

1 / 8

Sociological analysis of violence and the family

- o 1) Families are signs of what?
  - i. Families are seen as a sign of safety and security.
- o 2) Families are defined by what?
  - i.
- o 3) What constitutes abuse?
  - i. Physical, emotional, psychological and verbal abuse. As well as financial abuse. Virtually all women are abused in heterosexual relationships, it just goes unnoticed. Child abuse, as well as elderly, by neglect.
- o 4) Family violence mirrors what kind of social violence?
  - i. Capitalism. Neo-liberal policies; downsizing of jobs, denying women of work.
- o 5) What ideology blames individuals for social inequality?
  - i. Liberalism. Individualism: everyone is responsible for themselves and their actions.
- o 6) What is the separation of the private and public sphere?
  - i. In this separation of the private and public sphere, men became associated with the concept of the bread winner. Began in the 1790s and becomes solidified by 1865.
    - ii. The men leave the work and go home, which was associated as the place of leisure and relaxation. Women were still expected to perform all domestic labour duties, but it was not recognized.
    - iii. Public sphere: society. The place where you leave the family to go out and work. The social realm.
- o 7) The private sphere is socially imagined as what?
  - i. Gave the illusion that the home and family were the safe place. Emerges during the industrial revolution.
- o 8) What is the social construction of femininity in relation to family roles?
  - i. A good wife provides the family with a peaceful environment, mostly for the husband. Serve the husband first, the children second and the wife, not at all.
    - ii. In order to do this, it meant the wife had to keep the husband emotionally calm. Knew when to not speak, and how to maintain a calm home.
    - iii. The role of the good wife was to manipulate and calm the husband down and make sure he behaved in a calm manner with others.
- o 9) Prior to the 19th century what was the purpose of marriage?
  - i. It was a financial agreement. Agreement that the men worked and earned the money, and the women waited at home for him, cooked and took care of his children.
- o 10) Since the 19th century marriage is socially constructed as what?
  - i. Agreement?
- o 11) The notion of the family assumes what?
  - i. Blood or legal ties. Man and wife living together, man works, women stays home, has

children and takes care of the family.

- o 12) How does liberal ideology explain why victims stay?

2 / 8

- i. Blaming the victim makes them feel responsible for their actions. Guilt's them into staying because they feel that they put themselves in that situations, so they must deal with it.

- o 13) What is patriarchy?

- i. A system of male dominance imbedded in every aspect of our society.
  - ii. Men have privilege in what they say, how they say it and what they do.
  - iii. Capitalism needs patriarchy in order to survive.
  - iv. The wife becomes the property of the husband. The father walks the bride 2/3 of the way, then the husband takes the wife the rest of the way. The husband got there all on his own.
  - v. The husband was not doing his job well enough if he didn't punish his wife and kids like he was expected to. Maintaining control and authority over your property.
  - vi. Not the case in matriarchal society.

- o 14) How does the media portray violence?

- i. The media does not create or do anything, it reproduces the status quo (racism, sexism, classism).
  - ii. When the media reports on family violence, it talks about what's wrong with this individual person.
  - iii. Individualize white culture violence.
  - iv. People of colour violence is pathological and patriarchal.
  - 1. Allow for a white Christian north American audience to say that they don't do that, and to "remind" white women that they do not have it as bad.

Violence against women in intimate relationships

- o 15) Prior to the person's case what could women not do?

- i. Women did not get the right to vote until after 1920
  - ii. Women of color didn't get the right to vote until the rest of your community did

- o 16) What has historically allowed for male violence against women?

- i. Marriage, and agreement of marriage, as consent. Once the marriage has been consummated, it could not be considered as rape.

- ii. Age, race, ethnicity, class, and alcohol and drug addictions used as an excuse.

Alcohol and drug said to affect the man to do something violent, but drunk actions are sober thoughts.

- o 17) Until the mid 19th century male violence against women was considered what?

- i. Marital rape law?
  - ii. Marriage?

- o 18) What did temperance activists argue caused family violence?

- i. Arguing that poor working class men go out after work and drink their entire paychecks. Then leave none left for their family, and abuse their family due to being drunk.

- o 19) Until the 1970's why was it impossible for a wife to leave an abusive husband?

- i. Divorce did not become viable until 1968, as the Divorce Act.

3 / 8

ii. Police considered the family a safe haven and did not consider abuse within the family a real social problem. It was a private family matter.

o 20) Prior to 1983 what did husbands have the legal right to do?

i. Marital Rape Law (1983)

1. If you've ever had sex with your husband once before, it won't count as rape afterwards.

2. Catherine McKinnon argued for the recognition of marital rape.

o 21) Why is marital rape difficult to prove in court?

i. Rape was only considered rape through physical proof. If there was no proof of bruising, cuts or scarring, then the women had no evidence to prove they were being raped. Statistically collected though physical evidence.

Patriarchy masculinity and male violence

• Know the theories and what it argued and criticisms

o 22) Social psychological theory

i. Look at these particular individual's guys as mentally ill and pathological.

ii. There must be something wrong with the individual, not with the system of patriarchy.

iii. All psychological and mainstream theories begin with statistics. Only looking at physical violence. Visible proof.

o 23) Social learning theory

i. Argues that although you may not be mentally ill, your family is. They're dysfunctional.

Watching and learning.

1. Male peer support theory Walter T. (York and Carlton). Developed the theory.

Reinforced the status quo. Said there is nothing like male patriarchy. Dismissed the violence.

Theory based on four principles:

a. Traditional Patriarchy: Guys came from family with male dominance. All of these guys all come from and expect traditional patriarchal family structures because they come from families where the father was the dictator of the household. They now expect that of their life.

b. Boy's Club: All the guys did something where they belong to an all male groups and environments. Sports teams, fraternities, male dominated jobs; law, police, fire.

c. Alcohol: A few beers in and the men begin to rant about their wives and the problems of the home. Violently talking.

d. Absence of Deterrence: The reason why these men go home and beat their wives.

Their peers support them in their abuse of the wives.

i. The reason why this theory is well liked is because of the solution; criminal sentence, anger management counselling.

ii. Just an excuse for male violence. These men can't think for themselves. When they are surrounded by men alike, they continue to do the same thing.

4 / 8

- o 24) Subculture theory
  - i. Look at the statistics. Only the poor and low income men that abuse.
  - ii. Used to reinforce that poor and working class people are inferior. The proof: they're poor and working class. Upper class men abuse as well, but they are mostly verbal, mental and financial abuse.
- o 25) Sex role theory
  - i. Looks specifically at the social construction of masculinity and femininity, in a very narrow way. Looking at how masculinity is constructed to demand and reinforce dominance, stoicism, toughness and unemotional behavior. Men are allowed to have anger, because its power. That is why women are expected to not be angry. Men abuse because the social construction of masculinity gives them the permission to do so, and makes it so that women take the abuse.
- o 26) Systems theory
  - i. Begins to explore social structures and institutions. It seems the family as a system of interrelated parts. In this system, there's all kinds of stress and conflict. Conflict over access to resources, gender power conflict. The conflict that exists, often times reflects the kind of conflicts going on in social institutions. Ex. If a man gets laid off at work, he goes home and abuses. Looks at that its men that try to establish their authority when they lose their power in the society. (Only poor and working class men, and looks at physical violence.)
- o 27) The triad of male violence
  - i. Argues patriarchy exists but it is embedded in all social relations in society. Argues male domination; men are socialized and constructed to adhere to the social construction of masculinity. Men need to constantly reinforce their masculinity; repressing and rejecting all aspects associated with femininity eg. Passivity. Must learn to be overtly oppressive.
    1. Individual reproduction- men have great access to resources and must constantly reinforce their male domination through demonstrating overt aggression
    2. Reinforcement of masculinity- looks different wherever you are based on social context; expression of masculinity eg. Working class men demonstrate and perform masculinity in physical ways while middle class men demonstrate masculinity through money degrees, profession.
    3. Fragility of masculinity- scared of loosing domination and control; loosing power. Male violence against women is an expression of the fragility of masculinity. Verbal, psychological and financial.
- o 28) Feminism
  - i. Liberal: Does not look at family violence. Fighting for 1) educational reform, encourage women to work for male dominated jobs, 2) legislative reforms, the ability to fire women when they got married or were pregnant, this reform encouraged women to go against that, and 3) re-socialization, encouraging women to get full time jobs, come home, make a meal and take care of the family. Does not look at family violence. In the mid 1900s, this mean that women should have a full time job AND come home and take care of the family.

- ii. Radical: Called this because they were a radical response to what they saw as being a

very serious issue at the time. Arguing to completely separate from men. Violently opposed to heterosexual relationships. What they saw was male violence against and all men as abuse and violating against women. Argued that women were forced into heterosexual relationships, and that they were not allowed to work and live on their own. Argued that the family was dangerous for the women in the family.

iii. Socialist: Does not look at family violence. They looked at how women were exploited at home, to do all the domestic house work.

iv. Power and Control: Emerges in the 1980s from radical feminists and feminists in general. They argued that male violence against women needed to be recognized as part of a much larger social context, in which patriarchy and control over women was normalized. Incorporating the concept of patriarchy, which shapes masculinity and femininity.

o 29) Why do abused women stay?

i. Social psychological theory – learned helplessness.

ii. Abused women stay because they rationally look at options for leaving; how are they going to escape? How are they going to leave without being killed? How are they and children going to escape without being killed? Where are they going? How will they support themselves? What immediate kinds of money and relief do they have accessible to them?

iii. Feminists understand broader social and cultural context regarding violence against women, are there accessible battered women's shelters? Shaped by race, class, ethnicity, culture, religion. Can you leave without assistance from family?

o 30) Mainstream sociological theory

i. Economic inequalities- men and women have different pay

ii. Sex-role socialization- socialized into role of femininity and lack of access to resources e.g. employment, money. Not feminist- how does this arise? How are women prohibited from having access to resources?

o 31) At what point do women kill their abusive husbands?

i. Too many years and instances of abuse that they reach a boiling point, where to kill is better to stay in the relationship?

o 32) Why is battered women's defense an important legal precedent?

i. Battered Women Defense (BWD)

ii. Based on the R v Lavallee case

1. Nova Scotia couple living on a large farm. Two sons. The husband over time became incredible cruel and abusive. The wife was resigned to thinking that there was no escape from this, that she might possibly be killed from this. He kept her isolated, no source of income. Then, he started abusive the oldest son. She lived in imminent danger. Saw the husband sleeping in his truck one day, so she grabbed a gun and shot him dead. Mensrea- with intent. Her lawyer argued that it was actually actus rea- in the act of. Actus rea relies on the concept of imminent danger, means in the moment, in the act of, no planning. In battered women defense, one of the things

6 / 8

in defense was that up until this was enacted, up until then none of acts none of the beating, violence, child abuse, abuse sustained could be used in her defense until the BWD.

The defense was battered woman syndrome, but only as a state of mind. It is a bigger sentence for when you kill your husband than when you kill your wife. She served the full 12 years, regardless of her argument.

Colonization patriarchy and violence in aboriginal families

o 33) What did aboriginal families look like prior to colonization?

i. Foraging Societies: Not agricultural society, did not grow their own food. They foraged for their food. They worshipped Mother Nature as their religion. They saw the earth, animals and everything as human being. Mother Nature birthed everything and everyone. Relied on Mother Nature to supply for them. The concept of private property was foreign to them, did not own their own land. As Mother Nature supplied for them everything, they did not over dig, take too much and always left some for others. Practiced infanticide, tried to limit the number of children in the community, needed it small. Continued the community which required limiting the number of people in the community.

ii. Nomadic Societies: People constantly on the move, following seasons and the hunt, as foragers. Only set up for three or four months at a time. Having a lot of material goods was a liability to you and your survival. Had what was necessary for your survival household utensils, spears, baskets, clay pots, blankets out of fur, and the clothes on your back. They did not worship material goods.

iii. Kin Ordered: Everyone in your community was either blood or from legal ties. As a result, you'd marry someone from another community. Political social organization: the elders in the community were the leaders (women and men) who managed to survive up till 40 years old. Women tended not to make it from child birth and men tended to die in the hunt. Female hunters elected a male chief, and could easily take him down and elect a new one if they did not like him. Matriarchal, matrilineal and matrilocal: women had social political and legal power (matriarchal). Women owned their own bodies. Children in the community were always seen as part of their mother's clan (matrilineal). When the bride and groom got married, the groom came to live with the bride's family. The elders in the community as strategists, negotiators, judges and mediators of disputes (matrilocal).

iv. Hunters and Gatherers: Division of labour. Either involved in some aspects of the hunt and some aspects of the gathering. Men hunted and women gathered, but not because of patriarchy in the community. Men had less value in the community, and hunting was dangerous and most likely ended in death. Gathering represented 65% of what the community ate. Hunting represented 35%. The family could not survive without the gathering. Women had economic and social power, but chose to share and have a relationship with men.

o 34) What did the missionaries try to do and succeeded in doing?

i. Men converting to Christianity. Influenced men to start thinking as the leader. Missionaries start to push abuse to get them to force their wives to convert. Women did not want to convert because that would take away their power to divorce their husbands.