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| View of society | Believe patriarchy (‘rule of the father’) is built into the structure of society. (They would argue we’d need to completely change society to get rid of patriarchy) | Believe the path to improvement for women is through changes in legislation (laws) and socialization of boys and girls into gender roles. | Conflict structuralists. Believe we live in a capitalist society and society is based on class and economic inequality. People with lots of money and the means of production (Bourgeoisie) control those with less (Proletariat) | Use an organic analogy where society is viewed as a body. The family is the heart of society. Society is based upon a common culture that comprises shared norms and values (value consensus). Consensus structuralists |
| The role of the family in society *i.e.,. what does the family do for society as a whole?* | Argue men benefit from women’s oppression in the household. Delphy and Leonard- family is a hierarchical and patriarchal institution. 57 types of unpaid labour for women. | Family has key roles- primary socialization, reproduction of new members. It creates a new workforce. Parsons argues the nuclear family emerges with industrialization and is the ‘best fit’ for society. Only it can carry out certain roles. | Want men and women to share roles within the family. At present they would argue roles are more symmetrical, but not equal (Oakley).  Oakley believes we should explore canalization and change the socialization of boys and girls | The family maintains the class system. Zaretsky argues the family ‘props up capitalism’ through primary socialization, women’s unpaid labour, male work. Family may exist in most historical societies but is not inherently universal. |
| Gender / marital roles within the family  *i.e.,* | Highlight the effects of patriarchy. Jessie Bernard argues ‘being a housewife makes women sick’. Male power in the family in maintained through the threat of violence. | Parsons argues men have an instrumental role (breadwinner) and women have an expressive role (caring). This is linked to their biological/innate tendencies. He also put forward the ‘warm bath theory’- women act as a ‘metaphorical’ warm bath- looking after their husbands when they get home from work. | The family is patriarchal and helps to serve the interests of capitalism through the free labour of women in the home and by being a unit of consumption.  Engels- wives ‘glorified prostitutes’  Zaretsky- women act as a ‘safety valve’- the negative version of the ‘warm bath’. | Men and women have been socialized to adopt different roles in the family, which has led to inequality. The aim should be to socialize children differently and encourage symmetrical roles |
| Key theorists/  Sociologists for this theory- *try and think of 2-4 for each* | Purdy- women should go on a baby strike.  Jessie Bernard  Delphy and Leonard- women have 57 forms of unpaid labour.  Dunscombe and Marsden- argue women now take on a triple shift- working, looking after children/husbands and the home. | Ann Oakley- canalization, gender roles in the family are more shared but no equal.  Sue Sharpe- looked at changing aspirations of girls in 1970s and 1990s and saw the impact in changes in the law and socialization. | George Murdock- four functions of the family- reproduction, sexual, education, economic. Argues the nuclear family is universal.  Talcott Parsons- the family adapts to social change. The nuclear family emerges with industrialization. Two functions- primary socialization and stabilization of adult personalities. Argues nuclear family is the ‘best fit’ | Engels- argues the nuclear family helps to solve the problem of inheritance of private property.  Zaretsky- safety valve, prop to capitalism.  Breugal (marx fem)- women’s unpaid domestic labour helps to maintain the capitalist system.  Fran Ansley (marx fem)- women act as a ‘safety valve’ and are ‘the takers of sh\*t’ |
| Evaluation of the theory using the other perspectives studied | Parsons would argue separate gender roles are necessary and based on our biology. | Ignore family diversity- don’t account for homosexual couples and single parents families etc (Postmodern view).  Ignore power in relationships- Engels, Marxist or radical feminists.  Ignore the dark side of the family- Dobash and Dobash.  Ignores the choice and individualism of people (Aland and Crow, Beck and Beck Gernsheim). | Legal changes mean that the idea of women being dominated or controlled is less meaningful.  Ignores the fact that women might choose to be housewives (Alan and Crow argue our families are now based on choice).  Ignoring diversity- many women take on both roles by being single parents. | Doesn’t take account of social mobility- being born into one class doesn’t mean you will stay there.  Gives priority to economic factors.  Ignores the diversity of family types (Postmodern view).  Disagrees with functionalists, who would argue the family’s role in society is positive.  Examples of communism have not worked cross culturally. |