Sociology 200

Photo from: http://marsrovers.nasa.gov/people/D2004_0115_B79_Nagin-br.html retrieved 3/18/07

Men and women of the Mars Exploration Rover mission admire some of Spirit's first images in 3-D.

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Chapter 11, Gender stratification

Gender differences in social interaction, inequality in work

Agenda

- Can gender be changed? Evidence from sexual assignment surgeries and children with ambiguous genitalia at birth
- Gender differences in social interaction
- Gender inequality at work

Can gender be changed?

- Early study 1963
- subject: David Reimer (David also had twin), lost his penis due to botched circumcision

David Reimer being raised as Brenda photo from http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/reimer/ retrieved 3/18/07

Adult David Reimer from: http://www.slate.com/id/2101678 retrieved 3/18/07

- researcher: John Money, contended that David could be reconstructed as a girl with socialization and hormone therapy since he was so young that he was still psychosexually neutral
- David's testicles were removed at 22 months, what remained of his penis was retained
- David got into fistfights and was otherwise much more a boy than a girl in behavior in childhood

- David was told at 14 what had happened, at the time he was due to have final reassignment surgery. He chose surgery to have breasts removed an a penis reconstructed. He married a woman with three children. For a time he was content, but he separated from his wife and eventually committed suicide. He was 38 at the time of his death. (His brother had committed suicide two years prior)

- Intersex children are born with ambiguous genitalia – may have both male and female elements (vagina and testicles)
- Since the 1950s, these children have been assigned to either male or female characteristics, however, it may be better to allow them to develop and be able to tell whether they are boys or girls.
- Dr. William G. Reiner found one “girl” who was intersex actually was a boy and that “she” had a testicle and enough testosterone to self identify as male

- Current interpretations on causes
  - It appears that intersex infants that are genetic girls that look like males were exposed to testosterone at critical phases of development in utero
  - Conversely, it appears that genetic boys that look like females did not get enough testosterone in utero
- Interpretation for gender issues in sociology
  - Biology *is* important, especially in utero
  - Socialization may not be able to overcome the entirety of biology, but can elaborate upon biological bases
  - *Gender is complex!!!*

Gender Differences in Social Interaction

- Communication
  - Communication between men and women
    - Deborah Tannen is a recognized researcher
    - She notes that women have recalled saying something at a meeting and having it ignored, but when it was repeated by a man it was taken seriously
      - Men use language to convey information
        - » Concrete events or facts
      - Women use language to create intimacy or connections, or to discus problems
      - Men want to solve problems, so they offer advice or solutions where women want agreement or mutual understanding

- Men also tend to use language in public setting since speaking in public is about attaining status by showing possession of more knowledge, therefore, at home men feel they have established status at home and they do not need to talk
- Tishchler suggests that once people realize that their partners or coworkers have different conversational styles they are inclined to accept difference without blaming themselves, others, or their relationships

- Cyberspace communications
  - In cyberspace, unless we choose to identify ourselves, we can be genderless, right?
  - But, we let out clues even if we don't sign our names, let our gender be known or sign on as nerdgrrl, etc.
  - Susan Herring (1994) found that the communications were not equal
    - Male minority dominated
    - Women were censored or ignored
    - Men were adversarial and criticized or ridiculed others while promoting his own importance
    - Males tend to use "flaming" (making offensive or derogatory comments)

- Male style is also characterized by self promotion, sarcasm
- Men are likely to take an authoritative, self confident stance in which the represent themselves as experts.
- Women tend to hedge, apologize, ask questions rather than make assertions
- Women also tend to reveal thoughts and feelings
- Women tend to interact with and support and interact with others including expressions of appreciation, thanks and community-building activities that make participants feel accepted and welcomed

– Lisa King in a subsequent study (2000) summarized this with women's vs. men's language and notes that " there is no possibility of gender-neutral communication. . ."

King's differences of Men's vs. Women's Language Differences in Cyberspace

Women's Language	Men's Language
Attenuated assertions	Strong assertions
Apologies	Self-promotion
Explicit justification	Presuppositions
Questions	Rhetorical questions
Personal orientation	Authoritative orientation
Supports others	Challenges others
	Humor/sarcasm

- Problem solving and views of the future
  - Maines and Hardesty (1987) both males and females wanted work and eventually marry with children.
  - However there were different assumptions as to the integration of these desires
    - Men operate in **linear temporal world** with a greater emphasis on career accomplishments as the outcome and that family providing a support system for that career- young men expect autonomy
    - Women operate in a **contingent temporal world** with the expectation of having to balance work, family, and education- young women expect only partial autonomy at best

- Carol Gilligan (1982) looked at how men and women solve problems
  - Men tend toward decisive, rational, firm and clear
  - Women's decisions tend to be considered fuzzy, indecisive, tentative, softheaded so the best compliment a woman could be given is that she thinks like a man
  - Gilligan looked at Kohlberg's study of moral development in which children were asked to make a moral decision on acquiring medication by stealing

- Boys often thought the right to life superseded theft, case closed
- Girls looked at contingencies and other possibilities such as persuasion of the pharmacist because the husband might go to jail, then what would happen to the wife, what if there were children, etc
- Gilligan hopes that if society accepts a woman's moral view of interconnectedness of actions and relationships, consequences could result in scholarship, politics and international relations. (Actually, this is going on with community based management of resources, so it's a paradigm that's being realized)

Critique of Gilligan

- Stephen Pinker contends that women's feelings of compassion, nurturing and peaceful accommodation would disqualify women from becoming constitutional lawyers or Supreme Court Justices. (Oh . . ??) Jaffe and Hyde (2000) have tested Gilligan's hypothesis and found that women and men differ little or not at all in moral reasoning

Gender inequality and work

- 2004 - 59% of all American women in the workforce, median income for men was $60,093, median for women was $42,307
- Even in highest paying occupations for women they were less likely than men to be in the highest paying categories such as engineers, mathematical and computer sciences

- Women earn less than men in almost every profession
  - For 2001

Male technical sales workers $34,682	Female technical sales workers $24,596
Male managers and professionals $53,967	Female managers and professional $38,064

- Is this explained by educational difference?
  - In 2001 male high school grads who worked full time had an average salary of $31,720, but women had an average salary of 22,932
  - College graduates: males $56,264, females $40,768 on average
  - Males high school graduates make more than women with two-year college degrees: This may be explained by the lower skilled jobs held by men being unionized, therefore, better paid

- Job discrimination against women is complicated, typically has three prongs
  - During hiring women are given jobs with lower occupational prestige than men with equivalent qualifications
  - Through unequal wage policies women receive lower pay for equivalent work
  - In awarding promotions, women find it more difficult to move up the career ladder
- Discrimination can be subtle with women more or less channeled away from “men’s jobs”

- Despite past problems, in 2002 women were nearly equivalent with advanced degrees to men, and women under 25 are more closely approximating incomes of their male counterparts