

Literature, Culture and Media
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Lecture – 18
Theories of Gender

Good morning dear participants and welcome to this module. In the previous module we have discussed how the feminist thought has gradually emerged from the days of essentialist arguments it has started to incorporate the variations based on culture and later on it moved towards indeterminacies. The impact of postmodernist philosophy has also changed the way in which the feminist were looking at the world outside them.

In this context today we would continue our discussion and highlight the general philosophy as such. How does the discipline of gender study emerges?, what are the key concepts in it and how is it different or similar to the feminist ideology.?

(Refer Slide Time: 01:12)

Development of Understanding of Gender

- The contemporary understanding has developed through debates within different disciplines.
 - Feminism, queer theory, postcolonial studies and post modernist criticism
- Linked with socio-political movements and cultural representation of identity
- Much contested concept, slippery as well as obligatory
- Heterogeneous possibilities of the interpretation of the term
 - “A site of unease rather than agreement”

The contemporary understanding of gender studies has been a result of various interdisciplinary disciplines. Studies in the area of postmodernism, culture studies, feminism, postcolonial studies et cetera, sensitize the people towards the fact that gender studies are also needed because it is linked with the socio-political movements as well as the cultural representation of identity.

Gender as such is a much contested concept, it is slippery and as well as it is obligatory and there are immense and heterogeneous possibilities for the interpretation of the term. Cora Kaplan has termed gender as a site of unease rather than a site of agreement. As a grammatical category we find that gender has existed in every language and the masculine form has been treated as the linguistic norm.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:16)

Gender

- Gender is a grammatical category in every language and the masculine is the linguistic norm
- Masculine form is generic, feminine form is a variant:
 - Master : Mistress; Poet: Poetess; Lord : Lady
- Social, cultural and psychological meanings imposed upon biological sexual identity
- Gender Studies do not have a woman-centered investigation
 - Involve women, men and the transgender

Masculine form is generic and feminine form is a variant in all the languages, introducing a component of weakness that women are somehow less than men in terms of power and in terms of authority. For example, if you look at these terms master and mistress, poet and poetess, lord and lady and then the list can be continued further. When we use the word master in any language we find that it denotes unconditioned authority over something.

On the other hand, the term mistress is always a dilution of this authority as if this is the exercise of the authority which has been given over by the master. At the same time, we find that the feminine terms unlike the generic masculine terms are always incorporated with demeaning connotations. For example, the term mistress was also used around the second world war for a brothel keeper.

The same differences we can find in poet and poetess. Poetess is a variation; it is not the norm. Similarly, lord and lady whereas lord suggest again like master and unquestioned authority and a socialist stature. Lady is just a woman. So we find that the dilution of authority is always inbuilt in the social connotations, in the cultural connotations, the way the languages used the world over.

So we find that the sociocultural and psychological meanings are imposed upon biological sexual identity and language as we have seen in our earlier discussions of postmodernist debates also plays a significant role in it. The studies on gender became important because a woman centered investigation was somehow not suitable anymore for the society and studies of gender related objects incorporate not only woman but they also study man, the transgender also.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:26)

- Etymologically, the word 'gender' has been derived from the Latin *genus*.
 - Its origin is also traced to the Middle English *gender* – Norman conquest–era; Old French. Both words mean 'kind' or 'type'.
 - Their derivation in turn can be traced to Proto-Indo European (PIE) root *gen-*, which is also the source of English words like kin, kind, king etc.
- A survey of the literary use of the word shows that it has been in use after the 14th century to refer to femininity and masculinity as types.

Etymologically, the word gender has been derived from Latin word *genus*. Its origin is also traced to the middle English *gender*, a loan word from Norman conquest era old French and both words mean kind or type. Their derivation intern can be traced to Proto-Indo European root *gen-*, which is also the source of English words like kin, kind, king et cetera. A survey of the literary usage of the word suggest that by the time we were entering 14th century the word had come to refer to femininity and masculinity as a type particularly in religious text.

It was around 1950s that the feminist critics had started to talk about the impact of culture in defining

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- Feminist criticism in 1950s started talking about the impact of culture in defining gender, and clearly differentiating between sex and gender.
 - Post feminist critics, particularly Butler, Chodorow and Barbara Turner critically assessed existing perceptions on gender, gender roles, sex and sex categories.
- Analytical understanding of these concepts entails a clear understanding of the interactional processes involved in the creation of a gendered person in society.
- These critics suggested that one's sense of gender identity and gender role significantly mould one's perception of overall identity or sense of self.
 - Chodorow remarks, "We cannot step out of being gendered and sexed; that is who we are. We do not ... have a separate self apart from our engendering."

And clearly differentiating between sex and gender. The contribution of 3 feminist critics is particularly to be noted in the context of the emergence of gender theories and they are Butler, Chodorow and Barbara Turner, who critically assessed existing perceptions on gender, gender roles, sex. They also told us that after an analytical understanding these concepts entail a clear understanding of the interactional processes which are involved in the creation of gender as well as in the creation of a gendered person in society.

These critics argue that it is our sense of gender identity and our perception of gender role which we try to enact in our lives which becomes important in the overall identity formation. Chodorow has rightly remarked- "we cannot step out of being gendered and sexed, that is who we are. We do not have any separate self apart from our engendering."

So the idea that gender conditioning is important for personality formation, gradually was extended to incorporate the social conditioning, the cultural conditioning of men and transgender and thereby we find that the concept of gender has emerged. A very interesting idea of gender theories is that they talk not only about the difference but they also talk about power.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:46)

Gender

- Gender is not only about *difference*, it is also about *power*
- Gender is imposed by hidden forces – biological/mythic/cultural arguments
- Promoted by media and popular culture
- Reading with gender on the agenda involves not only the writer, but also the reader, in an active process of imagination and interpretation.
- It alerts the reader to the need to look beyond the limiting gendered possibilities of textual decoding, encouraging him/her to look beyond prescriptive critical norms.

The gender critics think that gender is imposed by forces, which are hidden as biological, mythical, cultural, racial, religious and so on different types of arguments. It is also promoted by media and popular culture as we would see in another module. So reading with gender on our agenda somehow is an enabling factor for the reader also as well as it envisages a proactive reading of the text on the part of the reader.

So reading with gender on the agenda involves not only the writer but also the reader because it would require an active process of imagination and interpretation. It alerts the reader to the need to look beyond the limiting possibilities of textual decoding and encouraging the reader to find out what are the gender related issues beyond the regular critical norms.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:43)

- Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous and Julia Kristeva
- Opposed the concept of a universal and neutral human nature as it sets masculine values as a standard and thus promotes a gendered social hierarchy.
- Universalizing the masculine implies setting it as a norm which results in the subordination of women and transgender.
- They have put forward theories of feminine difference as a value, rejecting the male symbolic order, thus challenging and subverting the conventional gender patterns.

It is important here to refer to 3 critics Irigaray, Helene Cixous and Julia Kristeva. These writers have put forward theories of feminine difference as a value and rejecting the male symbolic order. They oppose the concept of a universal and neutral human nature as it sets masculine values as a standard promoting gendered hierarchy and gender binaries. In her works like *Speculum of the Other Woman* published in 1985.

And *This Sex which is Not One* published in 1987, Irigaray has posited that women have been constructed and others of man in the western thought. Universalizing the masculine according to these critics imply setting it as a norm, which results in the subordination not only of women but also of the transgender.

So we find that where is the previous feminist thinkers used to think that the concept of cultural conditioning puts women only in a subordinate place, these critic Irigaray, Helene Cixous, Julia Kristeva and several other influenced by them started to talk about the subordination of the transgender and here in we find is the quintessence of the development of masculinity studies as well as the queer studies also.

So they have put forward theories of feminine difference as a value rejecting the masculinity supremacy and thus subverting the conventional norms. These philosophers have combined psycho analysis and linguistics in a post-structuralist argument.

(Refer Slide Time: 09:30)

- Irigaray has posited that the woman has been constructed as the specular 'Other' of man in all western discourse.
- She wants to create a new language to escape the masculine rule-bound and rigidified language.
- Wants woman to create her own writing, favoring the images and metaphors of fluidity, dynamism, polysemy and plurality (feminine); rather than those of unity, monologism, stability and fixity (masculine).

Irigaray has posited that the women have been constructed as the specular other of man in western discourses we have seen earlier and she wants to create a new language to escape the

masculine rule-bound and rigidified language. She seeks to uncover a feminine order of meaning and then Irigaray also argues that the Freudian theory of sexuality and sexual pleasure had also initially believed in the gender binary, in the traditional binary.

And therefore she suggest that the conventional gendered supremacy of men has dominated the linguistic modes of expression to and create her own writing favouring the images and metaphors of fluidity, dynamic, polysemy and plurality, which she engages with feminine order and then she also suggest that women should reject the masculine way of expression that is metaphors which are based on unity, monologism, stability and fixity.

So Irigaray wants to create a new language in order to escape the masculine rule bound and rigidified language which in her opinion would pave way for gender equality. They also have gone ahead and say that gender and power is structure each other. This was their main contribution and then they have started to talk about power hierarchies and thus they have paved the way of masculinities and queer theories also and that is why they want that women have to be made more visible so that gender and power hierarchy can also be challenged.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:11)

- Significations of gender and power construct each other
- Women have to be made more visible.
- Hierarchical structures rely on gendered understanding of relationships considered as natural in a patriarchal setup.
- Helene Cixous also attempts to discover a writing which is fluid, transgressive and beyond binary systems of logic; thereby attempting to establish equality and defy gendered hierarchies
- Chodorow remarks that heterosexuality is a compromise formation; a sexual orientation which has been made primary in the western culture since the nineteenth century.

Helene Cixous like Irigaray has also wanted to create a different language which represents the feminine. She wants to also attempt to discover a writing which is fluid, transgressive and beyond binary systems of logic and thereby attempting to establish equality and defy gendered hierarchies. She has also commented that heterosexuality in our society is a compromise formation is sexual orientation which has been made primary in the western culture since the 19th century.

The emphasis of Irigaray as well as Helene Cixous over the different ways in which language is used by men and women in our culture is taken further by gender critics and they have also studied the impact of these different cultural processes in the way women use language not only in their literary writings, but also in different types of media. In our discussions on media we would see how it is said that women normally use more hatches, more indirect way of expression even in their non-literary writings.

And therefore these post-feminist critics have criticised the Freudian theories. Cixous further combines power with gender categories and in their definition of culture they have started to talk about the presentation of gender that is men, women and transgender in various cultural products.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:39)

- Culturally popular fairytales, myths, movies and books constitute sexual fantasies through language, which are later on individually appropriated to invent and solidify personal myth.
- Thus, notions of sexual attraction and attractiveness are constructed historically and cross-culturally.
- Literary connotations have somehow taken up heterosexuality as a norm, thus abetting gendered norms in societal groups.
- Chodorow comments that in all depictions of homosexuality, references are made specifically to sexuality, sexual object choice, fantasy, erotization or desire; whereas in accounts of prevalent heterosexuality, similar acts are shown as being/meaning something more than or larger than sex

Culturally encouraged fairy tales, myths, movies and books constitutes sexual fantasies through language which are later on adopted at an individual level to invent and solidify personal myths regarding gender and gender roles. Thus notions of sexual attraction as well as what constitutes attractiveness are constructed in a historical manner and they may have cross cultural connotations also.

But the impact of particular culture is always visible on them. Somehow these post-feminist critics say that somehow literary connotations and literary productions have taken up heterosexuality as a norm, thus abetting gender norms in societal groups. Chodorow also comments that in all depictions of homosexuality references are made specifically to

sexuality, sexual choice, fantasy, eroticization and desire as far as the accounts of homosexuality are concerned.

Whereas in all accounts of heterosexuality similar acts are shown as being or meaning something more than the mere act of sex and therefore the society has given a particular dominance to heterosexuality. Feminists also analyse literary texts evinces that the contemporary norms of gender structure,

(Refer Slide Time: 14:06)

Gender

- Feminist analyses of literary texts evinces that contemporary norms of gender structure man-woman relationship in such a manner that it tends to subordinate and devalue women as well as homosexuality.
- Sexuality has always been central to psychoanalysis, but it has accepted the gendered binaries, and has not advanced our understanding of hetero/homo sexuality.

Man-woman relationship in such a manner that it tends to subordinate in the value, not only women, but also the transgender. They have also said that sexuality is central to psycho analysis, but in the conventional studies of psycho analysis dominated by Freud in the beginning of the 20th century it is accepted the gendered binary and therefore has not advanced our understanding of hetero as well as homosexuality. At this particular point it is important to quote the work of Sedgwick and Judith Halberstam.

(Refer Slide Time: 14:40)

- Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Judith Halberstam
 - Criticize the apparent sexual politics which decides the gendered preference in one's behavior and attitudes, and foreground the argument that the realms of genders are variable
- Centrality of sexuality for every issue of gender has to be accepted, as it moulds, among other aspects, the power relations too
- In her article "Between Men", Sedgwick quotes Catherine Mackinnon's argument in support of her ideas, "socially, femaleness means femininity which means attractiveness to men, which means sexual attractiveness, which means sexual availability on male terms" (Sedgwick).
- *Gone with the Wind*

They have criticized the apparent sexual politics which decides the gender preferences in one's behaviour and attitudes and foreground the argument that the realms of genders are variable. They also say that the centrality of sexuality for every issue of gender has to be accepted as it moulds among other aspects, power relations also. So we find that these philosophers have talked about the inherent relationship between gender, gender roles and power relations which govern different relationships.

If Sedgwick has particularly talked about the economic relationships, in an article between men Sedgwick has quoted Catherine Mackinnon's argument and support of ideas that socially female has been femininity which in turn means attractiveness to men which in turn means sexual attractiveness which in turn means sexual availability on male terms. So the idea of these post-feminist critics is to suggest that wherever femininity is constructed it is related within hetero sexual relationship with certain type of availability on sexual terms.

She has also incorporated a detailed analysis of the famous novel, *Gone with the Wind*, from this perspective.

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- Gendered roles and identities are constructed by the intersection of domination and sexuality
- Whereas the second-wave feminists highlighted the *artificiality* of gender, post-modernist thinkers brought into consideration the *indeterminacy* of gender.
- Though meanings vary with each culture, a sex gender system is always intimately interconnected with political and economic factors in each society.
 - It can be said that the cultural construction of sex into gender and the asymmetry that is fundamentally present in all gender systems cross-culturally, are the reasons of social inequality.

So we see that gendered roles and identities are constructed by the intersection of domination and sexuality, whereas the second-wave feminist had highlighted the artificiality of gender, post-modernist thinkers have brought into consideration the indeterminacy of gender. Though meaning may vary with every culture, a sex gender system is always interconnected with political and economic factors in every part of our globe.

It can be said therefore to the cultural construction of sex into gender and the asymmetry that is fundamentally present in all gender systems cross culturally are the reasons of social inequality. The concept on gender has also tried to analyse the way women have to express themselves particularly in literature and literary works within a particular version of creativity which has been defined and modulated by men.

So women writers have to adjust their creativity with the male version of creativity. So women have to negotiate with the male fantasies of the female instead of writing their own fantasies in terms of any particular affair or desire.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:19)

Gender, Women, and Creativity

- Critics have pointed out how women writers often had to work within a male vision of creativity.
- Women had to negotiate with the male fantasies of the female, which were either of the submissive angel or aggressive monster.
 - As Technology
 - As Performance

They have to trust the male versions of the female fantasies which were either of the submissive angel or that of an aggressive monster. Taking these arguments further I would like to introduce 2 terms, gender as technology and gender as performance. The idea of gender as technology was given initially by De Lauretis. She has said that gender is a representation and the representation of gender is its construction.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:47)

Technology of Gender

- Gender is a representation and the representation of gender is its construction.
- All of Western art and high culture is the “engraving of the history of that construction” – De Lauretis
- The construction of gender goes on not only in and through different public and social organizations (media, family, work place – “ideological state *apparati*”, as Louis Althusser, terms it)
- But also less obviously, in the academy, in *avant-garde* artistic practices and radical theories

And she also says that the Western art in the high culture is the engraving of the history of the gender construction. She also says that the construction of gender goes on not only in palpable and social organisations where it can be seen easily, but also in subtle manner in other organisations where one does not expect to work.

Echoing the argument of Louis Althusser borrowing the phrase of ideological state apparatus from Althusser, she says that the concept of gender works not only in family, workplace and media where it is more apparent, but also it works in those places of academy in avant-garde artistic practices and radical theories where one does not normally expect to exist. So this technology of gender has a prevalent impact on our psyche.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:51)

Gender as Performance

- Butler suggests that gender is a continuous process, it is something we 'do', rather than 'are'. (*Gender Trouble* 1990)
- Butler negates the common assumption that sex, gender and sexuality are relational; i.e., a biological female is expected to adopt and display culturally accepted feminine traits in a heteronormative world.
- Butler claims that gender is 'unnatural' and there is no necessary/corresponding relationship between one's body and gender
- Gender is a choice and a reorganization

Another idea of gender as a performance was given by Judith Butler, in her famous book, *Gender Trouble*, published in 1990. These 2 ideas had a very important impact on the development of gender theories and later on the development of masculinity studies and the queer studies also. So Butler has suggested that gender is a continuous process. It is something which we do rather than we are.

She also negates the common assumption that sex, gender and sexuality are relational, that is a biological female is expected to adopt and display culturally accepted feminine traits in a heteronormative world. She claims that gender as such is unnatural and there is no necessary or corresponding relationship between one's body and gender. She says that gender is a choice and a reorganization of preferences and choices.

She also suggest that a person cannot be a free agent in selecting ones gender. Because she thinks that such an act of free choices impossible as we are already conditioned by respective gender norms of the society, the family et cetera, of which we are a part.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:10)

Gender, Women and Creativity

- Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar argue that women's texts construct techniques of evasion and concealment –*The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979).
- They feel that the 'madwoman' image in most nineteenth century fiction by women writers represented their double, the 'schizophrenia of authorship' and the anxiety of creation.
- Irigaray and Helene Cixous also attempt to discover a writing which is fluid, transgressive and beyond binary systems of logic.
- Thereby, attempting to establish equality and defy gendered hierarchies

Another aspect of gender theories has also been influenced by this line of argument, which was presented by Gilbert and Gubar in their book, *The Madwoman in the Attic* published in 1979 where they have felt that that madwoman image in most of the 19th century fiction written by women writers represented their double, the schizophrenia of authorship and the anxiety of creation.

And they suggested that women writers have to go beyond it if they actually have to participate in the literary production. So we find that critics like Irigaray, Helene Cixous, Judith Butler et cetera have attempted to discover a writing, a process of writing which is fluid, transgressive and beyond binary system of logic and thereby they hope to establish equality and defy gendered hierarchies in the system.

To sum up we can say that gender critics feel that gender roles are delineated by behavioral expectations and norms and once the individuals know these expectations and norms

(Refer Slide Time: 21:20)

Gender

- Gender roles are delineated by behavioral expectations and norms
- Once individuals know those expectations and norms, the individual can adopt behaviors that project the gender they wish to portray.
- There are specific behaviors and norms associated with genders just like there are lines and movements associated with each character in a play.
- Adopting the behaviors and norms of a gender leads to the perception that someone belongs in that gender category.

They can try to adopt behaviours that project the gender they wish to portray. However, as Butler had said, this desire or this choice is not exactly independent, it is often also very much conditioned. So there are specific behaviours and norms associated with genders. Just like there are lines and movements associated with each character in a play. Adopting the behaviours and norms of a gender leads to the perception that someone belongs to that particular category of gender.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:54)

Gender

- Gender roles, unlike sex, are mutable; they can change
- Gender is not, however, as simple as just choosing a role to play but is also influenced by parents, peers, culture, and society.
- The phenomenon of gender has multi-layered connotations
 - It has bodily, psychological and behavioral features
- Gender and power structures cannot be easily separated. They are interdependent and define each other in every society.
- Notion of gender is formed, framed and congealed into forms which appear to be natural and permanent, by discourses which also create patriarchal power structures.

So gender roles unlike sex are mutable, they can change because one can always choose to adopt a different gender role. So gender is not however as simple as just choosing a role to play but it is influenced by parents, by peers, by the culture, the society, the work place. At the same time the phenomenon of gender has a multilayered connotation. It is bodily,

psychological and physiological features also and gender and power structures cannot be easily separated.

They are interdependent and define each other in every society. Notion of gender is formed, framed and concealed into forms which appear to be natural and permanent by discourses which are also create patriarchal power structure and when we talk of discourses which create patriarchal power structures et cetera, the metanarratives, we find that the discussion of media becomes a natural corollary of this discussion.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:57)

Gender Studies

- It does not have any aggressive political agenda – it is symmetrical and studies men also.
- It recognizes that the existing structure of men and women relationship tends to devalue and subordinate women.
- However, the same norms can also marginalize many men.

So gender studies are symmetrical, they study men as well as transgender, they recognize that the existing structure of men and women relationship tends to devalue and subordinate not only open but they also marginalise many men who cannot confirm to the gender norms given to men also in the society. After this discussion we find that our gender identity is a compulsory facet as suggested by the gender theorist.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:26)

Gender Identity

- Gender identity is a compulsory facet of our cognition – individual as well as collective.
- Internalization of gendered identities conditions one's own cognitive and behavioral patterns, while simultaneously creating a comfort zone as far as our reactions to different gender are concerned.

So individually and collectively a gender identity is created. Now whenever we talk of creation we will have to refer to Laetitia's word of gender as a technology. So in the next part of our discussion we would see what are the different ways in which gender theorists feel the concept of gender is constructed at an individual as well as at a collective level. Major theories about construction of gender are listed here.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:00)

Major Theories about Construction of Gender

- Biological Difference Theory
- Psychodynamic Theories
- Cognitive-Developmental Theories
- Socialization or Social-learning Theories
- Gender-Schema Theory
- Social-Structural or Situational Theories
- Identity-Construction Theory
- Enculturated-Lens Theory

And I would take them up briefly one by one. Many of them we have already referred to during the course of our discussion.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:09)

Biological Difference Theory: Anatomy is destiny

- Little consideration of the wide variety of behaviours among members of each sex
 - How masculinity and femininity relate to each other in different settings
- It is not uncommon to witness newspaper or magazine articles routinely quoting scientific studies to show how the difference between men and women lies hidden somewhere in the body, often brain.
 - For example, in his book *The Essential Difference: Men, Women, and the Extreme Male Brain* (2003), Simon Baron-Cohen, professor of developmental psychopathology at Cambridge puts his thesis: "The female brain is predominantly hard-wired for empathy. The male brain is predominantly hard-wired for understanding and building systems."

The first theory is biological difference theory which suggest that 'anatomy is destiny'. We have discussed it in detail in our discussions in the first phase of feminist theory. This theory and this belief gives little consideration to the fact that there is a wide variety of behaviours among members of each sex and also there is a wide variety in how masculinity and femininity relate to each other in different settings.

However, we find that it is not uncommon to witness newspaper or magazine articles routinely coating scientific studies to show how the difference between men and women lies hidden somewhere in the body often brain. It is interesting to quote a particular study by Simon Baron-Cohen, which was published in 2003. The title of the book is *The Essential Difference: Men, Women and the Extreme Male Brain*.

Cohen is the professor of developmental psychology at Cambridge and his thesis can be put summarily as a stating that the female brain is predominantly hardwired for empathy, the male brain is predominantly hardwired for understanding and building systems. So these are the arguments which the feminist critics in the first phase and also during the early second phase have countered.

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- To put it in different words, the male frame of mind is different from the female frame of mind in the sense that
 - The former is geared toward the analysis of a system, often complex systems of thought such as the philosophical systems, or the physiological systems, that of the body or mind, any particular disembodied area such as the cosmos, the nature, etc.
- On the other hand, the female approach is connected with readings natural beings such as the humans, their faces or other bodily expressions to analyze what they might be up to.
 - However, this view of 'natural' difference is difficult to support as notions of appropriate gender behaviour are not static, but differ over time, between ethnic and cultural groups, and even between and within families

To put in different ways these theorists believe that the male frame of mind is different from the female frame of mind in the sense that the former is geared towards analysis of a system whereas the female approach is connected with readings of natural beings, it is more concerned with empathetic behaviour; however, this view of natural difference is difficult to support as notions of appropriate gender behaviour.

As we have seen during our discussions are not static, but they differ over time between ethnic and cultural groups and even between and within families.

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Psychodynamic Theories

- Emphasizes inner psychic conflicts of children instead of external pressures
- E.g. Freudian concepts of oedipal conflict and penis envy

Psychodynamic theories emphasize inner psychic conflicts of children instead of external pressure. They talk about Freudian concepts of oedipal conflict, the penis envy, the electoral conflict et cetera and suggest that on the basis of these psychological conflicts gender roles

are defined by children at a very early age of their development. Cognitive developmental theories emphasize the early stages of mental development.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:41)

Cognitive-Developmental Theories

- Emphasize stages of mental development
- Lawrence Kohlberg's theory that children are almost inevitably led by their own cognitive processing to choose gender as the organizing principle for social rules that govern their own and their peers' behavior

A major thinker Lawrence Kohlberg has suggested that children are normally led, the phrase he has used is almost inevitably. So he says that children are almost inevitably led by their own cognitive process to choose gender as the organizing principle for social rule that govern their own behaviour as well as the behaviour of the peers. So he has associated the internalization of gender roles by a child as a process of the cognitive development during the early ages of life.

Socialization of social learning theories as the very title suggest emphasize the influence of culture over the individual.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:23)

Socialization or Social-learning Theories

- Emphasize what culture does to the individual
- Influence of “differing learning environments”, especially of children but sometimes adults as well
- Imitation of models and examples they see in society’s response to
 - Rewards for gender-appropriate behavior
 - Criticism or punishment for gender-inappropriate behavior (from peers as well as adults)

How culture influences differing learning environments especially of children and also sometimes of adults as well and therefore these different learning environments promote different type of perceptions for gender. For example, there are rewards for gender appropriate behaviours, which is supported by the society. There is a criticism or even a punishment for gender inappropriate behaviour by the peers as well as by the adults.

So we find that imitation of models and examples which young children see around them in the society becomes effective because a gender appropriate behaviour is rewarded and a gender inappropriate behaviour is ridiculed and even punished.

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Gender-Schema Theory

- Merges cognitive-developmental with social-learning theory.
- Schemas are internal cognitive networks (shaped by socialization) that organize and guide individual perceptions
 - Gender schemas are cognitive networks associated with concepts of masculine and feminine
 - Highly gender-schematic individuals tend to organize many of their thoughts, perceptions and evaluations according to gender stereotypes and symbols
 - Research shows that 3 years old children begin to learn the figurative or metaphorical meanings of gender
- Children learn an underlying framework for understanding the nature of masculine and feminine that does not depend on the specific models having appeared in their environment.

Gender-schema theories merge cognitive developmental aspects with social learning theory. Schemas are internal cognitive networks which are shaped by socialization that organize and

guide individual perceptions. Gender-schemas are cognitive networks associated with concepts of masculine and feminine and highly gender schematic individuals tend to organize

Many of their thoughts, perceptions, evaluations and actions according to gender stereotypes and symbols. Results also shows that by the time a child is of 3 years old the child has started to learn the figurative or metaphorical meanings of gender. Children learn an underlying framework for understanding the nature of masculine and feminine that often depends on the specific models appearing in their environment.

But at the same time it may also not depend on them. So they may learn from models who are present in their immediate environment, but at the same time they may leave them aside and may learn from certain others models which are not available to them in their immediate environment. Social structural situational theories emphasise the constraints with definite structures of the society put on children and adult.

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Social-Structural or Situational Theories

- Emphasize structural constraints on children and adults
- The fact that men and women are in different and unequal positions in the social structure
 - Conscious discrimination
 - Unconscious discrimination
 - People may not be aware that they are discriminating or being discriminated against—it is quite difficult to prove that discrimination has occurred

The fact that men and women are in different and in unequal positions in different social structures often result into a conditioning of gender in very subtle manner. For example, people may also sometimes consciously discriminate against people or sometimes they may unconsciously discriminate against certain things. So it may also be possible that people themselves may not be aware that they are being discriminatory on the basis of gender patterns.

So the structural constraints, condition men and women sometimes do consciously discriminate against some behaviour, but sometimes it may also happen that they themselves are not aware of this discrimination. So it becomes quite difficult to prove that discrimination has occurred because for someone it may be a case of discrimination whereas for some people this discrimination may be taking place at an unconscious level and they may not even be aware of conducting it.

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Identity-Construction Theory

- Emphasizes the individual's personal and conscious commitment to a specific image of self
- One can think of gender like a role in a theatrical play.
- There are specific behaviors and norms associated with genders just like there are lines and movements associated with each character in a play.
- Adopting the behaviors and norms of a gender leads to the perception that someone belongs in that gender category.
- Emphasizes individual's personal and conscious commitment to a specific self image

Identity construction theories emphasize the individual's personal and conscious commitment to a specific image of self and they encourage us to think of gender like a role in a play. They say that there is specific behaviours and norms associated with gender just like they are lines and movements with each other with each character has to play and it reminds us of Judith Butler's argument.

Adopting the behaviours and norms of a gender leads to the perception that someone belongs to that gender category. So these theories emphasize individuals personal and conscious commitment to a specific self-image. They think that according to ones preferred self-image a person would be able to choose a particular type of behaviour like one may choose certain lines in a play.

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Enculturated-Lens Theory- Sandra Bem

- It includes all the above and also emphasizes the social and historical context containing the lenses of gender
- There are two key enculturation processes that are constantly linked and working together
 - The institutional preprogramming of the individual's daily experience into the default options, or the historically precut 'grooves,' for that particular time and place, which differ markedly for men and women
- The transmission of implicit lessons—or meta-messages—about what lenses the culture uses to organize social reality
- Including the idea that the distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine, is extremely important

Enculturated-lens theory propounded by Sandra Bem includes all these theories which we have talked about and they also emphasize the social and historical context, which contains the lenses of gender. According to Sandra Bem there are 2 key enculturation processes that are constantly linked and working together. The institutional programming of the individual's daily experience into the default option.

All the historically precut grooves for that particular time and place are different markedly for men and women. So her idea is that people are encouraged, young girls and boys are encouraged to follow the precut grooves as far as the gender norms and gender appropriate behaviour is concerned. The transmission of implicit lessons or meta messages about what lenses the culture uses to organize social reality are also important.

Because they include the idea that the distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine is extremely important and has to be preserved.

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Feminist and Gender Theories oppose

- Culture based on control of women
- Crowded with over determinations of traditional male supremacy
- Concept of single man/woman experience is polemical
- Not a simple belief system
- Wants to transform society
- Dynamic and constantly growing theory/movement
- "In a non-sexist, non-patriarchal society, feminism will no longer exist"
(Toril Moi)

So we have seen that feminist and gender theories oppose a culture which is based on control of women, that want to transform the society and they feel that at the same time that the concept of a single men and women in terms of their experiences is polemical and they suggest that the plurality has to be understood. They also feels that the traditional, conventional patriarchal culture is crowded with over determinations of traditional male supremacy and they want to change the society.

It is also dynamic and progressive approach and I would like to conclude the discussion by quoting from Toril Moi echoing the idea of Karl Marx that in an ideal society the state will wither away. She also presents a utopian vision before us and says that in a non-sexist, non-patriarchal society feminism will no longer exist.

So these ideas suggest that feminism as an ideology, feminism as a movement as well as gender theories are there because the patriarchal culture has necessitated it and once this non-patriarchal culture is abolished perhaps the feminism as well as the gender theories will not be needed by us. Thank you.