

Chapter 3 Theories and Methods

Topic 7 Feminist Theories

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 223

1. Malestream sociology sees society only from a male perspective.
2. Liberal feminists
3. Sex refers to biological differences between males and females, such as their reproductive role, hormonal and physical differences. Gender refers to culturally constructed differences between the 'masculine' and 'feminine' roles and identities assigned to males and females. It includes the ideas that cultures hold about the abilities of males and females, such as whether they are capable of rationality. These ideas are transmitted through socialisation.
4. Radical feminism
5. True (though some individual men may benefit also).
6. Women are a source of cheap exploitable labour; a reserve army of labour; reproduce the labour force; absorb anger.
7. The oppression of women in the family supports capitalist production by maintaining the current generation of workers and by reproducing and socialising the next generation of workers. Women also provide a cheap reserve army of labour for capitalism.
8. They argue that feminism needs to consider all women, in many different circumstances, not just White Western women.
9. The idea that all women share the same 'essence' or same fundamental characteristics and experience.
10. Oppression is not just about how women are seen, but the result of real structural inequality; the feminist movement is weakened by dividing women into many different sub-groups; poststructuralist feminism ignores the important similarities in the position of all women.