Carefully read all the texts under the sections, “Sexuality” & “Sexual Violence & Resistance,” and describe the authors’ main arguments on those two issues. Also, don’t forget to mention the authors’ recommendations (if there are) regarding how sexual violence should be dealt with.

In engaging the topics, such as sexuality, sexual violence and resistance, the authors of this week’s readings have stated their opinions, uplift their arguments, their recommendations (if there are) and how sexual violence should be dealt with. For example, during the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, it was legal for a man to beat his wife, as long as the method and extent of violence was not mentioned or formally documented limits (Andersen 1997, 175). As the dominant figure in society and the household, men have always portrayed a behavior of aggression, especially towards women. “Historically, wife beating has been a legitimate way to express male authority” (Andersen 1997, 174). Men in today’s society, tend to use battering as a method of expressing dependency to their partners or as a way of getting closer to their partner, due to growing up in violent households. As a result of such activities taken place in the home, marital rape may also occur in the couple’s home. According to Andersen, “marital rape is more likely to occur also where husbands associate sex with violence, have extramarital affairs, and are unreasonably jealous” (Andersen 1997, 177).

Children who are brought up in abusive homes, where mothers are powerless due to battering, may experience a high risk of sexual abuse, especially among adolescent daughters who have taken on household responsibilities (Andersen 1997, 178). As a result, the author states that feminist criticism of the family rests, in part, on the psychological, physical, and economic threats families pose for women (Andersen 1997, 178), which is why Andersen recommends a change in traditional structures, as a solution to ending violence and marital rape in the home. These changes may also be used as a succor to empower in the family, by creating new values “regarding women’s work in the family as well as, new rewards for women, regardless of whether they are also working in the public labor force” (Andersen, Thinking About Women 1997, 178).

“Patriarchal violence in the home is based on the belief that it is acceptable for a more powerful individual to control others through various forms of coercive force” (hooks 2000, 61). Which means, in society, men are looked upon as the head of the household and the dominant figure, which is why we live in a patriarchal society. Patriarchal violence is not only present in heterosexual relationships, but it is also present in same-sex relations, which is due to sexist thinking and sexism. This type of aggressive behavior, not only has a traumatic effect on society, but it also affects the mother and children of the household. “Often children suffer abuse as they attempt to protect a mother who is being attacked by a male companion or husband, or they are emotionally damaged by witnessing violence and abuse” (hooks 2000, 62).

According to hooks, “people are concerned about violence, but resolutely refuse to link that violence to patriarchal thinking or domination” (hooks 2000, 67). hooks recommends that, in order to end patriarchal violence, it’s up to society and it must be expanded by a movement. Also, mothers should not teach their children, that violence is an acceptable means of exerting social control, society must put an end to sexist thing and we must realize that both sexes in society support the use of violence if we are to eliminate it (hooks 2000, 63). According to hooks, “one of the most positive interventions feminist movement made on behalf of children was to create greater cultural awareness of the need for men to participate equally in parenting not just to create gender equity, but to build better relationships with children” (hooks 2000, 75), which means, no gender should reveal an authoritative behavior in the family, especially in the presence of children, both men and women should share an equal role in parenting.

“Violence against women depends upon the myth of male strength and female weakness” (Mccaughey 2000, 160), which provides an explanation of the sexist beliefs held, in regards to women in society, both socially and culturally. “The set of cultural assumptions that positions aggression as a primary marker of sex difference fuels the frequent understanding that men’s violence is an inevitable, in unfortunate, biological fact” (Mccaughey 2000, 160), which is why self-defense should be seen as a solution, for women to protect themselves. If society continues to interpret violence as something patriarchal and awful, and not eliminate sexist thinking, then the female body would be portrayed as an object of domestic violence.

According to Mccaughey’s recommendation, self-defense is the answer, which means, “embracing women’s rights to self-defensive violence is embracing women’s status as equal citizens who have boundaries and lives worth defending” (Mccaughey 2000, 164). This not a way of teaching women to become bullies of violent crime, but to uphold women’s legal right to self-defensive violence (Mccaughey 2000, 164). By transforming a woman’s body to become physically self-defensive, her mind and thoughts are quick to develop a new political consciousness, which is why self-defense training should be offered by already-existing organizations of the women’s movement and colleges for student orientation programs, rather than sexual assault awareness sessions. “Self-defense training is a feminist consciousness-raising session in the classic-sense-and by enlisting the bod, it expands our notion of what consciousness is” (Mccaughey 2000, 166).

During the nineteenth century, it was very difficult and impossible for Africans to resist the strong hold of oppression against Caucasians, which means, no matter what Africans did they would always be wrong. One example that demonstrates this is, “if the Negro votes, he is shot; if he marries a white woman, he is shot…or lynched-he is a pariah whom the National Government cannot defend” (Carby 1985, 314). Lynching and rape was the worst punishment bestowed upon Africans, the threat of any of these punishment makes them fearful and helpless. African women were violated and African men were defenseless, because they were at the mercy of the white colony. “Lynching was instituted to crush the manhood of the enfranchised black. Rape is the crime which appeals most strongly to heart of the home life” (Carby 1985, 314). The colonization of Caucasians during the nineteenth century, forced Africans to lose their identity and any control they think they had. Africans fought to stay alive or even to be someone was no existing and seemed far-fetched.

It is very confusing and dehumanizing to know that you can be killed for what is considered to be a domination when your oppressor is guilty of the same act. “When accused of threatening the white female body, the repository of heirs to property and power, the black male…is lynched out of existence” (Carby 1985, 315). An African woman could be raped and brutalized by the satisfaction of a Caucasian man, while an African man could be murdered if accused of raping or even sleeping with a Caucasian man out of consent. According to Carby, the struggles and resilience of the African race was real and African feminist have been redeemed and have learned from their traumatic experience to become the strong force they are today.

During the Colonial Era, African women were the only women seen as sexual objects and were not allowed to come in contact with Caucasian men, unless they were prostitutes. Which is why, the “imperial response to African women becomes complicated by the sexuality of the continent” (Busia 2005, 249). African women were degraded and called whores, and often seen as inferiors because they were seen as “tempting, reproductive sex objects, who both allure and repel” (Busia 2005, 249). Both male and female of Caucasian descendent had an option and the liberty in their sexual behavior, whereas Africans were always being judged and seen as sex objects, sexual inferiors, or even prostitutes. According to Busia, “sexual relations with a black man is always a disaster for the European woman, and she can under no circumstances be forgiven for marrying an African” (Busia 2005, 252), on the other hand, African women seem more prone to spread diseases and death (Busia 2005, 253), which is an example of Caucasian men displaying hostility towards African women’s sexuality, as animalistic which is an inherited myth due to slavery.

Living in a culture that categorizes people and is a male-dominant, pursues many disadvantages to society. For example, “sociological and popular understanding of gay and lesbian relationships has been greatly distorted by the false presumption that only heterosexual relationships are normal ways of expressing sexual intimacy and love,” (Andersen 1997, 95). Which is how, society helps in influencing and identifying people sexual identities throughout their lifetime. For instance, Andersen states that, heterosexual identity includes the belief that men have an overpowering sex drive and that women are considered more loving, soft and are link to sex (Andersen 1997, 94), and “contemporary sexual attitudes are shaped by phallocentric thinking-that which sees men as powerful and women as weak” (Andersen 1997, 96). Which is why, society is lead to believe that men should be the dominant figure of the family and in gay and lesbian relationships, no one individual displays the behavior of an authoritative figure.

Gay and lesbian relationships were not typically endorsed in society, until recently when same-sex marriage was approved. Sexual identity is socially constructed and it’s natural for an individual to perceive changes while one is discovering his or her sexual identity. According to Andersen, “sexual identity for any individual emerges over the course of a lifetime and is shaped by social and historical contexts” (Andersen 1997, 96), which means sexuality not only takes time to develop, but it is natural for an individual to experience numerous changes in order to discover one’s sexual identity.

However, in *Sexual Practice and Changing Lesbian Identities,* Martin explains that “the construction of homosexuality and lesbianism, in particular, as a ‘third sex’ leaves conventional assumptions of gender polarity and normal heterosexuality intact by containing difference in a third, static category” (Martin 1992, 97), which means that although there are two distinct biological sex that underlie the social construction of gender (Martin 1992, 101), gender could be culturally inscribed on the basis of sex as well, which lead to the development of butch-femme and drag roles in lesbian and gay relationships. Although, the “practices like butch-femme roles are completely saturated with issues that exceed what is narrowly conceived to be sexuality” (Martin 1992, 117), which is a way of stating that lesbians and gays experience complications and issues while they are in the process of discovering their sexuality.

In *Sexual Practice* *and Changing Lesbians Identities,* the author states that the “structuring presence of heterosexual constructs within gay and lesbian sexuality does not mean that those constructs determine gay and lesbian sexuality” (Martin 1992, 105). The presence of these standards not only forms an authoritative situation that cannot be rejected, but they may form into the site of a travesty contest and display that robs compulsory heterosexuality of its claims to being natural.

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