

Year 12 Sociology
Summer Bridging Work 2021



Introduction to Sociology

1. In 50-100 words, summarise what you believe Sociology to be.
2. Now watch the following video clips and add to your notes, summarising what you believe Sociology to be.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LK5J0-cM-HE>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnCJU6PaCio>
3. Find the definitions for the following concepts:
 - Agents of socialisation
 - Socialisation
 - Primary socialisation
 - Secondary socialisation
 - Norms
 - Values
4. A core theme of A Level Sociology is different social groups. You may have come across social differences in a range of Key Stage 3 and 4 subjects even if you have not studied GCSE Sociology. You should be familiar with the concept of culture and identity. This section is aimed at familiarising yourselves with differences related to social groups, including class, age, gender and ethnicity.

Research definitions and complete the following glossary of key terms:

Challenge: Where appropriate, try to provide an example which illustrates the concept.

Ageing population	
Achieved status	
Ascribed status	
Culture	
Ethnicity	
Gender	
Identity	
Institutional racism	
Racism	
Social Class	

A brief history of feminism and types of feminism

First wave

Emerging in the mid 1800's.

Focused on social and legal reform (especially to allow women to vote).

Fought to allow women to be better educated.

Led mainly by middle class women called suffragettes.

Successful in the vote, education, access to professional jobs, women's rights to property.

Second wave

Emerging in the 1960's and 1970's.

Linked to several other key movements such as civil rights, gay rights, anti-war.

Argued that personal and public life is inherently patriarchal (male dominated).

Focused on women raising awareness of their oppression and offering each other support.

Focused on equal pay, access to contraception, equal rights in jobs and education, free childcare, freedom from domestic violence, reducing discrimination against lesbianism.

Different types of feminism emerged including; liberal, radical, Marxist.

Third Wave

Emerging in the mid 1990's.

Focus on individual desires and wishes, rather than seeing all women as sharing the same experiences.

Focus on being able to express your identity in unique and personal ways.

Focus on challenging traditional ideas about sexuality and gender as well as abolishing gender roles and stereotypes in the media for example.

Fourth Wave

Emerging 2010 onwards.

Some debate about if there is a fourth wave.

Tackling sexism globally using new forms of technology that are available.

Creating online networks of support, giving voice to women who were previously unable to speak.

Everyday Sexism Project was highly successful in highlighting day to day examples of engrained sexism.

Mumsnet – support network for women online now very popular and influential.

A brief history of feminism

In your own words summarise the key characteristics of each era of feminist thought and how the aims of feminism have changed over time.

Types of feminism

Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminists are concerned with the human and civil rights and freedoms of the individual. They believe that all humans should be equal; so it follows that all men and women should be equal. They believe that social change should be gradual and careful, not dramatic or revolutionary therefore changes towards greater equality for women should be gradual. They believe that equality legislation, for example can secure equal opportunities for women.

As well as changes in the law, liberal feminists seek cultural changes. In their view traditional attitudes towards women prevent equality. For example, women seen as less rational and more emotional prevents their involvement in decision making roles, and encourages their confinement to domestic labour and childbearing. Liberal feminists reject the idea that biological differences make women different (less capable) than men. They equally reject the idea that men are less caring or emotional than women.

Liberal feminists have used the ideas of the famous feminist Ann Oakley. **Oakley (1981)** makes a key distinction between sex and gender:

Sex refers to the biological difference between men and women which is largely fixed

Gender refers to culturally constructed differences between the 'masculine' and 'feminine', transmitted across the generations via gender role socialisation

Oakley points out gender roles vary according to the time and place; comparative studies reveal great differences in expectations and attitudes towards men and women in different countries and in different times.

How to improve women's position?

Gendered socialisation and education are key areas to change according to liberal feminists, so they focus on men contributing more to domestic labour and also encourage more male role models within education. They believe that over time, this will encourage cultural change and that gender equality will become the norm.

Liberal feminism is therefore an **optimistic theory**, believing that change is occurring, reducing sexist/traditional attitudes, and that political changes are leading to progress towards a fairer society.

Radical Feminism

Emerging in the 1970's, this group of feminists believe that patriarchy is universal;

- **Firestone (1970)** argues that the roots of women's oppression lie in the biological ability of women to have children. This makes women dependant on men.
- They argue that patriarchy is the most fundamental form of inequality and conflict.
- All men oppress all women, all men benefit from patriarchy – especially women's unpaid domestic labour and from their sexual services.
- For radical feminists patriarchy is direct and personal. Oppression takes place in the public sphere of the workplace, media and politics as well as the private sphere of the family. They claim that all relationships involve power and they are political when one person uses this power to dominate another.
- Radical feminists therefore focus on the ways in which patriarchal power is exercised through personal relationships, often through sexual or physical violence or the threat of it. This has the effect of controlling all women, for example, not necessarily directly, but women for example, being scared of going out alone in the dark.
- **Brownmiller (1976)** notes that the fear of rape is a powerful control over women's behaviour².

How to improve society?

Radical feminists argue that for change to occur to benefit women, relationships and therefore sexual politics must be transformed.

Separatism – men and women living apart.

Consciousness raising – when women share experiences in groups, they see that they are not alone. This may lead to collective action, such as marches.

Political lesbianism - is the only non-oppressive sexuality, therefore they recommend lesbianism.

Marxist Feminism

Marxist feminists reject liberal and radical feminists' explanations for the causes of women's oppression. Instead, they see women's subordination as a result of capitalism. Although men benefit from women's subordination, the main beneficiary is capitalism. Women's subordination results from their role as an unpaid domestic housewife as it places them in an economically dependent position in the family.

Their subordination forms a number of important functions for capitalism:

Women are the source of **cheap exploitable labour** – they can be paid less because it can be assumed that they are dependent on their husbands.

Women are a **reserve army of labour** – during boom and recession women can be called upon to work.

Women **reproduce the labour force** through their unpaid domestic work, nurturing and socialising children to become the next generation of workers.

Women absorb anger – women are the 'takers of shit' (Ansley) from their husbands who feel frustrated with the system. By absorbing the anger, there is no threat to the system and prevents realisation as to the true cause of their frustration (i.e. capitalism).

Barrett (1980): The Ideology of Familism.

Barrett argues women's roles also support the capitalist ideology, to maintain positive feelings and motivation for the capitalist system to continue. The nuclear family is perceived as ideal, and is a place where women can achieve fulfilment through motherhood and the housewife role. For Barrett, the revolution must also remove expectations about the role that women play in the family to ensure that domestic labour is shared equally.

How to improve society?

Marxist feminists argue that women's interests lie in the overthrow of capitalism.

Difference Feminism

All the types of feminism we have looked at so far assume that women share a similar situation and a similar experience of oppression. By contrast **'difference feminists'** argue that we cannot see women as sharing the same experiences of patriarchy.

Difference feminists argue that the other types of feminism focus on a very white, Westernised notion of gender. Difference feminists therefore disagree with essentialism (seeing all women as essentially sharing the same experiences), for example women in developing countries faced by famine and poverty have very different concerns to Western women.

Task 2 Types of feminism

1. In your own words briefly describe each type of feminism.

2. What is the difference between liberal and radical feminism?

3. What makes difference feminism unlike the other types of feminism?

4. Marxist feminists argue that women are 'dually oppressed', what do you think this means?

5. Which solution do you think is the best way to overcome patriarchy and why?

Task 3: Evaluate feminism.

Label the statements below as a strength or a weakness of feminist theory.

Marxist and radical feminists argue that broader changes need to be made if women are to gain true equality.

Made huge improvements in laws and to attitudes in society.

Liberal feminists have been criticised for being overly optimistic, regarding laws as having the potential to 'fix' prejudices and change attitudes.

They have played an important role in highlighting the inequalities between men and women, in employment, the family, the media, and so on.

Feminism ignores masculinity and that the masculine role is also socially constructed. Masculinity is complex and yet feminism largely ignores this, or the way women may also uphold patriarchy

Make sure that women's perspectives and views are taken into account in sociology

Their work has emphasised the socially constructed nature of gender differences.

Task 4: Applying feminist ideas to understanding culture worksheet

Look at the images below and explain how the norms and values make assumptions about gender and gender roles

1.



2.



3.



4.



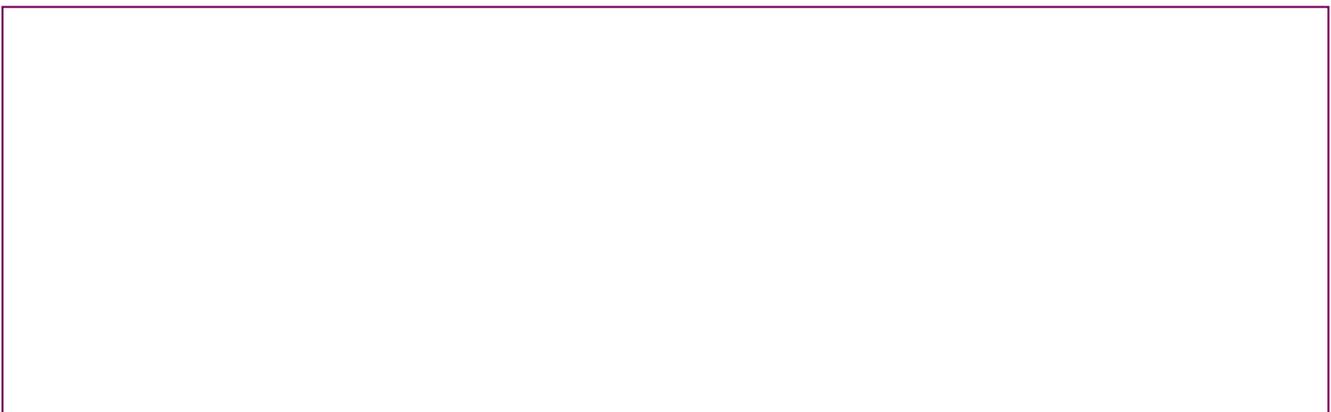
5.



What do these images reveal about cultural views of gender in the UK?



Look at the images below. How might these suggest that traditional views of gender are changing?



A Level Sociology Textbook Suggestions:

OCR Sociology for A Level Book 1, Sue Brisbane

OCR Sociology for A Level Book 2, Sue Brisbane

Pre-course Wider Reading Suggestions for Sociology A Level: Non-Fiction

'The Sociology Review', A Level magazine: Hodder Education.

Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism, Bell Hooks (1981)

Black Like Me, John Howard Griffin (1961)

Freakonomics, Steven D. Levitt & Steven J. Dubner (2006)

Chavs: The Demonisation of the Working Class, Owen Jones (2011)

Gang Leader for a Day, Sudhir Venkatesh (2009)

Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity, Judith Butler (1990)

Respectable: The Experience of Class, Lynsey Hanley (2016)

The Call of the Weird: Travels in American Subcultures, Louis Theroux (2005)

The Nonsense of Free Will: Facing Up to a False Belief, Richard Oerton (2012)

Watching the English: the Hidden Rules of English Behaviour, Kate Fox (2004)

Documentaries/TV

Back to School with Mum and Dad (BBC)

Black and British: A Forgotten History (BBC)

Beyond the Asylum (BBC)

Harrow: A Very British School

Educating Essex (Channel 4)

Secret Life of Four Year Olds (Channel 4)

Twitter suggestions

@TheSocReview – The Sociology Review A Level magazine