

Theory: - Hypothesis → pre-supposition
A supposition or a system of ideas intended to explain something, especially one based on general principles independent of the thing to be explained.

Gender Theory: - It refers to the conceptual framework (Structure of axioms and principles) invented by feminists - Gender Theory explores how we ~~sexuality~~ ^{identity} and difference in gender discussions together the ideas comprising a concept e.g. marriage coz it incorporates ideas that we don't admit

1.1 INTRODUCTION: as they relate to literary Theory.

The term gender was first developed by Iill Matthews in 1984 in her study of the construction of femininity. According to Mathews, the concept of gender gives recognition to the fact that every known society distinguishes between women and men. Therefore the term / concept of gender is a systematic way of understanding men and women socially and the patterning of relationships between them.

The concept of gender in feminist writings and other sociological discourses became popular in the early 1970. In simple terms, gender explain the differences between men and women in social terms as men, and as what a man can do; as

„woman“, and as what a woman can or cannot do. Therefore, gender is an analytical category that is socially constructed to differentiate the biological difference between men and women. The term gender is also used to describe the differences in behaviour between men and women which are described as

„Masculine“ and „feminine“. Feminist writings focus on this aspect and claim that these differences are not biological but are social constructions of patriarchal society.

Some theorists suggest that the biological differences between men and women also result in their mental and physical differences. They argue that biologically, men are physically and mentally superior to women. Other theorists suggest that the biological difference between men and women are exaggerated. The differences are socially constructed by the patriarchal system of society by which men are described as superior to women. Therefore women become subordinate to men in the society.

Ann Oakley in her book, sex, gender and Society written in 1972 explores the term gender. Oakley says that in the Western culture women play the roles of the „housewife“ and „mother“. This is because women are made to play these roles because of their biology. The western culture also believes that any effort to change the traditional roles of men and women in the society can cause damage to the social fabric of the society. Oakley concludes that this view regarding the roles of men and women helps to support and maintain the patriarchal society.

Simone de Beauvoir in her book „The Second Sex“ says that „one is not born, but rather becomes a woman“. She explains that gender differences in the society make the man superior through his role as the bread winner. It gives him a position of power in the society and family. Gender differences are set in hierarchal opposition such that men are superior and women are subordinate. Women's position is that of the „other“ and women are the continual outsiders. Civilization was masculine to its very depth.

Shulamith Firestone in her book, „The Dialectics of Sex (1970) suggests that patriarchy exploits women's biological capacity to reproduce as their essential weakness. She explains that the only way for women to break

away from this oppression is to use technological advances of free themselves from the burden of childbirth. She advocated breaking down the biological bond between mothers and children by establishing communes where monogamy and nuclear family do not exist. *married to one person at a time* *a group of ppl living together sharing responsibility*

Few feminists accept firestones views mainly because both technology and its uses are still firmly in the hands of men. While cultural feminists question whether all the key differences between men and women are solely cultural and whether also biological. These feminists prefer to value and celebrate the mothering role as evidence of women's natural disposition towards nurturance and would not like to relinquish even if they could. *take up / give away*

Ann Oakley says that there is a constant slippage between sex and gender; for example people are generally asked to declare their „gender“ instead of sex on an application form. In feminist writings there are references to the close association of gender with the biological or natural as inevitable. Recent writings on sex and gender suggest that feminism has relied too much on the polarization of sex and gender distinctions, showing that the meanings attached to sex differences are themselves socially constructed and changeable. It is dependent on the way we understand them and attach different consequences to these biological „facts“ within our own cultural historical context. At the same time there is an argument that biology does contribute to some behavioural characteristics. *unavoidable* *clear cut* *division*

Movia Gatens states that evidence points "that the male body and the female body have quite different social value and significance and cannot but help have a marked effect on male and female consciousness". Certain bodily events have huge significance especially if they occur only in one sex. She cites the example of menstruation. She points that masculinity is not valued, unless it is performed by biological male; hence the male body itself is imbued in our culture with the mythology of supremacy of being the human „norm“. *include*

Gender Theorists and theories

Judith Butler is well known as a theorist of gender, sexuality and identity. Judith Butler's 1990 "Gender Trouble" was widely acclaimed as a groundbreaking book due to its revolutionary ideas regarding gender identity and the relations between gender and sex and the introduction of the notion of gender as performance or gender performativity. In "Gender Trouble" Judith Butler undermines the distinction between sex as a natural given category and gender as an acquired cultural- social category. Butler argues that sex also is a socially constructed category which stems out of social and cultural practices and in the context of a discourse that has a history and its own social and political dynamics. *innovative / pioneering*

In "Gender Trouble" Judith Butler develops her famous performative theory of gender which tries to account the manner in which a subject identity is formed while establishing Butler's claim that gender identity is not a manifestation of intrinsic essence but rather the product of actions and behaviors, that is, performance. In other words, Judith Butler argues that everyday actions, speech utterances, gestures and representations, dress codes and behaviors as *deep rooted* *fact of existence* *intrinsic* *same*

well as certain prohibitions and taboos all work to produce what is perceived as an essential masculine of feminine identity. Judith Butler's theorization about gender introduces the notion of performativity, an idea that gender is involuntarily „performed“ within the dominant discourses of heteroreality. Butler's conception of is perhaps most radical as she asserts that all identity concept „are in fact that effects of institutions“ practices, discourses with multiple and diffuse points of origin“. She further states that "sex / gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed gender". This approach questions the way we make constructing of gender identity. Individual do tend to challenge the way discourses establish and reinforce certain meanings and institutions such as that of compulsory heterosexuality.

Doing Gender" by Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman - article review and summary In their 1987 article "Doing Gender" sociologists Candace West and Don H.Zimmermann first introduced their notion of gender not as a trait, a social role or a societal representation, but rather as an accomplishment- the product of daily social practices and behaviors which codify and manifest femininity of masculinity. This product is the result of social structures and it in itself serves to reinforce them. The "doing" of gender legitimizes social structures and therefore establishes the male/female dichotomy as natural.

understand
Traditional gender perceptions view man and woman as natural and unequivocal categories. These allegedly principal differences between sexes are supported by the division of labor and are characterized by female and male behaviors, which have deep psychological and social implications.

dispute
In "doing gender" West and Zimmerman refute the classic distinction between the social constructed "gender" as opposed to the biological "sex". Instead they argue for a more complex relations between social and physical features.

West and Zimmerman's definition of gender is a sociological one which relies on codes and conventions that are at the foundation of everyday activities. "doing gender" means to perform complex societal activities of perception, interaction and of micropolitics which define certain activities and pursuits and either masculine or feminine.

West and Zimmerman argue that gender is a series of traits nor a "role", but rather something which is performed, something which is "done" (hence "doing gender") in a continuing and context-related manner. Gender is established by mean of interaction and is displayed through it, and while appearing as "natural" it is in fact something which is created by an organized social performance.

In viewing gender as an accomplishment, its essence is diverted for intrinsic traits and features to something which is dependent on social interactions and contexts. Gender is also a result of institutionalized functions of

society - indeed individuals are the one that are "doing gender", but they do it in the real or imagined presence of others.

In "doing gender" West and Zimmerman replace that traditional sex/gender distinction with a triadic division of 3 concepts:

Sex: a determination which is founded on conventional biological criteria for distinguishing male from female.

Sex category: a categorization which is founded on socially required identificatory displays that assert one's masculinity or femininity. Sex categories suppose sex but are not necessarily determined by it.

Gender: a reaction and result of an action in certain situations, as determined by conventional and normative expectations regarding one's assignment of sex category.

Doing gender in this sense is acting in a manner which promotes assignment to one of the sex categories, under the supervision of others. Doing gender is a socially required practice, and therefore we cannot "not do gender", our assigned sex category is imposed on us and is perceived as essential, we can comply with it or rebel against it.

On (same sex desire)

It is an umbrella term of sexual and gender minorities who put heterosex...

Queer theory as an academic tool came about in part from gender and sexuality studies that in turn had their origins from lesbians and gay studies and feminist theory. It is a much newer theory, in that it was established in the 1990s, and contests many of the set ideas of the more established fields it comes from by challenging the notion of defined and finite identity categories, as well as the norms that create a binary of good versus bad sexualities. Queer theorists contend is that there is no set normal, only changing norms that people may or may not fit into, making queer theorists' main challenge to disrupt binaries in

dispute/contend

hopes that this will destroy difference as well as inequality. One of the key concepts in queer theory is the idea of "heteronormativity," which pertains to "the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent—that is, organized as a sexuality—but also privileged" (Berlant). Heteronormativity is a worldview that promotes heterosexuality as the normal and/or preferred sexual orientation, and is reinforced in society through the institutions of marriage, taxes, employment, and adoption rights, among many others. Heteronormativity is a form of power and control that applies pressure to both straight and gay individuals, through institutional arrangements and accepted social norms

limited

...but that pp into distinct complementary genders in natural role life

Some of the core theorists in the development of queer theory include Michael Foucault, Gayle Rubin, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Judith Butler. Michael Foucault's work on sexuality said that it was a discursive production rather than an essential part of a human, which came from his larger idea of power not being repressive and negative as productive and generative. In other words, power acts to make sexuality seem like a hidden truth that must be dug

out and be made specific. Foucault refuses to accept that sexuality can be clearly defined, and instead focuses on the expansive production of sexuality within governments of power and knowledge. Queer theory is based, in part, on the work of Judith Butler (in particular her book *Gender Trouble*, 1990).

In Connell's book (1987), *Gender and Power; Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*, the theory of Gender and Power was presented. A central emphasis of this theory is that the analysis of gender involves a three-part structural model involving sexual division of labor (e.g. financial inequality), sexual division of power (e.g. authority), and the structure of affective attachments (e.g. social norms). These three structural models are the major elements of any gender order and operate with a logical complexity. Furthermore, these structural models exist at different levels (e.g. family, societal and institutional) and are maintained by social mechanisms. All gender relationships can be examined with these as a basis for analysis. Connell (1987; 99) is arguing that these three divisions are the three major elements of any gender order. Connell further breaks down his theory into two levels; the societal and the institutional, societal being the higher of the two. Gender imbalances exist as part of the social norms, historical praxis and political policies which are deeply rooted in a society. The gender-determined roles are very hard to alter even if the society changes. The institutional level is another level which Connell uses in his analytical theory to understand the gender based power imbalances. Unequal pay for comparable work, discriminatory practices at school and within health care, stereotypical and possibly degrading images of women in the media, religious institutions and familial relationships are but some of the institutions where there are gender imbalances on the institutional level. These can seem to change quicker than societal changes but still are very slow (Connell, 1987; 120) This theory is important because it allows for an understanding of the complex interplay between gender and power beyond the individual perspective. Connell's theory of gender and power has been shown previously to explain the gender effects in the spread of HIV/AIDS infection.