John Stuart Mill (1806–1873, British), they expressed little or no awareness of it. On the contrary, almost to a man, they struggled for the ascendancy of their respective political or social causes within the existing gender order. The great egalitarian revolutions of eighteenth-century liberalism were, for example, conceived within natural rights philosophies that understood the rights of *man* to be the rights of *men.*

In this view, the monotheistic, monocular, and monological assumptions of western thought naturalized the subordination of women. These constituent assumptions denied women both subjectivity and agency in historical processes. They provided the auspices for discursive forms that legitimated ignoring or, in the case of some historical writing, erasing women's participation in struggles for freedom of expression and freedom of the press. Consequently, repression and persecution of heresies like Gnosticism and witchcraft, which disproportionately targeted women, were not classified as censorship by historians. Yet church and state repression directed against these ideas and their advocates claimed more lives than many wars (Kors and Peters, 1972). Conversely, women's participation in the family-run clandestine presses that sprang up in many parts of Europe from the Inquisition until the French Revolution is not examined in histories of free expression. Yet women's work was essential to these enterprises, and widows often continued to operate illicit presses long after the death of their husbands.

Standard histories, it is argued, do not just fail to chronicle the experiences of European women. They also ignore the struggles of European men who belonged to subordinate or nonhegemonic categories of masculinity: homosexual men, landless men, servants, most laborers, and most members of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrant groups. In short, they exclude most of the European population. More significantly, they write all non-Europeans out of history. Liberal history frames its narratives in a periodizing schema—the Dark Ages, the Age of Reason, and so forth—that treats the achievements of prominent European men as universal. Within this schema, the Enlightenment marked the end of the great struggles against censorship. Yet most of the world's population was either disenfranchised or untouched by the "light" of the western Enlightenment.

When the chronology of liberal history is used to tell the stories of women, working-class, colonial, or postcolonial subjects, it reduces their struggles to attempts to amend or complete the received history of censorship. The liberal model ignores the differential social positioning of these people in time, place, and hierarchies of power and knowledge. It captures their resistances within its fictions of universal enlightenment.

The women's history movement abandons these narrative conventions. It treats gender as a primary category of historical analysis. Gender is conceived as a difference that makes a difference in how social order is created and how power relations are arranged, sustained, and contested. Received history is therefore not regarded simply as an incomplete record of the past. Rather, it is seen, for example by Joan Wallach Scott, as an active "participant in the production of knowledge that legitimized the exclusion or subordination of women" (1988: 26). The goal of women's history is not just to write women's achievements into the record. It is, Scott, a leader of this movement, points out, to write "histories that focus on women's experiences *and* analyze the ways in which politics construct gender and gender consrructs politics" (1988: 27).

Women's history is only beginning to lay the groundwork for rewriting histories of censorship. It is, nevertheless, possible to identify some of the epistemological moves women's history must make to transcend the myopia of the received history of censorship. Sociological—rather than etymological or juridical—definitions of censorship are required to bring women's experience into focus. Alternative schemata for periodizing history need to be replaced with reflexive, contextual forms that recognize the uniqueness and multiplicity of diverse cultural experiences, discursive practices, and gender orders. Dichotomous concepts, like patriarchy, which provide a useful lens for understanding European experiences, may distort rather than enhance comprehension of the gender politics of nonwestern cultures. Dualistic models do not, for example, advance analysis when applied to some Native American cultures where women are the primary producers of objects of aesthetic value, participate fully in political affairs, and yet play no part in important religious ceremonies.

Viewed from the perspective of women's history, liberal triumphs over church and state censorship require much fuller explanations. Using linear, positivistic theories of progress to theorize these developments greatly underestimates their complexity. These theories ignore the fact that victory within one of the multiple and mobile sets of social relations that make up the field of power is often accompanied by defeat within another (Foucault, 1980). The daring deeds of great men frequently require great sacrifices by their foot soldiers, servants, slaves, mothers, wives, sisters, and children. The free expression of such men often depends on the silence of their subordinates. A step forward in the historical process by some individuals or groups may signal steps backward by others. Women's history requires analysis of all the moves that take place within the field of power.

To cite a paradigmatic example: from the perspectives of standard historiography and women's history, Thomas Jefferson's arguments against censorship assume very different levels of significance. Liberal historians view history as a progressive development that culminates in the Enlightenment, free inquiry, and the rule of reason. Therefore, they regard the internal contradictions in Jefferson's discussions of censorship as inexplicable conundrums and relegate them to the museum of historical curiosities. In contrast, women's history theorizes power as a complex and conflictual process that constitutes the entire social body. As a result, it approaches Jefferson's contradictions as historical discoveries and rich resources for analysis. To bring women's experience of Jeffersonian liberalism into focus requires analysis of the fact that Jefferson vehemently condemned any form of state or local censorship in the American Republic, simultaneously advocating strict censorship of women's reading.

The goal of women's history is not to diminish Jefferson's achievements but to provide a fuller and more accurate account of their complexity. When historians examine the ways that "politics construct gender and gender constructs politics" in liberal democracies, the censorship of women's reading becomes a contradiction that requires explanation because men's reading is no longer subject to censorship. From this perspective, the American Enlightenment can be understood as both a reaffirmation of female subordination and a partial victory for women's struggles for emancipation. Even though it reproduced the gender order of the Old World, Jeffersonian liberalism also laid some of the philosophical and legal foundations for western feminist critiques of patriarchy.

Constituent and Regulative Censorship

Sociological definitions of censorship recognize the arbitrary, expansive, and fluid character of power relations and of the social structures and hierarchies they support. Two overlapping types of censorship can be distinguished: constituent and regulative (Jansen, 1988; Miller, 1962). Constituent censorship provides the epistemological foundations for the creation of social order and the legitimation of authority. It operates at the level of tacit or taken-for-granted assumptions. Constituent censorship is not ordinarily open to question or contestation except in periods of social tumult or transformation. Yet constituent censorship provides the precedent and anchor for regulative censorships. The gender order—what Gayle Rubin (1975: 157) describes as "the sex/gender system"—has served as a form of constituent censorship in virtually all known literate societies. Gender must therefore be understood as a fundamental constituent of all power relations, including the relationships of men with men.

Regulative censorship, by contrast, is generally both "visible and legible" (Sennett, 1980), even though it is often administered in inconsistent, arbitrary, or duplicitous ways. It involves formal, frequently bureaucratic, administration of written laws or rules. Regulative censorship is a legally constituted form of censorship practiced by church or state; it marks the limits of social permission and enforces sanctions against those who cross the boundaries of propriety, canon, or law. Liberal histories of censorship are histories of regulative censorships in the West.

Regulative censorship frequently contributes to the maintenance of the dominant sex or gender system in many cultures. It may, for example, be used variously to ban or restrict access to sexually explicit materials, including images and texts deemed pornographic or obscene; to censor materials that deal with homosexuality or lesbianism; and to restrict access to birth control information. In contemporary liberal democracies, regulation of sexuality has been a flash point for debates about censorship. Debates about regulating pornography framed within the terms of liberal discourse have deeply divided contemporary feminists in Europe and North America.

The distinction between constituent and regulative censorship is useful because it underscores both the intractability and the cultural variability of this suppression. It moves beyond and beneath western liberalism's circumscribed understanding of the concept. It opens up an approach that can begin to examine the diverse and distinctive ways that nonwestern cultures constitute their discourses and censorship. This approach allows censorship in Argentina, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, or Iran, for example, to be understood and critiqued on its own terms rather than within the terms of an alien screen of meaning that automatically codes difference as regressive, primitive, exotic, or unenlightened.

By emphasizing both the necessity and the difficulty of analyzing constituent forms of censorship, this terminological distinction also provides new ways of conceptualizing, contesting, and mediating current debates about censorship in the West. Groundbreaking works like Susan Griffin's *Pornography and Silence* (1981) and Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature* (1980), which document historical repression and erasure of the female principle in the mythopoetics of western thought, acquire new significance. Viewed as probes of constituent censorship in western power and knowledge rather than as specialized studies of pornography or ecology, they begin the work of writing women's experience into the history of western censorship.

The challenge of rewriting the history of censorship through the lens of women's experience is a formidable one. A first step is to free the term *censorship* from the hegemony of western legal and semantic traditions. The next step is to develop a radical methodological reflectiveness that incorporates the lessons of both feminist and postcolonial examinations of the constituents of western thought. Then it may be possible to begin to build international forums where the multiple, disparate, and possibly irreconcilable voices of women's historical and contemporary experiences of censorship can be articulated.

For many women throughout the world, organized struggles for freedom of expression and against censorship are just beginning to gain momentum. These women are claiming a voice and making history in places like Dakar, Dublin, Lagos, Ljubljana, Los Angeles, Manchester, Manila, Phnom Penh, Santiago, and Tashkent. As historical subjects and agents, they are reconstructing gender, politics, and definitions of free expression.

See Also

DEMOCRACY; EROTICA; EUROCENTRISM; HUMAN RIGHTS; LITERATURE: OVERVIEW; PATRIARCHY: FEMINIST THEORY; PORNOGRAPHY IN ART AND LITERATURE; PUBLISHING; REPRESENTATION

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Sue Curry Jansen

CENSUS

Throughout recorded history, elites and governments have conducted censuses as a means of keeping track of the material resources that they have owned or controlled (or have wished to own and control) within their borders. Most early censuses were conducted to enumerate the wealth and resources of the state for the purpose of assessing taxes and tributes due. Modern national censuses still provide economic information, but most states today conduct censuses primarily for broader social science purposes: the census, in most countries, is the main (often sole) document that aims to provide a comprehensive social survey of the nation. The most basic social census is designed to elicit information on the sex, age, marital status, family size, educational attainment, and economic status of each person enumerated; most national censuses go much further and include questions on health, welfare, housing conditions, consumption patterns, religious preference, and racial identity.

Conducting a regular census is considered a hallmark—and an obligation—of modern statehood; the United Nations issues guidelines on developing and conducting censuses. A decennial census (taken every 10 years) has become the international standard, but the ability of states to conduct regular censuses varies widely. A complex and costly infrastructure is required to conduct and interpret a national census, and in many poorer countries censuses are taken infrequently. On a global scale, then, the level of information available about the social and economic lives of women and men is wildly uneven; as a general rule, one can presume that the least information—or the least reliable information—is available for the poorest and more marginalized peoples and nations.

Uses of the Census

In many countries, the census is key to national government decision making—it is the primary document that provides the "factual" basis for a wide range of social, economic, and political policies. Most censuses are intended to be comprehensive social surveys, and most demographers, policy makers, and analysts who interpret census information have long assumed that this is what censuses provide. Recent critiques from social scientists, however, including feminists, particularly in western countries where census taking is a high-profile and high-expense government activity, have called into question presumptions about the comprehensiveness of modern censuses. It is increasingly clear that censuses provide, at best, a partial assessment of the "state of the state." It also is clear that the degree to which certain groups are rendered visible or invisible in a census will have important consequences in social and economic policy.

In some cases, certain peoples and groups may actively avoid being counted in national censuses; censuses are, after all, an arm of state surveillance, no matter how benign a function they may play in the national mechanisms of governance. Racial or ethnic minority groups, or peoples with particular political and religious affiliations, may feel they have good reason to resist being caught in the census net. However, intentional invisibility such as this probably accounts for only a small part of the underrepresentation that characterizes all censuses. *Undercounting,* which plagues most censuses, is more typically (though not always) unintentional and reflects the logistical difficulties of taking a census: certain groups, such as the homeless or people living in isolated parts of a country, are difficult to enumerate fully.

Censuses are also flawed by blind spots, which are the product of design predilections and presumptions built into the census itself. A census is a social construct, itself a social document; the questions that are asked or not asked on a census reflect presumptions about who and what are considered by the state to be "important" enough to count. Thus, the census as a social mirror seldom reflects all lives equally.

Racial and ethnic census classifications are especially problematic. Most censuses require people to identify themselves by one of a small number of preselected racial categories—the U.S. census, for example, allows for only five racial groupings. In most countries, this practice is coming under increasing criticism. Census racial classifications typically reflect stereotyped, simplistic, hierarchical, or imperialist classifications; once in place, such classifications narrow the nature of national debate and understanding about race relations; census categories give the impression that *race* is a fixed (and official) identity, and such categories can seldom accommodate multiracial identities.

Women's Invisibility in the Census

Throughout history, and in all countries, censuses, by both commission and omission, have rendered most of women's lives invisible most of the time. The invisibility of women in official statistics perpetuates the myth that what women do is less important, less noteworthy, and less significant than what men do. It is only relatively recently that women have been counted in censuses—literally. Although women are no longer counted merely as men's chattel, it is very much still the case that the basic categories and classifications used in most national censuses largely ignore women or misrepresent their social and economic roles.

For example, most censuses include questions about the participation of the population in economic activities. It is still the case, however, that most censuses define *economic activity* as "work" and define "work" in ways that mask women's economic contributions to family and state. Productive labor is typically defined solely as participation in the "waged" market economy. This renders invisible household labor, unpaid labor in family economic projects, unwaged agricultural labor, and volunteer activities, all of which have significant value to a national economy and all of which are feminized spheres of activity. In virtually every economy and family structure around the world, the greatest share of nonmonetary economic activity is done by women—and this sector of activity remains unaccounted for in most censuses (Waring, 1988).

The definition of *family* and of women's role as part of households is just as problematic in censuses as is the definition of economic activity—and, indeed, the two are linked (Folbre, 1991; Folbre and Abel, 1989). Most censuses take the "household," not the individual, as their basic unit of measure. The presumption built into most censuses that households have a single and identifiable "head" is usually paired with a default presumption that this "head of household" is male. Under these presumptions, married women who live with their husbands disappear, and women living in households without male heads become abnormalities. Allegiance to the notion that every family must have a head is strong, and in most national censuses this is still the norm, although women's protests have resulted in changes to these census categories in countries including Canada, the United States, Sweden, and New Zealand. Virtually all censuses continue to ignore non-kin residential arrangements, such as people living in communal groups or in same-sex partnerships. Mismeasurement of the extent of female residential independence contributes to an exaggerated perception of male family headship, which is then privileged by public policy. Men, women, and children within a household seldom have equal status, roles, aspirations, or access to money or amenities; aggregating data by household makes these differences *among* members of a household invisible and gives a false impression of homogeneity and intrafamily equality.

Despite their failings, censuses do provide baseline measurements on the state and status of a country's population, and census reports are a unique source of information useful to women and to feminists. For example, census reports have provided the empirical data for feminist analyses about the increasing feminization of poverty throughout western Europe and for analyses of the changing composition of households in Canada and the United States. Similarly, census data have provided the starkest evidence of the persistence of preference for sons and of female infanticide in India, Pakistan, and

China: sex ratios (the number of females per 1,000 males) are recognized as a good indicator of the status of women within society, and data on sex ratios are almost always available from even the most rudimentary census. In India, the census of 1991 reported a sex ratio of 929 females per 1,000 males, a drop since 1981, when the ratio was 934:1,000 (Barrett and O'Hare, 1992).

Feminists have developed sophisticated critiques of the politics of statistics, and in most countries women are struggling to insist that their national censuses reflect their lives more fully and accurately. Some of the greatest headway in this battle appears to have been made in New Zealand and in Canada, where the censuses have been significantly modified in response to women's critiques—although, as Marilyn Waring (1988) and others point out, there is still considerable room for improvement.

See Also

DEMOGRAPHY; ECONOMY: INFORMAL; FAMILY STRUCTURE; GEOGRAPHY; HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES: OVERVIEW

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Joni Seager

CHADOR

See VEILING.

CHARITY

Generally, charity or philanthropy is associated with Christian doctrines of love and goodwill toward fellow beings. In late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century western industrial nations, the concept received a more specific meaning, that of benevolence toward the poor, in close association with the establishment of charitable organizations as the domain of upper-class women. The separation of home and work that occurred at that time as a consequence of industrial capitalism was accompanied by an ideology of domesticity, which prescribed that, while men went out to paid work, women's place was in the household: charitable work, as an extension of domesticity, was the only activity suited to them. Many charitable organizations were run by women only (although men might be called on to chair meetings and donate money), and their activities were generally oriented toward working-class women and children. Upper-class women used these charitable pursuits "to wield power in societies intent upon rendering them powerless" (McCarthy, 1990: 1). In some countries—the United Kingdom, for example—these organizations were the forerunners of professional social work. In other instances—for example, in Mexico and Russia—well-to-do women directed their charity mainly to the church, raising funds for convents and other religious endeavors (McCarthy, 1990).

Interpretations of Charitable Activities

The charitable activities of nineteenth-century upper-class women have often been interpreted as instances of upper-class control over the working class. For example, Octavia Hill (1838–1912), a wealthy Englishwoman who provided cheap housing for the poor, exercised vigilant control over their morality and cleanliness. On the other hand, Jane Addams (1860–1935), a philanthropist and feminist who lived and worked among the poor in the United States, rejected the notion of charity as implying inequality and made every effort to assist poor people without patronizing or controlling them (Stebner, 1997).

During the twentieth century, professional social work came to the fore, and governments took on the responsibility for supporting the poor and disadvantaged through systems of social security. This, however, did not mean the demise of charitable organizations. Women continue to make a major, albeit often unacknowledged, contribution as leaders and workers in such organizations.

See Also

ALTRUISM; PHILANTHROPY; VOLUNTEERISM

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Cora V. Baldock

CHASTITY

The word *chastity* has two related historical meanings. First, it refers to an abstention from almost all sexual activity: a chaste woman does not have sex. Second, it is used to describe a person whose only sexual interactions are with a spouse for the purpose of procreation: the chaste, faithful wife performs her uncomfortable generative duty. Unlike virginity, chastity does not depend on sexual purity and "innocence." Nonetheless, the terms are related in that they refer to qualities desired more from women than from men, placing primary value on women's sexual restraint and avoidance.

Chastity As a Female Virtue

Historically and across cultures, chastity has been a particularly female virtue. The cult of widow chastity, a phenomenon of early Chinese civilization, encouraged women not to remarry after a husband's death. Damage to "female honor and chastity" was the focus of a mid-nineteenth-century Russian rape code, an emphasis that highlighted the victim's status and downplayed the rapist's violence (Engelstein, 1992: 76). The eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher David Hume described chastity as such a necessary requirement of virtuous women that "bachelors, however debauch'd, cannot chuse but be shock'd with any instance of lewdness or impudence in women" (1990: 572).

The initial focus on women's chasteness as paramount and more necessary than men's sexual restraint comes from religious forces. Women were inextricably connected with the excesses and dangers of sexuality through a direct identification with the body. Polly Blue ties the foundations of sexual chastity to a "fear and loathing of the female body's functions; in identification of evil with the flesh, and flesh with women" (1987:59). This is apparent not only in the Judeo-Christian tradition, in which women's sinfulness and bodiliness began with Eve's collapse to temptation, but also in other religious thought.

Chastity and Property

In addition to religious influences, a societal emphasis on personal property and inheritance brought about chastity for women alone. Although Hume was characterizing the social mores of upper-class eighteenth-century Britain, his description of the rationale for the chaste woman is an effective one. According to the philosopher, a man will only support a child he is related to biologically; in order to be sure of his child's paternity, he must have no doubts of his wife's fidelity. Hence, writes Hume, society must ensure that women are faithful by overemphasizing the virtue of chastity. Further, women are the objects through which men procreate and pass on property; because of this dubious power, women's freedom of sexual expression is strictly limited through chastity.

See Also

CELIBACY: RELIGIOUS; CELIBACY: SECULAR; VIRGINITY

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Jennifer Casey

CHILD

See GIRL CHILD.

CHILD ABUSE

See ABUSE and CHILD LABOR.

CHILDBIRTH

A woman's capacity to conceive, gestate, and give birth to a human being is often described as a miracle, especially by those who have ever seen a baby slip from the enclosure of a woman's womb into the outside world. Pregnancy, labor, and birth, however, always take place in a societal context; the concept of birth as miraculous and the actual event of childbearing are mediated by the beliefs and practices of each culture (Jordan, 1978/1993). How women learn about childbearing and motherhood; whether and how they view themselves as spiritual, emotional, and practical agents of cultural continuity; and how their needs are met by customs and institutions related to maternity care are essential components of an understanding of childbearing. The understanding of childbirth reflected in this article, though by no means the only possible view, is a perspective shared by many today.

Needs of Mothers

Every pregnant woman deserves nurturance, encouragement, love, and support from family and friends: a safe work and home environment; good child care; adequate transportation; food, rest, and exercise; and a long enough leave from her work, with assurance that she can return to her job. She needs a skilled, wise, trustworthy practitioner to provide continuity of care throughout the time of childbearing, which is usually considered to be a year.

During labor, a woman needs a reassuring environment, as close to home and to her particular culture as possible, so that she can shape her labor as it unfolds. She needs attendants to help her relax and open up, to guide her and patiently observe the natural process of labor, and to be confident in her own intuitive and physical ability to give birth well. Labor progresses best when a woman can move around, change positions, and eat and drink as she desires to keep up her energy—and when she is surrounded by the people and objects that make her happiest and give her ease. She needs accessible medical resources nearby in case of an emergency.

After the birth, she needs time to be with her baby, as well as a helping hand during the following days and weeks to help her care for herself, the baby, and her family. She continues to need good food, rest, and exercise. A first-time parent needs information, encouragement, and the influence of experienced parents to help her be a good mother. She may want access to family-planning services so that she can plan any future pregnancies. Motherhood requires women to use their capacity for creativity, resilience, intuition, endurance, humor, and love, and to give so much of themselves that they deserve in turn to be well cared for.

How, then, do maternity care systems meet women's needs? Some questions to consider include these: Are women, mothers, and motherhood revered or discounted? Are women's birthing powers admired or feared? Do a society's practitioners and institutions support, control, or obliterate these powers?

Woman-Oriented Maternity Care

There are two main ideologies of childbearing and maternity: woman-oriented and obstetrical. The first, woman-oriented maternity care, or the midwifery model of care, in its ideal form, places mothers at the heart of the childbearing experience. Society, structured to value mothers' srrengths and their perception of their own needs, pays careful attention to the social, economic, spiritual, and emotional circumstances of their lives. Childbearing and motherhood are viewed as creative, healthy, joyous life transitions, eluding most efforts to measure and tame them and deserving of great respect. Women are treated with dignity and are trusted to know or to be able to learn what they need to know to be healthy, to give birth well, and to have healthy children. In this world, compassionate, experienced midwives "journey with" women during pregnancy, labor, and birth. Integral members of their communities, these midwives learn through apprenticeships, in midwifery schools, and occasionally in hospitals. Babies are born at home, in community birthing centers, or in hospitals when necessary. Every child is a wanted child. The community provides the resources to nurture and provide for every child. Family physicians and obstetricians hold women, motherhood, and midwifery in high regard. These practitioners, trained as medical and surgical specialists, provide backup when needed, in consultation with the attendant midwives, in homes, birth centers, or nearby hospitals, having carefully assessed the benefits and risks of any medical interventions they use. If this ideology were to become public policy, it would be consonant with women's needs; would come close to ensuring healthy, happy mothers and babies; and would cost society less money to implement and maintain than obstetrical care (Luce and Pincus, 1998; Rothman, 1982).

Obstetrics

Obstetrics, a surgical specialty, treats every woman's pregnancy as a potential illness, and birth as a medical event, to be "managed" and "controlled" in hospitals with drugs and technology. Within the hospital system, physicians (and nurse-midwives) may work in teams, so that a pregnant woman will not know whom she will see for her next appointment or who will assist her at the birth of her baby. Obstetrical care can be invaluable when it concentrates on medical surveillance and surgical rescue in times of crisis, but it is simply not appropriate for most women. Obstetricians are not trained to pay attention to a woman within the context of her life throughout the childbearing year; they are trained to examine her periodically very briefly during pregnancy, and then to enter the delivery room at the last moment to "deliver" the baby. They view labor as unbearably painful and much too long, and birth as excessively messy, risky, and dangerous. They rely on extensive testing, monitoring, probing, intrusion, and interference during pregnancy and labor, using drugs, devices, and procedures that have become the norm simply because they exist, their risks often undisclosed, their benefits—safety, necessity, effectiveness—unproven in any truly scientific way (Enkin et al., 1995; Goer, 1995).

Assuming that women's bodies don't work well by themselves, obstetrical practitioners impose a concatenation of interventions on labors that would ordinarily progress at a natural, harmonious rate in less coercive circumstances. Hospitals, modeled on factories, have rules, schedules, and routines of their own that interfere with the unique flow of each woman's labor; for example, each phase of labor must be accomplished within a predetermined amount of time. In industrialized societies, a "normal, standard hospital delivery" will involve the use of a hospital bed, a fetal monitor, an intravenous hookup, induction of labor, an epidural injection, and an episiotomy. All too often, over the last thirty years of the twentieth century—especially in the United States—labors ended in cesarean section, increasing both the expense and the risk of the birth, since a cesarean involves anesthesia, cutting into the woman's body, and possible postoperative infection.

The idea of the superiority of obstetrics prevails in almost all "developed" countries, where the obstetrical approach has become the norm. From the eighteenth century (and earlier) up to the turn of the twenty-first century, obstetricians have suppressed or eliminated midwifery practice, the result being that knowledge of some midwifery techniques and native medicine is lost (Murphy-Lawless, 1998; Wertz and Wertz, 1979/1989). Midwives and their advocates are harassed when they threaten obstetrical hegemony and medical practices. Most women do not know that alternatives exist, or they assume that midwifery care is inferior. They have their babies in hospitals, believing medicalized care to be the best and safest way. Ironically, because one intervention does lead to another (lying in bed slows labor; induction speeds it up, making it painful; drugs ease the pain; and so on), obstetrical technology ends up becoming "necessary."

Young women absorb the pervasive medical message permeating modern culture. Never having seen a woman actually giving birth, naturally or otherwise, they may fear the pain of labor and lack confidence in their bodies' capacity to give birth ro a child. They learn from films and television shows that childbirth consists of hospitalized women lying on their backs in great distress, covered with sheets, under bright lights, surrounded by masked and gowned practitioners attending to a crisis, if not an emergency. In this age of technological proliferation, they tend to believe that medical technology will guarantee a healthy baby. If their intuition, their needs, and their desire for calmer, less intrusive treatment lead them to question routine experimental or invasive procedures, they are asked, "Don't you care about your baby?" and are made to feel selfish or guilty. They then go on to become mothers who carry on the message of medicalized birth to their daughters.

Childbirth Activism

In response to the efforts of childbirth activists and midwives, many hospitals in the United States have become more woman- and family-oriented, with birthing rooms and nurse-midwives as practitioners (Edwards and Waldorf, 1984). Birthing centers have sprung up to meet women's needs for a more homelike atmosphere. Doulas (birthing attendants) are accepted in many medical settings. A very few hospitals serve as backup for direct-entry midwives who attend women in their homes. These midwives themselves are seeking licensing laws that will enable them to receive reimbursement. Although these improvements offer some women more choices, they do not change the basic structure of maternity care.

Thus it is crucial for women, their families, and their advocates to support midwives and midwifery practiced in harmony with obstetrics when needed. It is essential that women bring to light stories about truly natural, individual births and describe pregnancy, labor, and birth as the flowing, organic, spiritual, sensual, and empowering experiences they can be. Positive, joyous birth stories serve to preserve women's awareness of their own capable, strong minds and bodies and of the benefits of midwifery (Gaskin, 1978; Mason, 1990). They counteract the technological bias of the present generation and add to the wealth of wisdom that enhances women's experiences wherever they give birth.

See Also

MEDICAL CONTROL OF WOMEN; MIDWIVES; OBSTETRICS; REPRODUCTION: OVERVIEW; REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH; REPRODUCTIVE PHYSIOLOGY

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Internet Resources

<http://www.ourbodiesourselves.org>; <http://www.feminist.com>

Jane Pincus

CHILD CARE

The Triple Roles of Women

For most of human history, women's multiple roles in life have been perceived as inseparable. Today, the significance of women's triple roles is recognized: women as worker, the productive economic role; as housewife and homemaker, the consumer role; and as mother, the bearer and rearer of children, the reproductive and caregiver role.

In preindustrial times and in many agrarian, pastoral, and other societies in the developing world, child care was part of the traditional female role, combined with production and consumption. In almost all times and places, however, care of the very young, as in primate societies, has been seen as *female* responsibility, to be handled by women of all age groups (grandmothers, aunts, sisters, and other female relatives) and not *solely* by the biological mother.

Rationale for Child Care

With the coming of the industrial revolution, profound social changes deeply affected the pattern of women's lives in the industrial world. Production moved into large factories, where groups of workers congregated, not only separating the workplace from the home but also creating working conditions that made it impossible to keep young children near their parents while they worked. More affluent women, who were not obliged to seek work under these conditions, found their responsibilities in the home gradually reduced to the tasks of home management; thus was born the "housewife" of modern times.

Along with the "housewifization" of women, the nuclearization of the family (increasingly becoming the "one-parent" family of postindustrial societies), declining fertility, and universal primary education (which left no more older siblings at home to mind the younger ones while they helped with the chores) were friendships that led to the emergence of child care as an identifiable task. Meanwhile, Marxist thinkers, in their analysis of industrial society, were describing women's roles as productive and reproductive, thereby collapsing the two important functions of homemaking and childbearing or -rearing into one, a conclusion that can justifiably be attributed to a male perspective.

At the same time, a revolution in thinking relating to human nature and human development, starting with Rousseau in the eighteenth century, led to a wider understanding that the child was a unique being in his or her own right, not just a miniature adult. The concept of childhood as a unique and precious period of life requiring special attention finally arrived, leading to an understanding of child care as a specialized activity.

The work of later psychologists and the growth of the discipline of child development in the twentieth century emphasized still more the importance of early childhood as a stage in human development, making it meaningful once again to speak of women's triple roles instead of the "double burden." The increasing unease felt by working mothers about the conflict between their maternal and economic roles came to a climax in the mid-twentieth century with the work of John Bowlby, who, by bringing powerful evidence of the severely detrimental and long-term effects on children of separation from their mothers at an early age, lent credence to the theory that working mothers of young children could damage these children's development.

The intellectual heritage of Freud and Marx thus provides the ideological base for some contemporary concepts of childhood, child care, and the mother alone as the primary or sole caregiver. Although these ideologies are influential worldwide, they are not equally accepted or equally applicable everywhere, because the objective conditions in which women and children find themselves differ widely across the globe. In most developing societies, the majority of women continue to work largely in the informal sector or in agriculture; the involvement of extended families in child care is the norm; school-age children participate in labor as well as in household chores, including care of younger siblings; and childhood itself is viewed in different ways in various cultures. Nevertheless, the importance of child care services, both as an instrument for child development and as a support for women as workers, has gradually come to be recognized in almost all countries and has become a plank of the women's movement in some. At the same time, the gradual recognition of group child care as a skilled activity has led to the growth of training and education and the emergence of a new profession.

Historical Review of Formal Child Care

The dawn of the twentieth century saw the beginnings of formal institutional child care in many countries of western Europe, a development that arose from both the growth of the labor movement and the influence of Fabian and socialist thought. Early labor legislation led to institutions such as *l'école maternelle* in France. The two world wars had a tremendous impact on women's work status and roles. A significant event of World War I was the Soviet revolution in Russia, with its emphasis on the liberation of women from the traditional roles of capitalist society and its declaration of commitment to state support for women workers in fulfilling their maternal roles. These policies were to be faithfully adopted by all the countries that embraced Soviet-style socialism in the years to come. In the western world, the entry of large numbers of married women with children into the workforce brought about profound social changes, which were, however, slow to be understood.

The second half of the twentieth century was characterized by the rise of alternative "models" of child care: on the one hand, the growth of institutionalized child care systems in the western world, both private and state-funded, responding to the needs of working women and children, with diversity both in quantity and in content; and on the other, the Soviet model of state-supported child care systems. The rest of the world, including many developing countries, attempted to copy one or the other, while the older informal kinds of "coping strategies," rather than systems, continued to predominate because of the slow, incomplete, and varied pace of "development."

Present Status

Child care services should include arrangements for the child from birth (or even before) up to the age at which the child begins to attend school full-time (and child care may continue part-time even after that age), but the nature of the provision required may vary with the age of the child. During the first few months of life, when breastfeeding is of greatest significance, mother and child need close proximity for both nutritional and psychic reasons; for the age group from 2 to 6 years, there are more possibilities for substitute caregiving within or outside the home. Child care services thus include two major elements:

- Maternity leave, now broadening into parental leave, including job protection, along with arrangements such as flexible work schedules, part-time work, home-based work, and so on, which enable the mother (or, in Europe, the father) to stay away from work as much as possible in order to care for the child.
- Crèches (also known as nurseries or day care centers), which provide group substitute care for young children near the parents' workplace or their residence. This category increasingly includes family day care (also referred to as child minding or home-based care), which attempts to provide care in a homelike setting.

Data available from the International Labor Organization (1989) regarding provision for maternity benefits and child care for women workers in 135 countries reveal distinct patterns related to two groups of factors:

- Economic—level of development
- Political—degree of socialist or market orientation.

In the case of the formerly colonized countries, another powerful factor is the influence of the former imperial power.

In the *developed world*, child care ranges from high in Scandinavia, through continental western Europe, to low in Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and the United States, with the United States at the bottom of the heap, next to Japan. At its best, child care encompasses extensive maternity benefits, including maternity leave, and now increasingly parental leave (as much as 18 months to two years in some countries), as well as high-quality child care, in either group or family settings, with a high caregiver-child ratio. In Scandinavia, this may be attributed to the long history of welfare-oriented socialist governmenrs and srrong labor and women's movements in the context of high per capita income, dwindling family size, declining birthrates, universal nuclearization of the family, and increasing incidence of single-parent families. Several of these factors are equally applicable to western European countries, many of which have similar or somewhat lower and varying levels of provision. The table summarizes the extent of coverage of publicly funded child care services in some major European Union countries. However, there is a large and growing private and voluntary sector, which further disadvantages the most vulnerable.

At the other end of the spectrum, the poor record of the Anglo-Saxon countries may be related to the greater degree of market orienration and the policies of right-of-center governments. Significantly, in the United States, the most free market economy, there has been hardly any attention to maternity policy until recently; maternity leave (in some places quaintly termed *pregnancy disability*) is left primarily to private arrangements, and only very limited job protection is available.

Publicly funded early childhood services as percentage of all children in the age group, selected countries (1990)

	Date to which data refer	For children under 3 (%)	For children from 3 to compulsory school age (%)	Age when compulsory schooling begins (years)	Length of school day, including midday break (hours)	Care for primary-school children outside school hours (%)
Belgium	1988	20	95+	6	7	?
Denmark	1989	48	85+	7	3–5 1/2(a,b)	29
France	1988	20	95+	6	8	?
Greece	1988	4	85–70	5 1/2	4–5(b)	(–)
Ireland	1988	2	55	6	4 1/2–7 1/2(b)	(–)
Italy	1986	5	85+	6	4	?
Luxembourg	1989	2	55–60	5	4–8(a)	1
Netberlands	1989	2	50–55	5	6–7	1
Portugal	1988	6	35	6	6 1/2	8
Spain	1988	?	65–70	6	8	(–)
United Kingdom	1988	2	35–40	5	6 1/2	(–)

Key: ? = no information; (–) = less than 0.5; a = school hours vary from day to day; b = school hours increase as children get older

Notes: The table shows publicly funded services as a percentage of the child population; the percentage of children attending may be higher because some places offering services are used on a part-time basis. Play groups in the Netherlands have not been included, although 10 percent of children under 3 and 25 percent of children ages 3–4 attend, and most play groups receive public funds. Average hours of attendance—5 to 6 hours per week—are so much shorter than for other services that it would be difficult and potentially misleading to include them on the same basis as other services; however, play groups should not be forgotten in considering publicly funded care in the Netherlands.

Source: European Commission. 1990. *Childcare in the European Communities (1985–1990).* Brussels. In Peter Moss. 1992. *Perspectives from Europe.*

The *socialist world* shows a similar range of child care from the former U.S.S.R. and the more developed countries of eastern Europe to the poorer Asian and Latin American socialist countries. Common to all, however, is a strong political commitment to the care of children and support for working women.

In the former U.S.S.R. and the countries of eastern Europe, the services available have included extensive maternity benefits (with leave of up to two years in some cases), accessible crèches, and nurseries of medium to high quality, as well as financial incentives for protection of the family. These comments relate to the pre-1989 period. In light of the sweeping changes and political developments after 1989, reliable estimates of the present situation are difficult to locate, but there are indications that facilities have been substantially eroded.

In Vietnam, the poorest country in this group, crèches are extensively provided, though of low quality. Also found are imaginative schemes such as the involvement of elderly women in home-based day care services. About 35 percent of the 3–6 age group and 25 percent of the age group 0–3 are said to be covered by these arrangements. In China, the extensive network of crèches and day care centers is reported to be declining, and although maternity leave for 6 to 12 months is available, women are returning to work earlier in order to earn the full wage. The achievements in the smaller socialist countries of Latin America and Africa are also under threat.

Developing countries vary according to both the extent of market versus socialist orientation and the impact of the former imperial power. All Commonwealth countries, for example, have more or less the same pattern. India, a typical example, differs from China and Vietnam, at one end, and from Brazil, the Philippines, or Senegal at the other. Most follow the standard practice of three months' maternity leave (including both prenatal and postnatal periods).

Crèches are negligible in number, confined to urban areas, and more akin to preprimary schools, or altogether nonexistent. Among the developing countries, India has the largest and most comprehensive network of child care services, covering 12 percent of the child population below age 5 and more than 25 percenr of the members of this age group below the poverty line. But, as in most third world countries, the services focus on survival, health, and nutrition, on the one hand, and preschool education as preparation for universal elementary education, on the other, with little commitment to day care as a support service for working women.

Although the majority of their women work in the unorganized sector, most of these countries have borrowed their legislation from the industrialized countries. The resulting policies are applicable to only a small minority of women, and few countries have made serious efforts to develop systems more suited to their economies. Crèches are legally mandated in many countries for the industrial sector, but because conditions are not conducive to their development, the laws often remain unheeded.

Professionalism in Child Care

With the emergence of the concept of child care as a specialized activity, recognition is emerging of the caregiver as a full-time skilled professional and of the need for training for this role. But caregiving is still a highly feminine profession, relatively low-paid, low-status, and with low visibility. The shift toward professionalism may signal a return to both an earlier acceptance of social, rather than merely individual, responsibility for the care and upbringing of children and an appreciation of quality as vital to the development of children at a crucial stage in their lives.

The impact of feminism and the women's movement worldwide, both on the development of child care services and on changing attitudes toward child care itself, has come from both directions because of the wide spectrum of opinion among feminists on this issue. Whereas there have been vociferous demands from some sectors, others have tended to downplay women's maternal role in order to compete "like men," and still other groups have voiced a need for communal child rearing in order to give women real choices. The impact has been mostly on the heightened visibility of the issue.

See Also

CAREGIVERS; CHILD DEVELOPMENT; EDUCATION: PRESCHOOL; HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES: OVERVIEW; MATERNITY LEAVE; MOTHER; PARENTHOOD

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Mina Swaminathan

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

In what ways do gender, ethnicity, and culrure affect children? How do children understand everyday emotions? What can infants see? Why are relationships with family and friends important to children? The field of child development can answer these questions and many more, providing information about children's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development (Berk, 1996). Child development is a field of study that has two primary responsibilities. The first is ro formulate theories that make specific predictions abour how and why children grow and change. The second is to use scientific research to obtain knowledge about development by testing the predictions that these theories make. This knowledge can then be used to guide parents, teachers, psychologists, and others who interact with children.

For any individual, child development begins at conception and continues through birth, infancy, childhood, and adolescence. After adolescence, individuals enter adulthood, which signals the end of child development and the beginning of adult development. Many aspects of child development are universal and occur in the same way for all children because of certain genes that are present in all humans. For example, all children carry genes that enable them to crawl before they are able to walk (Berk, 1996). This explains why *all children*, regardless of their sex or their ethnic or cultural background, develop in similar ways and have many commonalities. Each child, however, ultimately develops into a unique individual. This occurs for two reasons. First, all individuals have unique genes, as well as genes that are common to all humans. Second, all individuals experience different types and combinations of experiences. Thus biological influences (such as unique genes) and environmental influences (such as family and culture) interact to ensure that each child develops into a unique person.

Theories of Child Development

Theories about how children develop help researchers to organize and explain what is known and what is still unknown about development and to select topics to be explored in future research. Because children are complex individuals who develop in many different ways, no one theory can adequately explain all aspects of their development (Berk, 1996). Instead, many theories are needed. Some theories, such as Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning, offer explanations about how children make moral decisions. Other theories, such as Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development and Sigmund Freud's theory of psychosexual development, make predictions about how children's interactions with parents and other important people help them to develop healthy identities. Still other theories, such as Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development and L.S. Vygotskii's sociocultural theory, make predictions about how children think about the world and develop new skills.

All these theorists—Kohlberg (a U.S. scientist), Erikson (a theorist born in Denmark but raised in Germany), Freud (an Austrian doctor), Piaget (a Swiss scholar), and Vygotskii (a psychologist from the former Soviet Union)—come from different cultural backgrounds, reflecting the fact that child development is an international field. Indeed, theorists and researchers from around the world have made important contributions to explaining how children develop (Adler, 1989). This has provided the field with a well-rounded view of child development that is sensitive to cultural differences.

Not only have international scholars played an important role in the field of child development, but women also have contributed theories to the field. For instance, women such as Myrtle McGraw (a U.S. scholar), Eleanor Gibson (a U.S. researcher), Mary Ainsworth (working in Canada, Britain, Uganda, and the United States), and Nancy Bayley (a U.S. scientist) have contributed meaningful theories about topics such as physical growth (McGraw and Bayley), perception of visual, tactile, and auditory stimuli (Gibson), relationships between parents and infants (Ainsworth), and infant intelligence (Bayley).

The importance of gender in child development is apparent in another way. Several developmental theories have been designed specifically to explain children's gender-role development. These theories have focused on how children come to understand what it means to be a girl or a boy and why there are gender differences in children's personal qualities, behaviors, and social relationships (Ruble and Martin, 1998). The two major influences on children's gender-role development, according to these theories, are their social interactions and their cognitive abilities (that is, the way they think about the world). One way that children learn about gender is through their interactions with others, particularly parents, siblings, peers, and teachers. By watching and imitating those around them, children begin to learn at a very early age about the activities and behaviors that are associated with being a girl or a boy. In addition, as children begin to engage in different activities and behaviors, they also learn from the messages they receive from others about their actions. Parents, for example, may praise them when they behave in ways that girls or boys are supposed to act (according to cultural or societal beliefs). Or, parents may discourage or punish them when they engage in what are considered cross-gender activities (for example, if girls play with trucks). Thus children's social experiences are important because their gender-role development is influenced by what they observe others doing and by the feedback they receive from others when they behave in ways that are either consistent or inconsistent with their biological sex.

Child development theorists suggest that to understand children's gender-role development, it is not enough to consider their social interactions. Another important influence on gender-role development is how children think about or interpret the observations they make and the messages they receive from others. In order to begin to understand the world in a meaningful way, children simplify information by putting it into categories. In the many cultures where gender is an important part of everyday life, children organize information into gender categories (that is, feminine or masculine). These categories, which also are referred to as *gender schemes* (Ruble and Martin, 1998), are particularly important once children are able to label themselves as either a girl or a boy. When this happens, children use the gender categories they have developed to guide how they act and what they pay attention to in their environment (for example, at home, when playing with their peers). Thus children develop an understanding of gender through the way they think about and interpret the experiences they have with others and the observations they make on a daily basis.

A Feminist Perspective on Child Development

Feminist scholars have made substantial contributions to the study of child development (Jacklin and McBride-Chang, 1991). First, they have emphasized that girls' and women's issues are important and that the field of child development must pay attention to these issues (Osmond and Thorne, 1993). In this respect, feminists have criticized studies of child development because they have often neglected to consider girls' experiences and how girls' development may differ from boys'. Instead, the studies have focused primarily on boys' experiences (Jacklin and McBride-Chang, 1991). In fact, some of the most influential developmental theories, including Freud's psychoanalytic theory, Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning, and Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, were based on information collected primarily from males or were formulated from a male standpoint, with little consideration for the special challenges that girls face (Jacklin and McBride-Chang, 1991; Muuss, 1996).

Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning has received the most criticism from feminist scholars, particularly from Carol Gilligan (a U.S. scholar) and her colleagues (Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan and Attanucci, 1994). Gilligan and her colleagues (whose research involved white women in the United States) are concerned that Kohlberg's "male-based" model has been inappropriately applied to females and has led to the incorrect conclusion that girls are less skilled than boys in making moral decisions. This feminist debate has raised awareness that caution must be exercised when theories developed for males are applied to females. Furthermore, the ongoing discussion of gender differences sparked by feminists has fueled important research on moral reasoning. For example, researchers now know that moral decisions are based not only on what is fair or just, as Kohlberg suggested, but also on how others will be affected by the decision; that is, a "caring" orientation (Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan and Attanucci, 1994).

A second important contribution that feminist scholars have made to the field is in challenging the assumption that gender is determined by biological factors, such as genes or hormones (Osmond and Thorne, 1993). Feminists downplay biological explanations for differences between girls and boys because biological differences are often perceived to be inherent and unchangeable (Leaper, 2000). Suggesting that boys' greater interest in math and science careers is the result of boys' having more natural spatial and math abilities than girls, for example, implies that sex differences in career choice are inevitable.

Instead, feminists have argued that the meaning attached to gender is determined in each culture and society by the behaviors and roles assigned to girls and boys (or women and men). Thus feminists have suggested that gender differences in career pathways can be explained by differences in social expectations (for example, girls receive less encouragement in math and science than boys from parents and teachers) and in the opportunities that girls and boys have to develop math and science skills (for example, boys take more advanced math and science courses). The result is that, rather than accepting sex differences in career choices as unavoidable, girls are encouraged in "traditionally" masculine areas such as math, science, and engineering.

Conclusion

The field of child development provides valuable information about how girls and boys grow and develop and about how these changes are related to children's gender and cultural background. Feminists have been particularly influential in drawing attention to the role that gender plays in children's development, and scholars from a variety of cultural backgrounds have demonstrated the importance of cultural influences on children's development. In the years to come, this information will be beneficial in helping children around the world develop into healthy individuals.

See Also

ADOLESCENCE; CHILDBIRTH; CHILD CARE; EDUCATION, *selected topics;* GENDER CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE FAMILY; GENDERED PLAY; GENETICS AND GENETIC TECHNOLOGIES; GIRL CHILD; LIFE CYCLE; PARENTHOOD; PREGNANCY AND BIRTH; PSYCHOLOGY: OVERVIEW; PSYCHOLOGY: COGNITIVE; YOUTH CULTURE

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CHILD LABOR

Child labor is often regarded as exploitative because children are more subordinated than adults in work relations, but some types of work are also seen as giving children pride and status. In poor households, including some headed by women, children's labor and earnings contribute to survival.

Definitions

Questions arise in defining child labor. Definitions of childhood vary across societies and time and according to class and gender (Goddard and White, 1982). The concept of labor is also problematic. For instance, when does play with younger siblings become child care?

As members of the family unit of production in agrarian societies, children contribute unpaid labor to income-earning activities in the fields, in family enterprises, collecting and hunting, and so on. Children also do much unpaid domestic work, freeing adults from the burden of this time-consuming labor. In comparison with boys, girls carry out a disproportionate share. In a study by Benjamin White, rural Javanese girls aged 7 to 9 did 2.8 hours of domestic work per day compared with 1 hour by boys of the same age (Rodgers and Standing, 1981: 3). Children's involvement in work activities is thus part of the reproduction of gender roles. In some countries children may be bonded to wealthier households as low-paid apprentices or unpaid servants or else pledged by their parents as part of debt repayment. This is a factor in child prostitution.

Historical Changes

With industrialization, production is transferred from the family unit to industrial corporations. Children are valued as a source of cheap factory labor. In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, children were often hired as part of the family work group. Wages were paid directly to parents. Concern about children's conditions led to the passing of child labor laws in Europe from the early nineteenth century. Collusion among parents, employers, and often children themselves, and the lack of children's empowerment, mean that protective regulations and education requirements are frequently circumvented in both western and nonwestern countries. Outside the formal economy, children also engage in independent survival activities such as street vending, shoe shining, scavenging, begging, theft, and prostitution.

See Also

DIVISION OF LABOR; DOMESTIC LABOR; ECONOMY: HISTORY OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION; ECONOMY: INFORMAL; GIRL CHILD; PROSTITUTION

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CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Children's literature is most simply defined as literature written for and read by children. The simplicity of this definition is deceptive, however, and for many years critics have debated whether there can be such a thing as "children's literature." Foremost among the issues in this debate is the relationship between the child and the text. For instance, since almost without exception children's books are written, published, marketed, and purchased by adults, in what sense do they belong to children? Are the characters in children's literature created to appeal to young readers, or are they products of adults' needs and fears? In an influential study, Jacqueline Rose (1984) proposes that children's literature is an impossibility and that the books in the children's canon are preoccupied with rescuing childhood for adults.

Children's literature is a relatively recent and geographically limited phenomenon. Before it is possible to have literature for children, it is necessary to have a concept of childhood as a distinct phase, with its own cognitive and emotional needs and interests. Literature is not essential for basic survival; in developing countries, reading is a skill that is primarily valued for its practical applications. Thus for cultural and economic reasons, literature for children—especially that concerned with cultivating the imagination—is at the bottom of the literary hierarchy. The low status of children's literature is compounded by the fact that in many countries books and stories for children are associated with women writers and storytellers, themselves placed low in the literary establishment.

The conditions necessary for the creation of a literature for children had been established in Great Britain by the seventeenth century, and Great Britain is generally accepted as the country with the longest and most developed tradition of writing for children. The Puritan movement is credited with developing children's literature in Great Britain because the Puritans recognized that children could learn (in this case about their sinful natures and the need to control them) from books.

The didactic nature of writing for children continues to be an important impetus and shaping force, though the nature of the message and the mode of its delivery have altered radically over the centuries. Initially children's literature was taught primarily through alternating stories of the exemplary with stories of the horribly punished and damned or by providing an indigestible diet of facts. Through the influence of educators, philosophers (notably Locke [1632–1704], Rousseau [1712–1778]), and the Romantic movement, the prevailing idea of childhood and children's needs was changed. Publishing for children began to combine its underlying drive to reach with an urge to entertain. The result is confusion about the criteria for assessing the merit of writing for children: Should it be judged by pedagogic, literary, or artistic standards?

By the end of the nineteenth century, most western countries had developed some form of a children's publishing industry. However, much of what was produced were imported and translated versions of texts that originated in Great Britain and, to a lesser extent, the United States, France, and Germany. Elsewhere this situation was compounded by the fact that printed material for children in the form of books, magazines, and tracts was frequently introduced by white missionaries and teachers and consisted of English-based stories translated into vernacular languages. Therefore, images of women generated by western, industrial-capitalist, patriarchal cultures dominated world publishing for children, a process that continued into the twenty-first century through the practice of buying and selling "world" copyrights (almost invariably including the North American market) and the need to attract copublishers in other countries. However, many governments have now recognized both that a literate population is essential in the modern world and that what young people read can profoundly affect how they understand the world. Explicit and implicit, consciously and unconsciously inscribed ideologies pervade literature for children. Newly affluent and emerging countries frequently use children's books to help create a sense of national identity through shared stories, vocabularies, and illustrations based on the traditional arts of a country or people. Examples of this can be seen in Australia (especially in relation to the indigenous, Aborigine population), India, Iran, and Israel and in the socialist realism of the former Soviet Union.

One woman who was particularly alert to the positive political potential of children's literature was the German-born Jella Lepman, who founded the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) at the end of World War II. Lepman believed that through exchanging and sharing books, young people would learn about and learn to value each other's cultures, thus reducing the possibility of future wars. IBBY is particularly concerned with encouraging children's literature in developing countries, where it fosters local publishing ventures, mobile libraries, and literacy plans.

Financial exigency means that in many countries an indigenous children's literature is prevented from developing. The paradoxical consequence is that it is often in host countries to large groups of immigrants or refugees that traditional tales first get printed. Through the complex networks of coeditions, such book may be produced in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, or France and subsequently exported to the countries from which they originate.

Women Writers

For most of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, it was not regarded as appropriate for women to write scholarly or worldly books. However, women were immediately accepted as writers for children. Indeed, referring to Great Britain, Peter Hunt (1994) observed that "women have dominated children's books from the beginning." There are a number of explanations for this. For instance, women were regarded as children's "natural" caregivers; women were thought to have intellects not much more developed than children's and therefore to be able to communicate at their level; and writing for children was a low-status occupation and therefore relegated to women. Considerable evidence proves that many women *did* write for children primarily because it was an acceptable form of paid employment and a natural extension of other kinds of work in which they were already employed (for example, running Sunday schools and teaching children at home). However, some women writers of children's literature had other motivations. Crudely, these women can be divided into two kinds: those who used this approved forum to show that they were men's intellectual equals and to seek acceptance within the dominant discourses of their time; and those who discovered that in writing for children they found a voice and a vehicle (as well as an impressionable audience) to critique the society in which they lived.

Julia Briggs (1989) compares both kinds of writers and suggests that not until the end of the nineteenth century and the publication of innovative children's books by the British writer Edith Nesbit (1858–1924) did women begin to exploit the subversive and liberating potential of writing for children. Women writers began to see similarities between the situations of women and children: both groups were disparaged and repressed by the prevailing social order. No longer were all the women who wrote for young people interested in promoting and reproducing the values espoused by the male academic and social establishment—not least because their efforts were largely ignored. As women and as writers for children, they were doubly marginalized. This status encouraged some women writers to use children's literature to criticize and challenge the male establishment. Specifically, adopting the child's point of view and on occasion imitating the child's way of speaking helped women writers to break free from male-dominated literary modes and values.

In the 1990s, a number of women writers used children's literature explicitly to criticize social practice and to consider the treatment of women, including minority women, throughout history.

Women and Girl Characters

Folktales and fairy tales are the oldest branch of literature for children. They are particularly interesting to women not only because they contain many images of girls and women but also because they have traditionally been told and perpetuated by women. Feminist and Marxist critics have traced the history of the best-known tales and recovered others that have been omitted from the popular canon. In the process, several facts of interest to women have been uncovered. For instance, Jack Zipes (1983) argues that many of the negative female stereotypes characteristic of well-known fairy tales (wicked stepmothers, passive princesses) are distortions of more positive and powerful female archetypes. In oral versions generated before patriarchy became a dominant organizing principle in many societies, he argues, female characters were both good and powerful. The perversion of these earlier models was accelerated during the nineteenth century, when men such as the Grimm brothers (1785–1863; 1786–1859) and Andrew Lang (1844–1912) began collecting tales for patriotic and scholarly purposes. In line with the predominantly patriarchal and Christian values of their time, these retellings of old tales tended to diminish female characters from goddesses to wicked witches to mean stepmothers. Moreover, they often added a Christian dimension that linked curiosity and the rise of evil to women. In such stories, the only good females are pretty, passive, obedient, and domesticated, though feminists have been careful to show that "wicked" women are often made bad by a male-dominated society that values women only for their beauty and marriageability.

Feminist and Marxist critics have also focused attention on the importance of reading in the construction of identity and the dissemination of ideology. Because it is entirely bound up in language and images, reading can play a central role in determining the range of characters a young person identifies with and inhabits. By the 1970s gender-based stereotypes in all kinds of children's literature (including school reading texts) needed to be replaced with more realistic portrayals. As a consequence, girl characters are now frequently shown as active, clever, and innovative. Many feminists have returned to the books that impressed them as children and have sought to understand both the nature of the original appeal and the kinds of messages such stories transmit.

One work that has attracted considerable attention is Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868). Many women remember being attracted to that book's central character, Jo March, precisely because she seemed to embody rejection of the feminine ideal. However, some adult readers say that, at least superficially, Alcott's text forces Jo into the role of a "little woman," and that the reader colludes in this process because it is necessary for a conventional happy ending. Arguably, however, a closer scrutiny of the sexual politics of this novel shows that Alcott explored the destructive nature of the feminine ideal: Beth March, the character who is the quintessence of this ideal, is incapacitated by her self-sacrificing femininity, which ultimately leads to her death. Moreover, *Little Women*, which is set against the backdrop of the American Civil War, can be read as a book that celebrates matriarchy. The world of women and home functions well through collective effort; the manly sphere of politics, battle, and individual achievement has collapsed into destruction and disease.

Another influential female character in children's literature who has attracted the attention of feminist critics is Pippi Longstocking, created by the Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren (b. 1907). Pippi is the strongest girl in the world—she regularly carries her horse in her arms. Because her mother is dead and her father the king of a cannibal island, she lives on her own, precisely as she pleases. Pippi subverts the twin ideals of "child" and "girl" and celebrates qualities such as freedom and spontaneity over the habitual and correct. Through her writing for children, Lindgren has become a figure of national and international importance (her work has been translated into fifty-seven languages); with Pippi Longstocking she provides an original role model for girl readers around the world.

Children's literature has offered opportunities for women writers and has seen the creation of many original, powerful female characters. However, because so many women continue to be denied education and a public voice, and because they are frequently caught in the double traps of poverty and reproduction, women from many countries lag behind men even in this traditionally female sphere of publishing.

See Also

FAIRY TALES; LITERATURE: OVERVIEW

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CHILLY CLIMATE

See EDUCATION: CHILLY CLIMATE IN THE CLASSROOM.

CHOREOGRAPHY

See DANCE: CHOREOGRAPHY.

CHRISTIANITY

As one of the three major western monotheistic traditions, Christianity affirms the existence of only one supreme being, a god who is intimately interested and involved in human affairs. However, Christianity differs sharply from Judaism and Islam when it comes to defining the nature of this deity. Whereas the other two traditions are resolute in their iconoclasm—that is, their insistence that God can be neither pictured nor adequately described in human terms—Christianity not only takes literally the idea that humans were created "in God's image" (Genesis 1:26) but also maintains that God took on human form in the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth (c. 6 or 5 B.C.–A.D. c. 30–33). The apparent conundrum of persons of both sexes being created "in the image" of one divine being, and the fact that in its human incarnation that being was a man, have made the position of women in the Christian traditions especially problematic.

Christian Origins

Christianiry begins in the affirmation that Jesus was the Son of God. In declaring him to be the Messiah (Greek *Christos* = "Anointed One," whence the term *Christian*), his original followers asserted that his life, death, and reported resurrection constituted the fulfillment of Jewish messianic expectation. Little can be gleaned from extra-biblical sources about the career of Jesus of Nazareth, other than the facts that he did indeed live and die in first-century Judea; that he was an itinerant preacher who amassed a considerable following at a time of growing unrest among Jews chafing under Roman rule; and that, apparently concerned about the political implications of his popularity, the Roman governor Pontius Pilate had him executed. The rest of our information about Jesus comes primarily from the New Testament Gospel narratives, which were written less with concern for historical accuracy than to demonstrate that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

Two facts about his public ministry do emerge clearly, however: Jesus preached a revolutionary message of radical love, equality, and justice; and, no doubt owing to this message, he counted among his closest friends and disciples a number of women. The prominence of these women among his core followers is affirmed at several key points in his story: he performed his first public miracle at the request of his mother; he praised Mary of Bethany's abandonment of housework in favor of religious study; it was Mary's sister Martha who declared Jesus to be "the Christ, the Son of God" (John 11:27); when all but one of his male apostles deserted him on the day of his crucifixion, the women stood by the foot of the cross; and when he rose from the dead, his first appearance was to a woman, Mary of Magdala, who appears to have been one of his closest associates. In addition, many of his most radical religious pronouncements were of especial concern to women: his rejection of divorce, in the context of a Jewish system that gave no rights to the wife; his intervention to prevent the stoning death of a woman convicted of adultery; his forgiving of the repentant prostitute (traditionally, if mistakenly, identified with Mary Magdalene); and his consistent championing of the interests of the socially subordinated (women, children, and slaves). Nowhere in the Gospels does Jesus employ a patriarchal vocabulary regarding the value of and distinctions among persons.

It is not clear that Jesus himself intended to found a "new" religion; he was a Jewish religious reformer. In this regard, he is very similar to Gotama Buddha, who six centuries earlier had sought to reform the Hinduism of his day. In both cases, while on one level the reform message is unintelligible without the context (Jewish or Hindu) that gave rise to it, on another level it became clear quite early that the teachings of Jesus and Buddha had implications well beyond their original environments. Hence, both Christianity and Buddhism developed into missionary religions, claiming universal appeal and global relevance that ultimately transcend cultural or ethnic boundaries.

Saul of Tarsus (c. 10–65/67 C.E.), who after his dramatic conversion to Christianity on the Damascus road went by his Roman name Paul, was the most influential among the first generation of Christian missionaries—so influential, indeed, that it may readily be argued that he, rather than Jesus, was the true "founder" of Christianity. The Jesus sect was rapidly spawning "house churches" throughout the Mediterranean world by the middle of the first century of the common era, and Paul's letters to these fledgling communities were the earliest written documents of the New Testament. In their blending of Jewish cosmology with Hellenistic philosophy, they set the model for the development of doctrine and theology that would preoccupy Christian thinkers for the next several centuries. It is clear from his letters that Paul, like Jesus, had a number of close and highly regarded female associates. Yet it is in Paul's own writings, along with others attributed to him, that one repeatedly finds statements that provide the scriptural foundations not only for the subordination of women in the Christian churches but also for the development of an oppressive theology of sexuality.

What accounts for this apparent contradiction? How could the same writer who proclaimed that "in Christ... there is neither male nor female" (Galatians 3:26–28) simultaneously instruct women to "keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the Law says" (1 Corinthians 14:34)? In part the answer lies in the fact that it was not the same writer: whereas the passage from Galatians most certainly represents Paul's own view, the oft-quoted passage from 1 Corinthians is generally regarded as a later interpolation into Paul's text. Additionally, all of Paul's statements about such social institutions as marriage and slavery (in the letter to Philemon he enjoins slaves to obey their masters) must be read in their apocalyptic context. Taking to heart Jesus's statements about the Kingdom of God being at hand, Paul apparently expected the world to end relatively soon, and he regarded spiritual renewal to be far more important than social reform. He may not have been, as some have argued, a protofeminist. But neither was he, as others have claimed, a misogynist. The same cannot be said for many of the theologians who would come after him.

The Early Church Fathers and the Development of a Theology of Sexuality

In the first few centuries of the common era, two parallel processes were at work, both of which would have a major impact on the shaping of Christian ideas about women in general and female sexuality in particular. The first was the process of canonization, that is, the creation of the Christian Bible. The second involved the development of several key theological concepts relating to the nature of God and Christ, original sin and the institution of marriage.

Christian theology actually begins in the creation of the canon. In the century following the life of Jesus of Nazareth, numerous texts appeared, attributed to various disciples and representing different—sometimes widely divergent—views regarding his teachings. As it gradually became clear that the world was not about to end, the Christian movement needed to become organized both socially in the form of the church and spiritually through the affirmation of a set of beliefs and practices held in common. The process of canonization (*canon*, from both Latin and Greek roots referring to a rule or measuring rod) involved coming to consensus on those texts that "measured up" to several criteria determined by the early church fathers. These criteria for canonicity also implied a standard of orthodoxy (from the Greek, meaning "right belief" or "straight thinking"). The texts that became the New Testament were the ones that shared a common, essentially Pauline point of view regarding the rudiments of Christian belief and practice, as well as four Gospel narratives, all of them written after and influenced by Paul's letters, that present a relatively coherent picture of the life and teachings of Jesus.

From the vantage point of women's history, what got left out of the New Testament is as important as what was included. This is especially true of the body of literature that has come to be known as the Gnostic Gospels. The Gnostics (Greek *gnosis* = "knowledge") were regarded as heretics by the early church fathers, and among their most heinous doctrinal errors, from the orthodox point of view, was their tendency to ascribe feminine qualities to God. The Apochryphon of John, for example, describes God as a trinity of Father, Son, and Mother; several other texts similarly assumed the Holy Spirit to be female. In addition, Mary Magdalene figures prominently in Gnostic writings; the Gospel of Mary establishes her as a major disciple and teacher. Women held positions of prominence equal to those of men in many Gnostic communities. It was clear to the early fathers of the church that if women were to be kept silent in the churches, the Gnostic materials must be kept out of the canon.

Those texts that did "measure up" supported a male-dominated hierarchy: in the canonical narratives the twelve apostles, Christ's major disciples, are all men, and what would come to be called the "apostolic succession" assumed that spiritual authority passed from one male to another. This is not altogether surprising, given the patriarchal context in which the canon developed, and the male-dominated world for which it was intended. The best way for Christian missionaries to "sell" their message to their pagan contemporaries was to make it conform, by and large, to social assumptions with which they were already comfortable. The New Testament contains, at most, tantalizing hints regarding women's leadership in the earliest Christian communities, but the patriarchal overlay is so thick that we ultimately cannot penetrate it. Thus, for the last two thousand years, the orthodox Gospel (from the Greek, meaning "good news") has been far better news for men than for women. As recently as the 1990s, Pope John Paul II appealed to the idea of apostolic succession to reiterate that women cannot be priests because Christ "chose" all men for his apostles. In 2000, when the Southern Baptist Convention similarly reaffirmed that women could not be ministers, it could appeal to a long tradition of Scripture-based theological interpretation.

Just as there was no room for women in positions of religious leadership, as far as the early fathers of the church were concerned, there was no room for the feminine in the Christian godhead. Christian theology (Greek *theos* + *logos* = "god-talk") took several centuries to sort out the basic questions regarding the natures of God, man, and woman. God was understood to be triune in nature, and by the beginning of the third century the Latin father Tertullian (d. 230?) had developed the vocabulary to describe the Trinity as one God in three "Persons" (Latin *personae* = "masks" or "faces"): Father (the Creator), Son (incarnate in the figure of Jesus Christ), and a somewhat ephemeral but decidedly male Holy Spirit (generally symbolized by a dove). Trinitarian theology flatly rejected the female Holy Spirit of the Gnostics. It is hard to imagine Tertullian doing otherwise: one of the most incisive thinkers and eloquent writers among the early fathers, he was also among the most misogynistic. Reflecting on Eve—and by extension, on all women—he wrote: "The curse God pronounced on your sex weighs still on the world. Guilty, you must bear its hardships. You are the devil's gateway." The major framers of Christian theology agreed with him regarding women's fundamental corruption.

Jerome (c. 347–420), declaring, "Death came through Eve: life has come through Mary," exalted celibacy as the most appropriate lifestyle for Christian believers in general and for women in particular. Eve, who used her feminine wiles to trick Adam into eating the forbidden fruit, had been Satan's agent in humanity's fall and expulsion from the Garden of Eden. By contrast, the Virgin Mary was God's agent in the cosmic drama of redemption; she provided the human half of her divine Son's dual nature.

But in order for her to do this, she must have remained pure, without taint of sin (that is, sexuality). Here, Jerome and subsequent theologians misread the Old Testament prophecy that the Messiah would be born of a virgin (Hebrew *alma* = "maiden") in the light of their own mistrust of female sexuality. Not only was the female excluded from the godhead; she was also the "occasion of sin" for man and more intimately related to the forces of evil and death. Jerome's logic laid the groundwork both for the tradition of female asceticism (what the historian Rudolph Bell has termed "holy anorexia") in which sainthood is possible for women only to the extent that they renounce their own sexuality and for the witch craze during the Renaissance and Reformation periods of European history. This logic of female culpability and corruptibility was reinforced in the theology of the greatest of the Latin fathers, Augustine of Hippo (354–430). A libertine and heretic in his youth, Augustine well appreciated the power that temptation to sin could exert on both body and spirit. (He reports in his *Confessions* that prior to his conversion to Christianity, he would pray, "Lord, give me chastity, but not yet.") Yet his reading of Genesis led him to reject his contemporary Jerome's insistence on celibacy: God had, after all, instituted marriage in the Garden, before the fall. For Augustine, the Christian theology of marriage is, nevertheless, inextricably related to the "original sin" of Adam and Eve—a sin that passes, through procreation, to every successive human generation. Even within marriage, each act of sex is tainted with sin, just as even in the cradle, each infant is already a sinful being. Because God ordained the marriage bond for the purpose of procreation, however, sex is something of a necessary evil. Woman's purpose, in this scheme of things, is to seek salvation through reproducing children as well as through submission to male rule (Genesis 3:16). The Augustinian theology of marriage and sexuality set the pattern for orthodox Christian theology for the next fifteen hundred years.

Mystics, Heretics, Witches, and Protestants

Of course, for as long as Christian theologians have strived to guarantee orthodoxy, there have been heterodox thinkers. As the church in Rome solidified its authority throughout Europe, it developed means for containing or controlling individualistic thinkers lest they become free spirits in too literal a sense. Monasticism grew directly, and with church approval, out of the spiritual zeal that had led Christians in earlier centuries to either martyrdom or the hermitage. Originally, monasteries housed men and women together. However, in much the same fashion that it has been claimed that the presence of women or of gay men would disrupt the male culture of the U.S. military, churchmen argued that the mere presence of women presented too great a sexual distraction to the monks. Female-only convents were therefore instituted as parallel institutions, and the role of nun (with Mary Magdalene, now identified with the repentant whore of Luke 7:37–39, as prototype) evolved as a church-sanctioned way for women to deny the body and devote themselves to the life of the spirit—most often under the direction of male spiritual advisers.

The medieval period saw not only the flowering of the monastic movement but also the rise of the cult of the Virgin Mary. The church was adamant in its insistence that the Mother of God was in no way herself divine; however, popular piety clearly ruled otherwise, and the Blessed Virgin attained a goddess-like stature. Indeed, many of her titles and the symbols associated with her were appropriated from earlier goddess traditions. As if to keep *her* under church control, Catholic theology stressed Mary's function as a role model for women, most of whom would be assigned the role of wife and mother. Given the Virgin's superhuman sinlessness, they would of course be destined to fall short of the ideal.

It was against the backdrop of the cult of the Virgin that Dame Julian of Norwich (1342–c. 1416) wrote of "Christ the Mother." There were many medieval women, like Julian, for whom neither the convent nor marriage provided spiritual satisfaction. Like their male counterparts, female mystics like Angela of Foligno (1248–1309), Catherine of Siena (1347–1380), and Margery Kempe (1373–c. 1439) sought direct, unmediated experience of the divine. Some women mystics were nuns, others were not; but all were, or became, celibate. Their visions were typically characterized by highly charged sexual imagery of their mystical marriage to Christ, while at the same time they engaged in often extreme forms of ascetic self-abasement, reinforcing the idea that the female body is the site of human sinfulness.

Mystics, of course, always risked being accused of heresy or witchcraft, and many divergent spirits went to their death. By the sixteenth century, for complex political and social reasons, the Roman church was no longer able to control religious divergence through either containment (as in the case of monastics and certain mystics) or expulsion and execution (as in the case of witches and heretics). With the Protestant Reformation, European Christianity became far more variegated in both belief and practice. Women experienced both gains and losses as a result.

Martin Luther, for example, abolished monasteries and convents and enjoined all good Christians to marry.

(The former monk was forced to be true to his word when the former nun Katharina von Bora insisted she would have none other than Luther himself; theirs turned out to be a long and loving union.) On the one hand, Lutheran theology took a far more positive view of the social role of wife and mother than did Catholic theology. On the other, it deprived women of any church-sanctioned religious role (the Lutheran churches would not begin ordaining women as ministers until well into the twentieth century, and some Lutheran denominations still bar women from the ministry). Similarly, John Calvin wrote that women should indeed be allowed to speak in church—but not to preach. The seventeenth-century Calvinist John Milton wrote movingly in his divorce tracts that marriage was first and foremost a spiritual and intellectual union between persons; yet in his masterwork *Paradise Lost* he depicted Eve as spiritually and intellectually inferior to Adam and as his sexual seducer into sin.

Women were more likely to attain something like genuine equality only in the more radical Protestant groups. Among the Quakers, for example, women and men were equally liable to be moved by the Holy Spirit to speak in Friends' meetings. Mother Ann Lee, the eighteenth-century founder of the Shakers, was regarded by her followers as the female Messiah. Fleeing from England to North America, the Shakers practiced a communal lifestyle in which the sexes were equal; they were, however, prohibited from intercourse on other than the spiritual plane.

Subsequent nineteenth- and early twentieth-century communitarian movements in the United States sought other ways to balance the sexes, either literally or symbolically. The Oneida Community practiced a variation on open marriage in which women were freed from many of the more onerous responsibilities of childbirth and child rearing. Two indigenous U.S. churches, the Mormons and the Seventh-Day Adventists, prayed to "Father/Mother God"; and in their early years both had female as well as male leaders, although in both women were eventually excluded from positions of leadership. Some women started their own churches: Ellen White (1827–1915) co-founded Adventism; Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) founded Christian Science; and Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) founded the Foursquare Gospel Church. Interestingly, the female-founded U.S. churches tended to place considerable emphasis on physical health and spiritual healing—as if to counterbalance centuries of female denial of the body.

Twentieth-Century Developments

Three interrelated developments had a direct impact on women in, and in relationship to, Christianity in the twentieth century: globalization, the ecumenical movement, and the international women's movement.

Globalization. Christianity had been a "worldwide" religion nearly since its inception; but from the seventeenth century forward, its world became much larger. Catholic and Protestant missionaries brought their "good news" to Asia, Africa, and North and South America; in these generally imperialistic settings, conversion to Christianity usually meant adoption of European cultural values as well. However, by the twentieth century, it had become clear that the effort to "Europeanize" or "Americanize" native cultures ultimately did more harm than good to the natives in question. Moreover, in those cultures where Christianity had taken root, over time the symbolism had taken on more of a local color.

In patriarchal contexts—as in much of Catholic Latin America—male dominance was still the religious norm. However, revivalist movements like the Zionist churches in South Africa and Pentecostalism in South America drew on indigenous culture and opened up possibilities for women to experience the Holy Spirit and to testify and perform healing rituals on an equal footing with men. Arguably, the less God could be imaged as a white male, the greater the possibility over time for women, drawing on the authority of their own spiritual experience, to assert their spiritual equality with men.

The ecumenical movement. The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), which brought Roman Catholicism into dialogue with Protestantism, was in a sense the culmination of a century of interreligious conversation among Christians, and between Christianity and other religions. What began as a conversation among religious professionals would have a revolutionary impact on believers: Roman Catholic ritual became much more immediate, with the Mass being performed in the vernacular rather than Latin and laypersons given a far greater role in the service. Much Catholic doctrine was similarly demystified. In a spirit of unity and mutual understanding, Protestants and Catholics discovered far more common ground, when it came to belief and practice, than earlier generations had suspected. Especially in the United States, where Catholicism was influenced by denominationalism, this led to increasing autonomy from Rome—at least on the parish level—and greater visibility and freedom for women within the religious community. The church continued to prohibit abortion and artificial contraception, to deny divorced Catholics the right to remarry in the church, and to refuse to ordain women as priests. Many Catholic women simply ignored the church's strictures on their sexual behavior. Others, influenced by the women's movement, called for a change in policy; by century's end, groups like Catholics for Free Choice and the Women's Ordination Conference had organized to demand reproductive rights, on the one hand, female priests, on the other.

The international women's movement. Throughout the so-called mainline Protestant churches, women have made terrific strides as a result of feminism. By the close of the twentieth century, women were becoming ministers in all but the most conservative denominations and accounted for roughly half the students in major divinity schools in the United States. The Episcopal and Anglican churches began to ordain women as priests, and the Episcopal church to consecrate female bishops. Issues of direct relevance to women—ranging from economic justice to reproductive freedom to world peace—were at or near the top of every church's agenda. Simultaneously, international women's conferences highlighted the role played by Christianity, as well as other religions, in the continuing oppression of women around the world and called for more aggressive action on the part of religious communities.

However, the late twentieth century also saw a resurgence of religious fundamentalism worldwide, which arguably represents a direct backlash against such gains as women have made. Christian conservatives, both Catholic and Protestant, bemoan the loss of "family values" and attribute that loss primarily to women's increased independence from male spiritual and economic control. They want to return Christianity to its roots: the patriarchal church and family, with men in charge and women willingly submitting to male rule. Christian feminists, ironically, are also calling for a return to Christianity's original spirit: that message of radical love, justice, and equality for which Jesus lived and died and around which the earliest Christian communities organized themselves. The shape that Christianity takes in the twenty-first century will depend, in large part, on which interpretation of "that good old-time religion" prevails.

See Also

CHRISTIANITY: FEMINIST CHRISTOLOGY; CHRISTIANITY: STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH; HOLY SPIRIT; MARTYRS; MORMONS; MYSTICISM; QUAKERS; SHAKERS; THEOLOGIES: FEMINIST; WOMEN-CHURCH

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Mary Zeiss Stange

CHRISTIANITY: Feminist Christology

Feminist Christology is part of an attempt by feminist theologians from all over the world to analyze and overcome the perceived patriarchal structures of Christianity and to reformulate the Christian faith from their own perspective and experience as women living in different contexts. During this process, feminist Christology increasingly revealed the crucial question whether feminism—women's struggle against all kinds of patriarchal oppression—and Christian belief are compatible. For feminist Christology, the Christian doctrine that the Jewish preacher Jesus of Nazareth is *the* Messiah (Christ), *the* universal savior for all people and the whole world, *the* unique, once-for-all, and full incarnation of God is not only the "heart" or center of Christianity but also one of the Christian doctrines most used to oppress women.

The Maleness of Christ

The first problem for women arises with regard to the maleness of Christ. The historical particularity of Jesus as male has been interpreted by the church throughout the ages to support and justify male dominance and the acceptance of it and female subordination and inferiority in church and society. On the basis of Hellenistic androcentric anthropology, the Christian church soon lifted the idea that the incarnation of God in a male was an *ontological* necessity: only the male represents full human nature and is by himself the complete image of God. Therefore, God had to choose the male sex to become human. Turning the historical particularity of Jesus's maleness into an ontological and Christological principle, the church not only emphasized the conceptualization of God as male but also denied that women were fully human, the image of the divine, and thus representative of the Christ. Christ became the male revealer of a male god whose full representative can only be male (Ruether, 1983). In the Catholic, Orthodox, and some Protestant churches, the maleness of Christ serves to exclude women from ordination even in the twenty-first century.

Some western feminists decided to leave Christianity because of the irreversibly sexist character of its central symbol (Daly, 1973). Other feminist theologians have tried to solve or reduce the problem of the maleness of Christ by rejecting the understanding of Jesus as the exclusive incarnation of God or by criticizing the deification of Jesus's maleness as a distortion of the Christian doctrine of incarnation and salvation. Women from the third world, who experience not only sexism but also poverty, neocolonialism, racism, and political oppression, emphasize that the maleness of Jesus is not a constitutive factor for his being Immanuel—"God with us"—or for the process of salvation. For them, Jesus is the representative of a new (redeemed) humanity that includes women and men equally, the incarnation not of a male but of a compassionate God who is with them in their daily struggle. For African-American women, as well, the male existence of Jesus is not the crucial point; they question whether Jesus is a white racist justifying slavery and white supremacy or whether he is on the side of black women, who suffer the triple oppression of racism, sexism, and classism (Grant, 1989). Some Asian feminist theologians understand the maleness of the historical Jesus as functional in a positive way: as a man having just and mutual relationships with women, Jesus challenged the patriarchal power system and the male definition of humanity (Fabella, 1993).

A Patriarchal and Imperial Christology

Feminist theologians criticize also the Christological doctrine, normatively defined at the church Councils of Nicaea (A.D. 325) and Chalcedon (A.D. 451), as the result of a patriarchalization of Christology during the first centuries of church history. The New Testament contains not one unique and standard Christology but a plurality of diverse contextual interpretations of who Jesus was for the people believing in him. But early on, the interpretation of Jesus as Logos of God, a term connoted with maleness, began to prevail over the very old Sophia-Christology (probably the oldest Christological tradition), which understands Jesus as the child/prophet or incarnation of the (female) Sophia, the divine wisdom. This patriarchalization culminated in the fourth century A.D. with the establishment of Christianity as the official state religion of the Roman Empire. The Christological dogmas of Nicaea and Chalcedon defining the one binding understanding of Jesus Christ as the Son of God not only made an end to the Christological controversies of various Christian groups but also served to guarantee the unity of the religious basis of the empire. Thus Christology, constructed in the context of political power, legitimated the patriarchal sociopolitical order of the Roman Empire and supported the establishment of a male hierarchical church. Christ became the head of the church (as man is the head of woman) and—like the Roman emperor—Pantocrator, that is, lord of the whole universe (Ruether, 1983).

Through the ages this patriarchal and imperial Christology not only oppressed alternative Christologies (for instance, Christologies more egalitarian in spirit) but also established the claim of Christ as being the unique way to salvation. Anti-Judaism, crusades, imperialistic conversions, and conquests of non-Christian peoples and cultures have been the cruel historical outcomes of this Christological model.

Feminist theologians from the third world therefore criticize not only the patriarchal but also the imperialistic character of western Christology, which has justified the colonization and exploitation of non-Christian continents and nations in the name of Jesus Christ, the lord of the whole universe. This colonial Christ also destroyed the indigenous religious and cultural traditions and worsened the situation of women in most cases. As African and Asian feminist theologians discovered in the history of their cultures, very often a patriarchal and Eurocentric Christianity added new forms of discrimination to the patriarchal structures of the indigenous cultures while repressing the traditional power of women, especially their spiritual power and agency (Chung, 1990; Kanyoro and Oduyoye, 1992). Most Asian and African feminist theologians reject this imperial "lordship" Christology for the patriarchal and colonialist oppression women have suffered in the name of the Lord. In the multireligious context of Asia, with its rich tradition of centuries-old salvation models, some feminist theologians also have questioned the Christian claim of the "uniqueness" of Jesus as the savior for all and the only full disclosure of God (Fabella, 1993).

Redemption through the Suffering and Sacrifice of Christ

Another problem for women in relation to traditional Christology is the Christological doctrine of redemption through the suffering, sacrifice, and death of Christ. As the U.S. feminist Mary Daly (1973) pointed out, the image of the suffering savior sacrificing himself for the sake of humanity has been used as a model, especially for women, to reinforce female "virtues" such as self-sacrifice and passive suffering and to render women subservient to various modes of domination. Some U.S. feminist theologians have further explored the relationship between the image of the suffering and self-sacrificing Christ and the legitimation of the victimization of women. For them, Christ, the son who suffers in obedience to his father's will, legitimizes, as an example to be imitated by those suffering patriarchal oppression, violence against women and children, especially domestic violence and sexual abuse (Brown and Bohn, 1989). For others, the Christological discourse of God sacrificing his innocent son for our sins reflects patriarchal views of divine power that sanction child abuse as divine behavior (Brock, 1988). Some womanist theologians criticize the Christian notion of Christ as surrogate figure standing in place of sinful humankind. This notion gives surrogacy an aura of the sacred and reinforces for African-American women the surrogacy roles as "mammies" they have been forced to perform since slavery (Williams, 1993).

In Latin America, Africa, and especially Asia, the image of the suffering Christ is claimed by many Christian women who suffer profoundly to give meaning to their own suffering. But feminist theologians from these continents warn their sisters not to accept every suffering as redemptive. Suffering inflected by oppressive and patriarchal structures and passively accepted by women does not lead to the new life Jesus lived and died for. Some Asian feminist theologians underscore the fact that the image of the suffering Christ or suffering servant has helped to promote the existing overemphasis on Asian women's self-denial and must be treated with caution (Fabella, 1993).

Feminist Reenvisioning of Christology

Aware of the various oppressive functions of traditional Christologies in the life of women, Christian women all over the world began to reenvision Christology in the context of their experience of oppression and their yearning for liberation and healing. For the first time in history women are giving individually and collectively their *own* answers to the Christological question: Who do you say that I am (Mark 8:29)? The answers are pluralistic and contextual, based on their *experiences* as women—experiences deeply influenced not only by gender but also by race, culture, and class. In Africa, where women endure extreme poverty and are subjected to oppressive cultural customs, Christian women discover the Jesus of the Gospels, who opposed religious and cultural practices oppressive for women in his time. Jesus is seen as liberator and healer, as companion and personal friend of women, and, like the African woman as the nurturer of life, as one who encourages the self-affirmation of African women (Fabella and Oduyoye, 1988).

For Christian women in Asia, Jesus is the one who transcends the evil order of patriarchy. In a continent of less than 3 percent Christians, where the majority of the poor and oppressed are women, most feminist theologians try to develop an understanding of Christ that is both liberating for women and respectful of religious pluralism (Fabella, 1993). Some Asian women also use religious imagery from their own cultural background to express who Jesus is for them in the context of modern Asia. They are transforming western Christology into a real Asian Christology based on their political, cultural, and spiritual experiences as Asian women (Chung, 1990). In Latin America, where women need liberation from both gender and politicoeconomic oppression, feminist theologians emphasize Christ's liberating mission by stressing aspects ignored by male liberation theologians: women's active participation in the Jesus movement, their equal status as disciples, Jesus's humanizing attitude toward women, and his criticism of patriarchal social and religious institutions (Aquino, 1993).

For black women in the United States, Jesus is the divine co-sufferer who is with them in times of trouble. In the past black women identified with Jesus because they believed that Jesus identified with them. The resurrection of Christ signified for them that their tridimensional oppression was not without end and inspired hope in the struggle for liberation. Therefore, Christ, in their experiences and community, is reimaged in womanist Christology as a black woman (Grant, 1989).

Most white feminist theologians in the United States and western Europe try to articulate a Christology that no longer supports sexism, anti-Judaism, racism, and western imperialism. Some understand Jesus as a messianic prophet, starting a process of liberation and redemption that must be carried on by his followers (Ruether, 1983). Some rediscover the Sophia-Christology of the New Testament, which interprets Jesus as the prophet or incarnation of the (female) Sophia, the divine wisdom (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1987). Others see Jesus as brother, showing us what it means to incarnate God—the power-in-relation—in our world and inviting us to do the same by living just and mutual relationships (Grey, 1989; Heyward, 1982). While this relational Christology does not confine Christ to the historical Jesus and leaves room for future revelations of the "Christic" power in our sisters and brothers, there are attempts to consider even the historical Jesus not as an isolated hero but as part of a healing community. Christ is seen as located in the (messianic) community of which Jesus was one historical part, and it is the community that generates the life-giving and healing power and thus becomes the locus for redemption (Brock, 1988).

Despite the diversity of feminist Christologies in different sociopolitical and cultural contexts, they all share the belief that the Jesus traditions of the Bible contain liberating elements which Christian women today can reclaim as they struggle for dignity, self-affirmation, survival, and liberation in a patriarchal world.

See Also

PATRIARCHY: FEMINIST THEORY; THEOLOGIES: FEMINIST; WOMANIST THEOLOGY

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Doris Strahm

CHRISTIANITY: Status of Women in the Church

Throughout history women have been active in the life and witness of the Christian church—supporting it by their faith and faithfulness, being its moral and spiritual energy at all times and all continents. Yet women have been denied a place as ordained clergy, in theological discourse, and in the preaching and teaching ministries of the church, as well as in its liturgical life and its administrative and decision-making processes. The church is often said to have remained a bastion of patriarchal power, in spite of the articulate voices of women and their active involvement in attempting to create an inclusive and just community of women and men. As Pauline Webb (1991) suggests, "There is a long history throughout the church of the lay ministry of women, of women in religious orders, diaconates and missionary service, and of the strength of women's movements within congregational life." But these women have been trivialized and silenced.

This article provides a glimpse of the status and role of women in the Christian church. It can only make broad generalizations because of the varied traditions, theologies, cultures, ecclesiologies, and administrative structures that have patterned the life and witness of the various denominations within the church. It is not always possible to speak in the same breath, for example, of the way the Eastern Orthodox churches in the Middle East or the Baptist churches in the southern United States or the African Independent churches in Nigeria would view the participation of women in their lives. Therefore, this article will concen-