Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development

Edited by Jane L. Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly, and V. Eudine Barriteau

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FOREWORD

The development debate has advanced considerably since the United Nation's First Development Decade in the 1960s, which emphasized economic growth and the "trickle-down" approach as key to reducing poverty. One of the notable advancements in the debate has been the move to consider gender equality as a key element of development. Women's concerns were first integrated into the development agenda in the 1970s. Disappointment over the trickle-down approach paved the way for the adoption of the basic-needs strategy, which focused on increasing the participation in and benefits of the development process for the poor, as well as recognizing women's needs and contributions to society. Activists articulated women's issues in national and international forums. Following these events, the women-in-development movement endorsed the enhancement of women's consciousness and abilities, with a view to enabling women to examine their situations and to act to correct their disadvantaged positions. The movement also affirmed that giving women greater access to resources would contribute to an equitable and efficient development process.

The end of the 1970s ushered in the concern with gender relations in development. Microlevel studies drew our attention to the differences in entitlements, perceived capabilities, and social expectations of men and women, boys and girls. Contrary to the unified-household model, the household has been considered an arena of bargaining, cooperation, or conflict. Reflecting the norms, laws, and social values of society, the differences in the status of men and women have profound implications for how they participate in market or nonmarket work and in community life as a whole. These differences embody social and power relations that constitute the setting for the implementation of development programs, and these differences therefore influence program outcomes. In the 1980s and 1990s, research demonstrated that gender relations mediate the process of development. For example, analyses of stabilization and structural-adjustment policies showed that gender inequalities have an impact on the attainment of macroeconomic objectives.

The concern with gender relations in development has strengthened the affirmation that equality in the status of men and women is fundamental to every society. And this concern has prompted us to refine our perspective on what development should be and how to bring it about efficiently. We realize that development requires more than the creation of opportunities for people to earn sustainable livelihoods — it also requires the creation of a conducive environment for men and women to seize those opportunities. Development implies not only more and better schools but also equal access to education for boys and girls. Development requires good governments that give men and women equal voices in decision-making and policy implementation. Bearing in mind the perspective that gender matters in development, we can go on to reexamine and redefine other development concerns and objectives.

Thus, one can only agree to the advantages gained if practitioners and students of development have a grasp of the concepts, theories, and discourses that stimulate the gender debate. We will, as a result, be able to better analyze and understand gender issues and properly integrate gender interests and needs into policies and programs. Concepts and ideas — such as feminism, gender analysis, diversity, and gender mainstreaming — that have become buzz words in the development circle will be clarified and demystified. This will foster effective communication among development agents and result in a consistent view of overall development goals and in complementary, rather than contradictory, plans of action.

Clearly, there is scope for developing and increasing the accessibility of programs for education and research on women and gender. Such programs could reach a wide audience, institutionalize gender scholarship, and complement other avenues for disseminating the gender debate and advancing the cause of gender equality. Yet, researchers and students in developing countries have expressed frustration in accessing gender programs and resource materials. In developing countries, the spread and depth of these programs and resource materials are still more limited than in developed countries.

The Commonwealth of Learning and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) have helped to address this gap by supporting the development of this course module. The research and writing of the module benefited from the contributions of gender experts, including scholars, educators, and practitioners from the three campuses of the University of the West Indies (Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad), Saint Mary's University (Canada), Dalhousie University

(Canada), and the International Women's Tribune Centre (United States). Further support was provided by IDRC for the publication of this module, to make it accessible to development and educational institutions in developing countries. IDRC's support for this undertaking resonates with IDRC's dedication to improving human well-being through research and the application of knowledge. Since IDRC's creation in 1970, it has funded development research in poor countries, with the objective of building the capabilities and institutions needed to conduct the relevant research in these countries. Gender is an important concern at IDRC. The Centre has taken steps to promote gender-sensitive research that improves our understanding of development problems and leads to appropriate solutions, and it has supported efforts to disseminate knowledge on gender issues, such as this book. It is hoped that this publication encourages learning, research, and action for a sustainable and equitable world.

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February 2000

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PREFACE

One of the approaches to overcoming obstacles to women's advancement is to develop and exchange materials, resources, and courses in the areas of women's studies and women and development (WAD). At a meeting in Ottawa, Canada, in October 1990, the Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs specifically mandated the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to develop a program to address the needs of women in the Commonwealth countries of the South.

In April 1992, COL convened a week-long meeting at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada, to examine ways to create course modules on women–gender and development. The meeting was attended by representatives of institutions of higher education from Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, India, Nigeria, the South Pacific, and Zimbabwe, as well as the United Nations Training and Research Institute and the International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC) in New York. Discussion focused on identifying the needed resources and materials and examining the capacities of various institutions to coordinate the development of modules. All the participants expressed interest in contributing to the long-term project and a desire to use the modules in courses on women–gender and development and women's studies at their own institutions.

They established a project team, comprising representatives from the three campuses of the University of the West Indies (UWI) (Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad); the Summer Institute for Gender and Development (SIGAD), a joint project of Saint Mary's and Dalhousie University; IWTC; and COL. The team convened in Kingston, Jamaica, in February 1993 to determine the specific content and design of the course modules and to assign writing tasks to team members. Two subsequent project-team meetings were convened, in New York in January and June 1994, to review and finalize draft materials prepared by the various teams of writers. COL managed the project and coordinated the activities.

The Centres for Gender and Development Studies at the three campuses of UWI and SIGAD collaboratively developed and wrote this core module, which focuses on the theoretical justification for examining women's specific roles and

contributions to development initiatives. The module is concerned with the integration and recognition of women and their inclusion as decision-makers in development planning and policy-making, as well as other development activities: it also celebrates women's contributions to social, economic, and political development. The collaborative process was complicated, but rewarding. Although individuals or small teams authored specific chapters, feedback from the various writing teams enriched and enlarged everyone's writing and thinking. For example, the presentation of black feminism and Third World feminism in Chapter 3 benefited enormously from the input of Eudine Barriteau from the Barbados UWI team. The opportunity to read each of the chapters provided new ways of addressing important issues and influenced all of our writing and thinking. Input from the writing teams also assisted in the laborious process of identifying appropriate activities, excerpts, case studies, recommended readings, and key concepts. Above all, the two editorial meetings facilitated rethinking and rewriting. Representatives of the writing teams worked through the materials with the additional input of the various participants from IWTC, COL, and the International Development Research Centre. These meetings were grueling, intellectually challenging, and enormously important. Every sentence and word was examined and contested; every concept was revisited and reexamined. Participants left humbled, but inspired, by both the challenges and the benefits of South–North collaboration.

The module that emerged from this process is a comprehensive, foundational text on gender and development (GAD). The module contains narratives or case studies to further illustrate the main topics. Exercises and study questions invite the user to enhance his or her knowledge through personal research. Related further readings are provided to direct the user to additional sources of information. Key concepts (defined in Appendix 1) are highlighted in bold in the text. The module spans the emergence of women in development (WID), bringing us to the point where the second wave of critiques and evaluation led to the emergence of the new field of GAD. It documents, discusses, and presents the major themes and practices in the field of WID, WAD, and GAD. It also addresses emerging debates that have continued to develop since the mid-1990s, particularly those on the power of development discourse, globalization, and the concepts of difference and voice.

The module was made available to educational institutions and nongovernmental and women's organizations throughout the Commonwealth for local adaptation and use in traditional educational settings and informal situations. Its

publication, in revised form, as a book is intended to enhance its usefulness and increase its availability around the world. The attribution of general editors reflects the work of moving the manuscript from a module to a book. Individual authors are listed on the chapters they wrote, but the manuscript as a whole reflects our collective endeavours.

Jane L. Parpart
M. Patricia Connelly
V. Eudine Barriteau

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The opinions expressed in this document are entirely those of the authors and should not be attributed in any manner to COL, the members of its Board of Governors, or the countries they represent.

CHAPTER 1
WHY THEORY?

Barbara Bailey, Elsa Leo-Rhynie, and Jeanette Morris

Introduction

In this chapter, we examine the process of theorizing and learn to appreciate the dynamic and flexible nature of this process. Much of our understanding of the world, our societies, and ourselves, today, rests on **theories** and knowledge generated historically and predominantly by men of certain nationalities and economic classes. Male-dominated and culturally specific theorizing and knowledge have generally resulted in the exclusion of women and other groups from the process of formal theorizing and knowledge-building. When applied in research, policy, and action, such theories and knowledge not only ignore women's contributions in all spheres of activity but also exclude consideration of issues particularly relevant to women.

Feminist scholars have argued that knowledge based mainly on male, culturally specific experience represents a skewed perception of reality and is only partial knowledge. The best way to correct this is to take women's daily experiences and their informal theorizing into account and, on this basis, adopt feminist approaches to building theory and knowledge.

Rationale

Theorizing and theory-building have generally been seen as the business of academics in ivory towers, yet all individuals make choices and decisions based on **assumptions** or theories about the world. These formal, mainstream (or "malestream") approaches to theorizing are being challenged by various groups of women who have engaged in different approaches to the process of theorizing. These women are bringing their unique perspectives to bear on issues affecting their daily lives. Women have used these new perspectives to **deconstruct** traditional knowledge bases and build new ones. Such reconstruction of knowledge has influenced policy and action affecting the lives of women.

Objectives

The objectives of this chapter are the following:

- To introduce the concept of theory;
- To understand that theorizing is one way in which people use their assumptions to achieve, interpret, or impose meaning;
- To understand how feminist theorizing has challenged mainstream theorizing;
- To understand how diverse assumptions about the same phenomenon result in diverse explanations, theories, and **power** positions; and
- To understand how theory and knowledge are interrelated and how feminist theorizing and knowledge have influenced research, policy, and action.

What is theory?

Although we have no precise, universally accepted definition of theory, certain recurring elements appear in the literature, which allows us to roughly draw the boundaries of the concept. Theory is defined most commonly as scientific theory, which emphasizes a logically unified framework, generalization, and explanation. Ornstein and Hunkins (1993, p. 184) indicated that a theory is a "device for interpreting, criticizing and unifying established laws, modifying them to fit data unanticipated in their formation, and guiding the enterprise of discovering new and more powerful generalisation." Common-sense understandings of theory often use the concept to describe the rules that guide action, opinion, ideals, or a particular philosophy. Stanley and Wise (1983) suggested that the majority of persons, particularly women, have been brought up to think of theory as something mysterious and forbidding, produced by clever people, most of whom are men. Nowadays, people are questioning this divide between experts and nonexperts and adopting a more inclusive approach to theorizing.

The nature of theorizing

The traditional, mainstream process of theorizing rests on the scientific method. This is summarized in the **model** presented in Figure 1.

The male-centred approach to theorizing has produced particular views of many issues, including those affecting women. These views rely on **androcentric** assumptions. An example of such an assumption is that women's work is biologically determined and therefore is or should be home based and restricted to nurturing and domestic chores. Such assumptions provide the basis for hypotheses such as, in this case, the hypothesis that the waged workforce tends to be predominantly male and women work at home. The information gathered during the testing of such an **hypothesis** has traditionally been limited to quantitative data, which are used to support the general principles posited as offering valid explanations about this issue. Researchers have, for a long time, uncritically accepted these explanations as factual and have produced theories about women's work based on questionable assumptions. Despite their questionable nature, such theories have also informed policy and action.

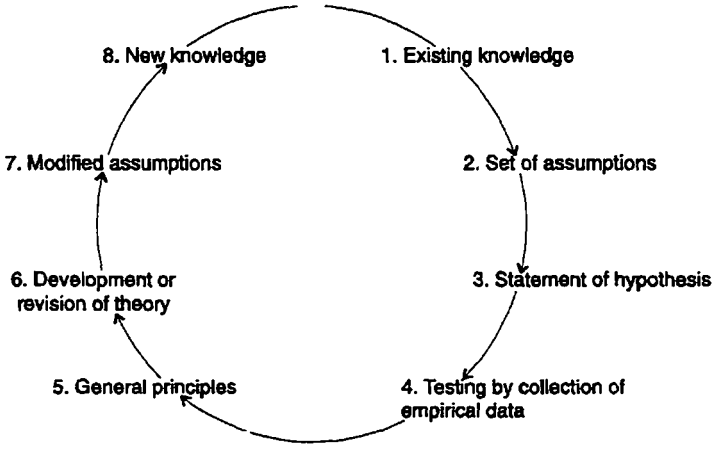

Figure 1. The process of theorizing: the knowledge spiral.

Some problems associated with mainstream theorizing are listed below:

- Unrecognized and value-laden assumptions, based on the (male) researcher's biases;
- Overemphasis on empirical and quantitative data and the denial of the validity of qualitative data;
- Lack of involvement of the researcher with the subject(s) of the research;
- Impersonal and detached nature of the process; and
- The supposed "objectivity" of the researcher and knowledge.

Sandra Harding expressed the following view of the traditional, scientific approach:

> Scientific knowledge-seeking is supposed to be value-neutral, objective, dispassionate, disinterested, and so forth. It is supposed to be protected from political interests, goals, and desires (such as feminist ones) by the norms of science. In particular, science's "method" is supposed to protect the results of research from the social values of the researchers.
>
> — Harding (1987a, p. 182)

When researchers use this traditional approach to theorizing, however, their biases can affect the process at every stage:

- In the identification of the problem;
- In the formulation of hypotheses and calculated guesses;
- In the design of the research to test hypotheses; and
- In the collection and interpretation of data.

Nonetheless, theories based on this approach have been a major force in shaping perceptions of reality.

An investigation of women's work conducted by researchers with a feminist perspective would, in all likelihood, rely on a variety of assumptions related to their own experiences, as well as to the experiences of women in other situations. Such assumptions would differ according to factors such as race, class, ethnicity, and age. An investigation such as this would therefore be more likely to give the following results:

- Some women do unpaid work in the home;
- Some women do both unpaid work in the home and waged and unpaid work in wider society;
- Some women work only in wider society and employ other women to work in their homes;
- Women are found in a variety of occupations;
- Women work at all levels in the workplace; and
- Women, both in their paid and in their unpaid work, contribute greatly to the national economy.

Based on this wider view, the general principle would be that women's work is not restricted to the home. Female perspectives and experiences would help to challenge the hypothesis (generated from the male perspective) that women's work is in the home and show it to be invalid. Theorizing is therefore an important, flexible, and dynamic process.

We each have assumptions about people, events, issues, etc., in our everyday lives. We may explicitly state these assumptions or allow them to remain implicit in our opinions, attitudes, and behaviours. We each interpret things differently as we bring our assumptions to bear on a situation. We test some of these assumptions formally and others informally. Informal testing of our assumptions is, in fact, a process of hypothesis testing, and the results often cause us to change our assumptions. Sandra Harding's views, reprinted in Box 1, are particularly interesting.

Box 1

Feminist empiricism

Though feminist empiricism appears in these ways to be consistent with empiricist tendencies, further consideration reveals that the feminist component deeply undercuts the assumptions of traditional empiricism in three ways: feminist empiricism has a radical future. In the first place, feminist empiricism argues that the "context of discovery" is just as important as the "context of justification" for eliminating social biases that contribute to partial and distorted explanations and understandings. Traditional empiricism insists that the social identity of the observer is irrelevant to the "goodness" of the results of research. It is not supposed to make a difference to the explanatory power, objectivity, and so on of the research's results if the researcher or the community of scientists are white or black, Chinese or British, rich or poor in social origin. But feminist empiricism argues that women (or feminists, male and female) as a group are more likely than men (non-feminists) as a group to produce claims unbiased by **androcentrism**, and in that sense objective results of inquiry. It argues that the authors of the favored social theories are not anonymous at all: they are clearly men, and usually men of the dominant classes, races, and cultures. The people who identify and define scientific problems leave their social fingerprints on the problems and their favored solutions to them.

Second, feminist empiricism makes the related claim that scientific method is not effective at eliminating social biases that are as widespread as androcentrism. This is especially the case when androcentrism arrives in the inquiry process through the identification and definition of research problems. Traditional empiricism holds that scientific method will eliminate any social biases as a hypothesis generated by what men find problematic in the world around them. The problem here is not only that the hypotheses which would most deeply challenge androcentric beliefs are missing from those alternatives sexists consider when testing their favored hypotheses. It is also that traditional empiricism does not direct researchers to locate themselves in the same critical plane as their subject matter. Consequently, when non-feminist researchers gather evidence for or against hypotheses, "scientific method," bereft of such a directive, is impotent to locate and eradicate the androcentrism that shapes the research process.

Finally feminist empiricists often exhort social scientists to follow the existing research norms more rigorously. On the other hand, they also can be understood to be arguing that it is precisely following these norms that contributes to androcentric research results. The norms themselves have been constructed primarily to produce answers to the kinds of questions men ask about nature and social life and to prevent scrutiny of the way beliefs which are nearly or completely culture-wide in fact cannot be eliminated from the results of research by these norms. A reliable picture of women's worlds and of social relations between the sexes often required alternative approaches to inquiry that challenge traditional research habits and raise profound questions which are no longer marginalized as deviant.

— Harding (1987a, pp. 183–184)

Activity 1

Making assumptions

Answer the following questions.

1. What assumptions do you think are held by various groups across cultures about the following issues?

   (a) Parenting

   (b) Abortion

   (c) Violence against women

   (d) Marriage

2. Identify and state assumptions that women could propose to challenge the assumptions you listed in answer 1.

3. What are the essential differences between the assumptions in answers 1 and 2?

The differences identified in this activity can reveal the ways the perspectives of men and women differ, and these differences also relate to the problems experienced by men and women. As Harding noted,

> Many phenomena which appear problematic from the perspective of men's characteristic experiences do not appear problematic at all from the perspective of women's experiences .... On the other hand, women experience many phenomena which they think do need explanation. Why do men find child care and housework so distasteful? Why do women's life opportunities tend to be constricted exactly at the moments traditional history marks as the most progressive? Why is it hard to detect black women's ideals of womanhood in studies of black families? Why is men's sexuality so "driven," so defined in terms of power? Why is risking death said to represent the distinctively human act but giving birth regarded as merely natural?
>
> — Harding (1987b, p. 6)

If we concede that men and women often view issues differently and have different experiences, it follows that we must consider a phenomenon in relation to the individuals who experience it. Harding therefore further suggested that

> Reflecting on how social phenomena get defined as problems in need of explanation in the first place quickly reveals that there is no such thing as a problem without a person (or group of those) who have this problem: a problem is always a problem for someone or other. Recognition of this fact and its implications for the structure of the scientific enterprise quickly brings feminist approaches to enquiring into conflict with traditional understandings in many ways.
>
> — Harding (1987b, p 6)

Feminists have challenged the view of women that has developed from male theorizing. Hilary Rose explained the nature of the challenge:

> Increasingly, the new scholarship drew on the concept of gender to illuminate a double process of a gendered science produced by a gendered knowledge production system. Was the seemingly taken for granted androcentricity, even misogyny, of science, a matter of "bias" which good unbiased science turned out by feminists and their allies would correct, or was the problem more profound, one that only an explicitly feminist science could displace, so as to become, in the language of the enlightenment, a "successor science"?
>
> — Rose (1994)

Feminist approaches to research and theorizing

Once we undertake to use women's experience as a resource to generate scientific problems, hypotheses and evidence, to design research for women, and to place the researcher in the same critical plane as the research subject, traditional epistemological assumptions can no longer be made. These agendas have led feminist social scientists to ask questions about who can be a knower (only men?); what tests beliefs must pass in order to be legitimated as knowledge (only tests against men's experiences and observations?); what kinds of things can be known (can "subjective truths," ones that only women — or some women — tend to

> arrive at, count as knowledge?); the nature of objectivity (does it require "point-of-viewlessness"?); the appropriate relationship between the researcher and her/his research subjects (must the researcher be disinterested, dispassionate, and socially invisible to the subject?); what should be the purposes of the pursuit of knowledge (to produce information FOR men?).
>
> — Harding (1987a, p. 181)

The aim of feminist theorizing is to deconstruct and redefine concepts previously defined from a male perspective and generally accepted as factual. The deconstruction and redefinition of concepts, as well as the creation of new ones, have emphasized the following:

- Women's experiences and knowledge;
- Conduct of research FOR women;
- Problems that, when solved, will benefit both researcher and subject;
- Interaction between researcher and subject;
- Establishment of nonhierarchical relationships;
- Expression of feelings and concern for values; and
- Use of nonsexist language.

The result is the generation of theories from a view of the world through feminist lenses. The aim has been to change conditions adversely affecting women's lives by critically analyzing existing theories and developing new policies and social action. Hilary Rose (1994) elaborated on this in her address entitled "Alternative Knowledge Systems in Science," an excerpt of which is set out in Box 2.

Box 2

Feminist theorizing

The problem for feminist materialists is to admit biology — that is, a constrained essentialism — while giving priority to the social, without concluding at the same time that human beings are infinitely malleable ... the very fact that women are, by and large, shut out of the production system of scientific knowledge, with its ideological power to define what is and what is not objective knowledge, paradoxically has offered feminists a fresh page on which to write. Largely ignored by the oppressors and their systems of knowledge, feminists at this point necessarily theorised from practice and referenced theory to practice. ... thinking from the everyday lives of women necessarily fuses the personal, the social and the biological. ... while there is general agreement that the first move is to challenge and overthrow existing canonical knowledges, the question of what we might replace them with produces broadly speaking two responses. The first is feminist standpoint theory which looks to the possibility of a feminist knowledge to produce better and truer pictures of reality; the second is feminist post-modernism which refuses the possibility of any universalising discourse but which argues instead for localised reliable feminist knowledges.

— Rose (1994)

Feminist theorizing seeks to uncover

- The pervasiveness of gendered thinking that uncritically assumes a necessary bond between being a woman and occupying certain social roles;
- The ways women negotiate the world; and
- The wisdom inherent in such negotiation.

The social roles and the ways women negotiate the world also differ among women in diverse contexts (cultural, social, political, racial or ethnic, religious, etc.) and with diverse personal characteristics (age, education, sexual orientation, etc.). The excerpt from Sandra Harding's "Is There a Feminist Method?," reprinted in Box 3, expands on this point.

Box 3

Women's experiences

Notice that it is "women's experiences" *in the plural* which provide the new resources for research. This formulation stresses several ways in which the best feminist analyses differ from traditional ones. For one thing, once we realized that there is no universal *man*, but only culturally different men and women, then "Man's eternal companion 'woman'" also disappeared. That is, women come only in different classes, races, and cultures: there is no "woman" and no "woman's experience." Masculine and feminine are always categories within every class, race, and culture in the sense that women's and men's experiences, desires, and interest differ within every class, race, and culture. But so too, are class, race, and culture always categories within gender, since women's and men's experiences, desires, and interests differ according to class, race, and culture. This leads some theorists to propose that we should talk about our "feminisms" only in the plural, since there is no one set of feminist principles or understandings beyond the very, very general ones to which feminists in every race, class, and culture will assent. Why should we have expected it to be any different? There are very few principles or understandings to which sexists in every race, class, and culture will assent!

Not only do our gender experiences vary across the cultural categories; they also are often in conflict in any one individual's experience. My experiences as a mother and a professor are often contradictory. Women scientists often talk about the contradictions in identity between what they experience as women and scientists. Dorothy Smith writes of the "fault line" between women sociologists' experience as sociologists and as women. The hyphenated state of many self-chosen labels of identity — black feminist, socialist feminist, Asian–American feminist, lesbian feminist — reflects this challenge to the "identity politics" which has grounded Western thought and public life. These fragmented identities are a rich source of feminist insight.

— Harding (1987b, pp. 7–8)

In examining problems and carrying out analyses, feminists recognize that factors other than gender shape perceptions and understandings. Class, race, and culture are also powerful determinants and therefore create differences that must be taken into account. The category "women" is pluralistic, so treating women as a homogenous group results in a theorizing process no better than that of the traditional, androcentric approach.

To further accommodate these differences, feminist inquiry highlights the importance of placing the inquirer on the same "critical plane" as the subject of inquiry, with the aim of ensuring less bias and distortion. Researchers can then no longer hide behind the language of "objectivity"; they must situate themselves in their research. The excerpt from the work of Sandra Harding in Box 4 elaborates on this point.

Box 4

Feminist research

The best feminist analysis goes beyond these innovations in subject matter in a crucial way: it insists that the inquirer her/himself be placed in the same critical plane as the overt subject matter, thereby recovering the entire research process for scrutiny in the results of research. That is, the class, race, culture, and gender assumptions, beliefs, and behaviours of the researcher her/himself must be placed within the frame of the picture that she/he attempts to paint. This does not mean that the first half of a research report should engage in soul searching (though a little soul searching by researchers now and then can't be all bad!). Instead, as we will see, we are often explicitly told how she/he suspects this has shaped the research project — though of course we are free to arrive at contrary hypotheses about the influence of the researcher's presence on her/his analysis. Thus, the researcher appears to us not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires and interests.

This requirement is no idle attempt to "do good" by the standards of imagined critics in classes, races, cultures (or of a gender) other than that of the researcher. Instead, it is a response to the recognition that the cultural beliefs and behaviours of feminist researchers shape the results of their analysis no less than do those of sexist and androcentric researchers. We need to avoid the "objectivist" stance that attempts to make the researcher's cultural beliefs and practices invisible while simultaneously skewering the research objects, beliefs and practices to the display board. Only in this way can we hope to produce understandings and explanations which are free (or, at least, more free) of distortion from the unexamined beliefs and behaviors of social scientists themselves. Another way to put this point is that the beliefs and behaviors of the researcher are part of the empirical evidence for (or against) the claims advanced in the results of research. This evidence too must be open to critical scrutiny no less than what is traditionally defined as relevant evidence. Introducing this "subjective" element into the analysis in fact increases the objectivity of the research and decreases the "objectivism" which hides this kind of evidence from the public. This kind of relationship between the researcher and the object of research is usually discussed under the heading of the "reflexivity of social science."

— Harding (1987b, p. 9)

Feminists have proposed various theories to explain their experiences on the basis of differences in their class, race, and culture. Substantial discourse among feminists has focused on these various theories. Discussing a paper by Amrita Chhachhi (Chhachhi 1988), Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen noted that

> The variety of approaches within feminist theory reflect, on the one hand, divergent perceptions, and on the other, different social and historical locations in which feminists exist. From Chhachhi's point of view, the rejection of all feminist theory as "western," "eurocentric," or "**ethnocentric**" results from a failure to distinguish between the application of feminist theories to the historical, political and socio-cultural specificities of black/Third World women, and the notion of all theory as "white." She distinguishes ... three levels of analysis in most contemporary social theories, including feminism.
>
> 1. Basic concepts which are abstract and function as tools of analysis (e.g. relations of production, relations of reproduction, etc.);
>
> 2. Intermediate level concepts (such as patriarchy, mode of production, etc.);
>
> 3. Historically specific analysis of a concrete social phenomenon (e.g. slavery in nineteenth century Caribbean society, dowry in north India, etc.).
>
> — Baksh-Soodeen (1993, p. 31)

Chhachhi had argued that at the first level of basic conceptual analysis (that of basic concepts), little disagreement occurs between black and white feminists who share similar approaches. However, she noted that black–Third World feminists have encouraged an important sensitivity to the need for historically specific research at levels 2 and 3 (those of intermediate-level concepts and historically specific analyses). As Baksh-Soodeen remarked,

> most often the limitations of Euro-American feminist studies lie at the second and third levels of analysis in that abstract concepts are imposed mechanically and ahistorically, and hence become a substitute for an historically specific analysis which takes into account the complexities of social reality.
>
> — Baksh-Soodeen (1993, p. 31)

Let us examine how women from different social contexts might have divergent perceptions and explanations of the same phenomenon.

Activity 2

Considering poverty

In this activity, we consider the phenomenon of poverty — Why are people poor?

1. State the assumptions you think the following women would have about this question:
   (a) The wife of a successful professional who does not work outside the home
   (b) A retired civil servant on a pension
   (c) A rural subsistence farmer
   (d) An executive from a donor lending agency
2. Based on the assumptions you have identified, what explanation would each women likely give for poverty?
3. Are there any commonalities or differences among these explanations?
4. How do you account for these commonalities or differences? (The differences in the explanations you identify are due to the fact that each of the individuals considered in the above exercise occupies a unique position, role, and status in society. These positions are usually unequal. Some women exercise greater authority and power than others. As a result, their assumptions and interpretations are more valued than those of others with less authority and power.)
5. In your opinion, which of these four categories of women would have the most, the least power? Give reasons for your choice.

Hilary Rose's comments in Box 5 illustrate how theoretical positions can also be used to exert power and influence over the lives of women.

Box 5

Biological determinism and patriarchy

The recrudescence of **biological determinism** during the seventies was committed to the renaturalisation of women; to an insistence that, if not anatomy then evolution, X chromosomes, or hormones were destiny; and to the inevitability of patriarchy. Such views fed upon the work of IQ advocates, whose views had become an important location for social and political struggle around issues of race and class. Within the U.S. these interventions were greedily taken up by a government looking for ways to justify the withdrawal of resources from the Poverty Programme, as a laissez-faire approach to welfare was more in accord with nature. Despite resistance by the Welfare Rights Movement, scientific racism helped justify cutting welfare benefits of poor — primarily black — women and their children, thus enabling more resources to be committed to the Vietnam War. In Britain, IQ theory was extensively cited by the racist campaign for immigrant restriction and fed racist sentiment that genetic inferiority explained high levels of unemployment and thence excessive demands on the welfare system by black people. The critical counter attack mounted by anti-racists helped prevent the new scientific racism spreading unchallenged.

In the prevailing political climate, the relationship between biological determinists — especially in the guise of the new sociobiology — and the New Right was a love match. In Britain, a New Right government happily seized on biological determinism as a scientific prop to their plan to restore women to their natural place, which at that point was not in the labour market. (By the mid-eighties the view changed and part-time women's work became the ideal solution to achieve unpaid labour at home and cheap labour in employment. From then on we heard little about women's natural market place.) No one put the government's view in the early 1980s more succinctly than the Secretary of State for Social Service, Patrick Jenkins, in a 1980 television interview on working mothers: "Quite frankly, I don't think mothers have the same right to work as fathers. If the Lord had intended us to have equal rights, he wouldn't have created men and women. These are biological facts, young children do depend on their mothers."

While it was perhaps overkill to draw on both creationism and biology to make his point, in the political rhetoric of government ministers and other New Right ideologues, the old enthusiasm for biological determinism was given fresh vigour by the fashionable new sociobiology. This at the height of the struggle of the feminist movement to bring women out of nature into culture, a host of greater or lesser socio-biologists, their media supporters and new Right politicians joined eagerly in the cultural and political effort to return them whence they came.

— Rose (1994)

Activity 3

Learning from a case study

Read the case study of women's work in the Philippines that follows (Case Study 1) and then answer these questions:

1. What factual information about women's work in the Philippines can you extract from this case study?
2. What principles about women's work in the Philippines emerge from these facts?
3. Do these principles coincide with those obtaining in your own society?
4. Have the facts in the case study caused you to change your assumptions about women's work? How?
5. Based on the data and your own experience, what explanation or theory would you develop of women's work?

Case Study 1

Women's work in the Philippines

In the mid-1970s, Gelia Castillo noted that about 60 percent of the women in the rural areas of the Philippines were engaged in agriculture or related activities, such as fishing, an increase from the 1965 figure of 53.6 percent. In roughly two decades (from 1956 to 1974), the proportion of all Filipinos in agricultural and related activities decreased from about 59 to 55 percent, and the proportion of all women and girls over ten years old decreased slightly more (from 48.1 percent to 36.6 percent). The overall decline in the proportion of women employed in agriculture coupled with the increased proportion of rural women in agriculture from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s could suggest that there were more opportunities for urban employment and/or fewer opportunities for non-agricultural rural employment. It is also possible that farm women were counted differently in the 1970s, if, as may people contend, agricultural women are generally underenumerated, the 1970s figures could reflect greater accuracy (Castillo did not address this issue in her study).

Of these agricultural women, the vast majority are crop workers in rice and corn farming, and the burden of the women's work is in non-mechanized tasks such as weeding and transplanting. In one study carried out in the provinces of Bulacan and Tatangas, planting/ transplanting, harvesting, and post-harvest activities accounted for nearly 70 percent of the female contribution to farming those regions. These are activities that can be done in a relatively short span of time, so they are compatible with the major household duties for which the women are also responsible. The kind of work Filipinas do helps to explain why there are substantial seasonal variations in the agricultural employment of women. Castillo notes, for instance, that the

percentage of women working full time in agriculture can increase between 6 and 10 percent between February and May.

A detailed study of time allocation in rural households in Laguna, a province of the Philippines, showed that mothers were less involved in agricultural activities than either fathers or children. On the average, the women in the sample spent slightly over one hour a day on pre- and post-harvest activities, vegetable production, livestock raising, and the like — men and children spent well over three hours a day on these same activities — but the 5 percent of the women in the sample who reported that their primary occupation was farming averaged about three and one-third hours a day on farming alone. Overall, farming and non-farming women in this rural area spent an additional seven and one-half hours on household work or home production.

As in most countries, rural women are among the most economically disadvantaged people in Filipino society. There are more unpaid family workers among women than among men, and almost 90 percent of all male unpaid workers in 1975 were in the rural areas and engaged in agricultural work. Despite this general condition, however, both rural and urban Filipinas are viewed by a number of scholars as having considerable status and power compared to women in other Asian countries, and Filipina influence extends to important decision-making roles in agricultural matters. Justin Green, for example, noted that women are better educated than men, and he has also argued that women have a good deal of behind-the-scenes or privately exercised power. People who think that the traditional method of reckoning kinship and the prevalence of bride price or dowry are indicators of male–female status might note that historically, Filipinos have traced kinship through both parents and bride price has been common (whereas dowry prevails in India). For rural Filipino women, a practical consequence of this relative equity is that the sexual division of labor is not as rigid as in many societies. Women can handle a plow if necessary, and a husband will do the cooking if his wife is away or do the laundry if his wife has just delivered a child.

— Charlton (1984)

Relationship of theory and knowledge

The theorizing process both uses and produces knowledge. Androcentric theories generate knowledge that embodies the assumptions of these theories and ignores the experiences and perspectives of women. One of the tenets of feminist theorizing is that knowledge should be formulated from a broader base of experience. Thus, a new, more comprehensive, more all-encompassing knowledge is built up through feminist theorizing. Such theorizing seeks to provide a more complete representation of women's realities. As Sandra Harding expressed it,

> Knowledge is supposed to be based on experience, and the reason the feminist claims can turn out to be scientifically preferable is that they originate in, and are tested against, a more complete and less distorting

> kind of social experience. Women's experiences, informed by feminist theory, provide a potential grounding for more complete and less distorted knowledge claims than do men's.
>
> — Harding (1987a, pp. 184–185)

Harding's analysis represents a feminist-standpoint theoretical approach. Like others, feminist-standpoint theorists have their own assumptions. They assume there is an objective reality that can be made better if women's experiences and knowledges are added to mainstream or androcentric **epistemologies.**

Postmodernist-feminist theorizing supports the investigation of women's experiences and knowledges as a basis for creating new feminist-informed knowledges. This approach differs from feminist-standpoint theorizing in several ways. Postmodernist-feminist theorists do not assume there is a complete, coherent reality to which women's experiences can be added; rather, they assume there are multiple realities and experiences. Postmodernist-feminist theorists see these experiences and their influence on the generation of knowledge as fluid, contingent, diverse, and historically and culturally specific. They do not argue that feminist claims are scientifically preferable, as they are more sceptical about the faith placed in rationality, objectivity, and science. However, they support the position that knowledge claims should be formulated from a broader base of experience and should recognize that women's experiences will differ across race, class, culture, and sexual orientation.

Thus, there are diverse feminist theoretical approaches. Although they converge on the core issue of women's subordination, they differ in their assumptions about the causes or sources of that subordination. These differences reflect the richness of women's lives and the need to integrate the experiences and knowledges of women in the South, as well as all women in the North, if we are to move toward a more inclusive, sensitive theorizing about both women's subordination and their power. Hilary Rose's remarks in Box 6 illustrate some of the new thinking of feminists in the South and North.

Box 6

Feminists using theory

Staying Alive by Vandana Shiva is a marvellous example of the ways that feminists relate to theory, using it as a resource in the defence of both women and nature. First the book is written from within a struggle of the Chipko women to defend the trees on which their lives depend. While without the mass movement there would be no story, it is also a story in which her skills as a scientist are integral. Her account of the struggle is a story of transformation ... of the people and also an exposition of the science (the definition, the analysis and explanation of the problem). She makes solid technical arguments about what is happening to the land and the water. Her training as a physicist — part of that universalistic highly abstract discourse so criticised by feminism — is both a crucial element within, and transformed by the struggle. She reports different ways of collecting data, organising in fresh ways, producing a holistic ecological knowledge specific to the locality and people. This careful rethinking of the environmental endemic generates a highly "situated and embodied knowledge" with strong claims to objectivity, out of the "universalistic and disembodied knowledge" of the physicist.

Nor are the activities she reports limited to new knowledge building, for she also describes and endorses essential myth making (which historically has often given energy to social movements of the excluded) but which unquestionably often makes their intellectual allies uneasy. Whereas Western feminists have mostly fought the notion that women are naturally nearer to nature, seeing that as a patriarchal cage, Shiva casts Indian peasant women (and the myths they construct cast themselves) in the role of the natural protectors of the forest. Essentialism is used as a source of strength. It is a dangerous move yet the situation is already a matter of staying alive. But the point I want to make is the extraordinarily divergent strands which Shiva weaves together. Nothing that can be made useful within a struggle is disregarded, she takes very different discourses and radically recycles them, adapting them with strength and imagination to political purposes. In Shiva I think we get something of a reply from a feminist scientist to Audre Lorde's question, can the master's tools be used to dismantle the master's house? I think the reply goes something like this, providing we are prepared to select, to adapt, to use for hitherto unimagined purposes and weave them in with the entirely new, then yes, we can use the master's tools. But in the process it is crucial to understand that the tools are themselves transformed. As well as tearing down the master's house, that crucial preliminary act, a feminist science also begins to build anew, to construct a feminist science.

— Rose (1994)

This more comprehensive knowledge base enables a wide cross section of experiences and measures to inform policy and action. Chapter 4 will examine existing policies and those being developed, to illustrate how they reflect and satisfy the needs of women.

Conclusion

This chapter discusses theorizing as a process used to test assumptions about a number of phenomena in order to generate principles and theories to explain these phenomena. This chapter also points out that traditionally this process has been male centred and related to the cultures, nationalities, and dominant economic classes of the theorists, who did not take into account the perspectives and experiences of women or the problems and issues that affect women. Until feminist theorists began critiquing existing knowledges, these theories were used to produce programs and policies that adversely affected the lives of women.

The readings highlight the feminist challenges to the traditional, androcentric approach to theorizing and discuss some of the characteristics of feminist approaches. These approaches not only take into account differences in experiences of women and men but also recognize that women themselves do not constitute a homogenous group.

Using these approaches, feminists have deconstructed androcentric theories and knowledge and produced a comprehensive view of women's multiple realities. The knowledges they have generated provide a basis for critiquing existing policies and determining alternative policies and activities to address the problems affecting women.

Recognizing that factors such as class, race, ethnicity, age, social status, and sexual orientation shape perceptions and experience points to the social character of gender and gender relations. In the next chapter, you will examine a number of theories on gender and development that have evolved from a process of both women's and men's theorizing in different contexts and situations.

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CHAPTER 2
WHY GENDER? WHY DEVELOPMENT?

Rhoda Reddock

Introduction

This chapter introduces the concepts of gender and development and the factors that gave rise to their emergence. It also provides an explanation of the precolonial experience of so-called Third World people, especially with respect to gender relations and the experiences of women and men in social, political, and economic life. The discussion challenges simplistic characterizations and generalizations of precolonial societies and points to their rich diversity and difference.

This chapter provides a framework for considering alternative ways of perceiving human social and cultural development and organizing social, economic, and political life. It also provides information that challenges traditional monolithic assumptions about women and the **sexual division of labour**.

Objectives

The objectives of this chapter are the following:

- To explore the evolution of the concepts of gender and development and to critically examine their underlying assumptions;
- To recognize the diversity of human experience and the alternative measures of value and standards for the assessment of progress and human achievement; and
- To provide a general historical understanding of the lives of Third World people before the institutionalization of development.

Why development?

In ordinary usage, *development* (a noun derived from the verb *develop*) implies movement from one level to another, usually with some increase in size, number, or quality of some sort. In the Penguin *English Dictionary*, the verb *develop* means "to unfold, bring out latent powers of; expand; strengthen; spread; grow; evolve; become more mature; show by degrees; explain more fully; elaborate; exploit the potentialities (of a site) by building, mining, etc." (Penguin 1977).

For our purposes, these meanings of *development* apply to human societies. The usage of the word in this context was popularized in the post-World War II period to describe the process through which countries and societies outside North America and Europe (many of them former colonial territories) were to be transformed into modern, developed nations from what their colonizers saw as backward, primitive, underdeveloped societies (see Box 1).

Box 1

Colonialism

Colonialism refers in general to the extension of the power of a state through the acquisition, usually by conquest, of other territories; the subjugation of the inhabitants to a rule imposed by force; and the financial and economic exploitation of the inhabitants to the advantage of the colonial power.

Characteristic of this form was the maintenance of a sharp and fundamental distinction (often expressed in law as well as in fact) between the ruling nation and the subordinate (colonial) populations. This led to entrenched forms of racism. In the modern period, that is, since 1492, colonial powers initially included the Dutch, English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish. Later, other European states also became involved, such as the Belgians and Germans. In the 20th century, the United States, too, became a colonial power.

It is necessary to differentiate between settler colonialism and nonsettler colonialism. In the case of the United Kingdom, for example, special status of dominion (or protectorate) was given to settler colonies, such as Australia, Canada, the Irish Free States, Newfoundland, New Zealand, Southern Rhodesia, and the Union of South Africa, which had large communities of European migrants. They were usually self-governing territories of the British empire. *Protectorate* was used to refer to territories governed by a colonial power although not formally annexed by it.

(continued)

Box 1 *(concluded)*

In these areas also, including the United States, *internal colonialism* is often used to describe the relationship between the settlers and the native or indigenous people and minorities. Although other forms of domination and hegemony have existed in human history, this chapter concentrates on the specific form of European colonization and colonial domination that has taken place since the 16th century.

Source: Fontana (1988)

Which were these societies?

These areas comprised most of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, the Pacific region, and South and Central America. Today, this grouping includes former colonial, largely but not totally tropical, countries, peopled mainly by non-Europeans. It is usually referred to as the Third World, underdeveloped countries, developing countries, and, more recently, the South or the economic South.

Although it would be helpful to have one term to designate all of these countries, none of the above terms is really adequate. All are based on assumptions that we should be aware of when we use them. They are an improvement, however, on the terms first used in development writing, such as *backward* or *economically backward countries.*

It is important to note that before European colonial domination, many societies had already felt the impact of other dominating forces. For example, in North Africa the spread of the Islamic influence wrought great changes in the lifestyle of the native people — so much so that, now, some people hardly have any memory of a pre-Islamic past. In India, the spread of Hinduism over the continent had a similar, although more varied, impact. In some instances, the colonizers entered countries already controlled by well-established, stratified, patriarchal structures and introduced yet another controlling force into women's lives.

In this chapter, I briefly explore each of these concepts and the contexts within which they arose.

Underdeveloped–developing countries

The concept of underdeveloped–developing countries emerged as part of the work of early development economists in the 1950s, who theorized very simplistically about the stages of development that societies had to pass through to become "developed," or "modern." These concepts sought to encompass all of the countries and areas to which I referred earlier, ignoring the vast differences among them. In addition, the history of Western industrialized countries was used as a broad model for the process through which all societies were to pass.

These development economists coined the following triad:

$$\text{Underdeveloped} \Rightarrow \text{Developing} \Rightarrow \text{Developed}$$

Around the 1960s, with nationalist sentiments becoming vocal, the term *less developed* was added, as it was considered less pejorative than *underdeveloped.* This approach is sometimes critically referred to as developmentalism.

Not much later, a school of mainly sociologists and political scientists emerged. They were eventually referred to as modernization theorists because they described this process as one of becoming modern. They, too, developed a triad:

$$\text{Traditional} \Rightarrow \text{Transitional} \Rightarrow \text{Modern}$$

In the words of Shyama Charan Dube,

> Modernity may be understood as the common behaviourial system historically associated with the urban, industrial, literate, and participant societies of Western Europe and North America. The system is characterised by a rational and scientific world view, growth and ever-increasing application of science and technology, together with continuous adaptation of the institutions of society to the imperatives of the new world view and the emerging technological ethos.
>
> — Dube (1988, p. 17)

One of the main features common to these two approaches is that they equated development (or modernity) with industrialization. Industrialization and its companion, urbanization (the emergence of towns and cities), were considered the only ways for backward societies to become modern, or developed. Progress and advancement were also seen in this light.

There was little appreciation of the social, cultural, economic, or political attributes of non-Western societies. Indeed, these approaches accepted to a large degree the colonial feeling of superiority over indigenous peoples, many of whom were decimated, robbed of their land, or confined to reservations or territories (for example, in Australia, Canada, and the United States), or marginalized and forced to flee into the mountains (for example, in parts of Asia and most of South and Central America) (see Box 2).

Box 2

Staying alive

Thus are economies based on indigenous technologies viewed as "backward" and "unproductive." Poverty, as the denial of basic needs, is not necessarily associated with the existence of traditional technologies, and its removal is not necessarily an outcome of the growth of modern ones. On the contrary, the destruction of ecologically sound traditional technologies, often created and used by women, along with the destruction of their material base is generally believed to be responsible for the "feminisation" of poverty in societies which have had to bear the costs of resource destruction.

— Shiva (1988, p. 12)

Exercise 1

Indigenous technologies

1. What does the author mean by "indigenous technologies"?
2. Give examples of indigenous technologies used in your society today by
    - Women
    - Men

These approaches also had little to say about women. Women were largely linked to the traditional and backward aspects of these societies and most resistant to change. Because the theorists used *traditional* in such a general sense, with little recourse to history or social anthropology, they little realized the diversity in women and men's relations, in modes of domestic and family organization, or in social, economic, and political life.

Third World

"Third World" is the English translation of *le tiers monde*, developed in France in the 1950s. It emerged with the heightened anticolonial consciousness that arose with the coming of the new nation-states in Africa and Asia. This was also a time when the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union – Eastern Europe was dividing the world along ideological and geopolitical lines.

In this context, the newly independent states of Africa and Asia (including Ghana, India, Indonesia, and Nigeria), as well as Yugoslavia, met in Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955. They adopted the position of nonalignment with either camp, arguing the need for a third, alternative world grouping. The term *Third World* was adopted by many of these countries to differentiate themselves from the First World (the North Atlantic capitalist world, or the world of advanced market economies) and the Second World (the centrally planned economies of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union). The Third World consisted of all other nations — usually in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and South and Central America, including the centrally planned economies in these areas.

One of the main criticisms of the concept of the Third World has been that it suggests a hierarchy of nations. Some people argue that to accept third place is to accept a lower status in the world order. The people who coined the phrase probably never considered this but simply saw *Third World* as an alternative to the two main options their countries were being pushed to accept, options that, as history would show, they would eventually agree to.

North–South

North–South became a popular term around 1980, after the publication of the report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, popularly known as the Brandt Commission because it was led by the late Willy Brandt, former Chancellor of West Germany (see Brandt 1980). According to one source,

> The expression was selected by the Commission to emphasize the economic divide between the North (rich nations) and the South (poor nations) and to highlight the presumed desirability of a North–South dialogue grounded in a common concern for global problems and freed from the complications of East–West political interests.
>
> — Hulme (1990, p. 8)

This division, like many associated with relations of power, is geographically incorrect. Some countries in the South are neither low income nor not former colonial countries; likewise, some economies and conditions of life in the North, such as can be found in Eastern and Southern Europe, have little in common with the leading industrialized capitalist economies of the North. For some, this terminology reflects global restructuring and the changes taking place in the global economy. *Economic South* was a term coined to further delineate this grouping in economic and political terms, rather than in purely geographic ones.

Development today

The heyday of developmentalism — in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s — fostered some strong beliefs, such as

- That state or government should play the central determining role in introducing development policies and strategies that could lead to improved standards of living and conditions of life; and

- That international investment, loans, and aid can redirect economies away from their traditional bases — usually in agriculture — toward industry and manufacture.

Today, although much of this sentiment has changed, much has remained the same. The dominant thinking in the late 1980s and early 1990s has been that the state has a leading, but only facilitating, role in the economy. Development is now seen as the responsibility of private companies and, increasingly, private nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In addition, the market is seen as the main arbiter of decision-making.

This approach is based on the renewed influence of liberal economic thinking (now called neoliberal economics), which has affected international economic

policy and development thinking. All this has taken place within the context of a Third World debt crisis, within which economic restructuring and structural-adjustment policies are advocated as mechanisms for generating income to repay debt. Such thinking has become reality through the conditions on the stabilization and structural-adjustment loans offered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank) to countries facing balance-of-payments difficulties.

The IMF and the World Bank were established in 1944 at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in the United States. At this meeting, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States set up a system to facilitate the reconstruction of Western Europe after World War II. The main purpose of the new organizations was to provide a basis for monetary and currency stability for increased trade and expansion of these economies. This was to be accomplished by providing financial support during periods of balance-of-payments difficulties, that is, when imports exceeded exports. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was later added, and, according to Dennis Pantin, each of these institutions would play a complementary role in the management of a world economy that did not restrict the movement of goods, services, and money (Pantin 1989).

Since the emergence of the new nation-states in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and the Pacific in the 1950s and 1960s, the Bretton Woods Agreement has widened in scope. As a result of the current trend in monetarist, or neoliberal, economics, the role of this agreement has expanded. The IMF provides short-term stabilization assistance to countries with balance-of-payments difficulties, on condition that they implement certain fiscal and monetary policies. The World Bank, on the other hand, is more concerned with long-term adjustment through restructuring of host economies along fixed lines. Its policies can be summarized as follows (Blackden 1993):

- Stabilization or reduction of budget or balance-of-payments deficits, reduction of budget deficits or freezes in public-sector employment, cutbacks in public-sector investment, removal of public-sector subsidies (usually away from the agriculture and social sector to the private commercial sector), and tax reform;

- Promotion of the private sector through contracting of public services, sale of state enterprises, and deregulation;

- Market liberalization and price reforms, in which the local market is opened to greater foreign and domestic competition; exchange-rate liberalization, usually devaluations or floatation of local currency to encourage exports; and removal of price controls and supports to local industry; and

- Rationalization of public-sector institutions, including civil-service (public-sector) reform, privatization of state enterprises, and reform of the social sector to make it cost-effective.

Aspects of these neoliberal policies have also been implemented since the 1980s in Northern countries, such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and, more recently, in continental Europe. Additionally, many governments have implemented economic-adjustment programs without being involved in an IMF or World Bank program.

In the Third World, these programs have been severely criticized for the following reasons:

- They are not tailored to the particular needs of individual economies;

- They contribute to major declines in standards of living, including nutritional levels, educational standards, employment rates, and access to social-support systems;

- They shift more of the responsibility for health care, education, and care of the sick and elderly to women already burdened by unpaid work;

- They increase social ills, such as violent crime, drug abuse, and violence against women; and

- They result in increased levels of migration (legal and illegal) from the South to the North.

Sustainable development

In many parts of the North and South, women's organizations and NGOs are involved in developing sustainable and economically feasible alternatives to these neoliberal policies of structural adjustment.

The term *sustainable development* came into popular use after the 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, popularly known as the Brundtland Report and the Brundtland Commission, respectively. The report was largely a response to the growing international environmental and ecological lobby. It defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987, p. 43). According to Donald Brooks (1990), the paradigm, or worldview, emerging around this concept recognized the need to ensure and facilitate the following:

- Integration of conservation and development;
- Maintenance of ecological integrity;
- Satisfaction of basic human needs (see Chapter 3);
- Achievement of equity and social justice; and
- Provision of social self-determination and cultural diversity.

This comprehensive approach does not reflect all approaches to sustainable development. Some economists, for example, speak of "sustainable growth." Critics agree, however, that economic growth (that is, continuous increase in the quantity of economic production) cannot be sustained indefinitely, given the renewable and nonrenewable resources of the planet. Nevertheless, a more equitable distribution of existing resources could lead to improvements in the quality of life.

Feminist activists have been central to the movement against environmental degradation and for sustainability right from the movement's inception. They have also often gone beyond the narrower definitions of the issues to include the struggle for peace and the struggle against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Whereas most of the discussions on sustainable development have taken place within the context of mainstream development economics, feminist activists have for the most part seen sustainable development as part of a larger alternative model of development or societal transformation.

Kamla Bhasin [1993] identified the following components of sustainable development:

- It must be in harmony with nature (if nature is to sustain us, we must sustain nature);
- It must be people centred and oriented (people have to be seen as the subjects, not the objects, of development);
- It must be women centred (recognizing the responsibility that women have always assumed for catering to the basic needs of society);
- It must cater to the needs of the majority (consumption levels of the rich and industrialized world must be reduced);
- There must be decentralization of decision-making and control over resources within countries and internationally;
- Democracy must become more participatory and direct, unleashing the latent energies of the people; and
- At every level, sustainable development must promote the politics of peace, nonviolence, and respect for life.

In short, sustainable development for many feminists from the South and North implies a new kind of political, economic, social, and cultural system and a new value orientation.

The women's challenge to modernization and development[1]

The seeds of the women-and-development concept (a broad-based term that includes a number of approaches to women's development; see below) were planted during the 1950s and 1960s. During this time, 50 countries were freed from colonialism, and the women who had participated in independence movements acted on their convictions that they must join with men in building these new nations. For example, at the beginning of the 1960s, women of East African countries, led by Margaret Kenyatta, met at seminars to adopt strategies aimed at reaching their goals. This was at a time when the revived feminist movement in the North had not yet found a distinct voice and *The Feminine Mystique* (Friedan

[1] This section benefited greatly from the contributions of Margaret Snyder and Mary Tadesse (1995).

1963), the book that some credit with signaling the revival of feminism and launching the women's liberation movement in Northern countries, had not yet been written.

Before that time, in 1947, just 2 years after the formation of the United Nations, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was established to monitor United Nations activities on behalf of women. To a large extent, however, its efforts were limited within the legalistic context of human rights. By the 1950s and 1960s, women of these newly independent countries began taking their delegations to the United Nations (though in small numbers) and were able to challenge the legalistic agenda of CSW by raising development-oriented issues.

By 1970, when the United Nations General Assembly reviewed the results of the First Development Decade of the 1960s, three factors that would eventually converge to foster the various approaches to women's development had become evident:

- It was found that the industrialization strategies of the 1960s had been ineffective and had, in fact, worsened the lives of the poor and the women in Third World countries. The Second Development Decade was therefore designed to address this and "bring about sustainable" improvement in the well-being of individuals and bestow benefits on all.

- Evidence was brought forward in Ester Boserup's (1970) now classic *Women's Role in Economic Development.* Boserup, an agricultural economist, used research data from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America to highlight women's central positions in the economic life of these societies, and she described the disruptive effects of colonialism and modernization on the sexual division of labour through the introduction of the international market economy. Among other things, this process drew men away from production based on family labour and gave them near-exclusive access to economic and other resources. Boserup concluded that the economic survival and development of the Third World would depend heavily on efforts to reverse this trend and to more fully integrate women into the development process.

- The feminist movement reemerged in Western countries around 1968, alongside other social movements for civil rights. Although the movement's energies were, for the most part, directed internally, some

> Western women used their position to pressure their government's foreign-aid offices to ensure that grants to recipient countries supported women as well as men.

The central point of the original women-and-development approach was that both women and men must be lifted from poverty and both women and men must contribute to and benefit from development efforts. Margaret Snyder and Mary Tadesse, in their book, *African Women and Development: A History*, defined *women and development* as follows:

> "Women and Development" is an inclusive term used throughout this book to signify a concept and a movement whose long-range goal is the well-being of society — the community of men, women and children. Its formulation is based on the following suppositions:
>
> - "Development," in accordance with the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade, means "to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual and to bestow benefits on all."
> - Because women comprise more than half of the human resources and are central to the economic as well as the social well-being of societies, development goals cannot be fully reached without their participation.
> - Women and development is thus a holistic concept wherein the goal of one cannot be achieved without the success of the other.
> - Women, therefore, must have "both the legal right and access to existing means for the improvement of oneself and of society."
>
> — Snyder and Tadesse (1995, p. 6)

International Women's Year was declared by the United Nations in 1975, and the celebration of this at the First International Women's Conference in Mexico City marked the globalization of the movement. This unique intergovernmental conference and the nongovernmental International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC), a networking and communications institution, brought together women from nearly all countries of the world under the theme Equality, Development and Peace and extended its work during the United Nations Decade for Women, 1976–85. This sparked the creation of institutions and networks worldwide as "women and development" became an area of specialization in the development field.

The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Women (later called the United Nations Development Fund for Women) and the International Training and Research Centre for Women were soon established within the United Nations system. IWTC and the Women's World Bank, a loan-guaranteeing organization, came into existence as NGOs. At the national level, "national machineries" — commissions on women, women's desks, and women's bureaus — were soon established in most countries. New women's organizations and networks sprang up at the community and national levels. These contributed to the institutionalization of women and development as an internationally recognized set of concepts and did much to generalize knowledge and consciousness about women's issues internationally.

Exercise 2

National machineries for women

Visit the national machinery for women's affairs in your country. It may be a women's desk, a women's bureau, or a ministry of women's affairs. Write a short history of its emergence and analyze its interpretation of the term *women and development.*

Why gender?

The concern with gender emerged as feminist theorists sought to understand the complexities of women's subordination. The word *gender* came into mainly academic use some 15 years after the reemergence of late-20th-century feminism, which has, unlike its earlier manifestations, made a significant dent in male-dominated (**androcentric**) scholarship (at least, I like to think so).

Feminist scholars argued that the Western academic tradition, of which most universities and colleges in the world are part, has systematically ignored the experiences of women in its fields of learning, concepts, theories, and research methods. Additionally, although claiming to be scientific, it has really embodied mythical assumptions about women's and men's capabilities, the sexual division of labour in early human history, and, as a result, women's place in today's society. These assumptions were extended to non-Western societies, with the result

that Western assumptions and values influenced relations between the sexes and between groups within each sex, relations that ranged from egalitarian to highly patriarchal and stratified.

The word *gender*, like *development*, had a specific usage before feminist theorists extended its meaning. One of the earliest uses of *gender* in feminist theory can be traced to the 1976 University of Sussex Workshop on the Subordination of Women and the school of thought that emerged from this workshop. Scholars such as Olivia Harris, Maureen Mackintosh, Felicity Odlum, Ann Whitehead, and Kate Young argued that women, like men, are biological beings but that women's subordination was socially constructed and not biologically determined. They argued further that to conceptually differentiate between these two realities, it is necessary to identify "sex" as the biological differentiation between male and female, and "gender" as the differentiation between masculinity and femininity as constructed through socialization and education, among other factors. What is biological is fixed and unchangeable, but what is social is subject to change and should be the focus of attention for feminist theorists.

In its more recent use, as you will see in Chapter 3, *gender* has come to be used, like *class* and *ethnicity* or *race*, to designate an analytical social category, one that interacts with other social factors in influencing life experiences of groups and individuals (see Box 3).

Box 3

The social relations of gender

Firstly, what is gender? It is somewhat ironic that the term "gender," which was first coined by psychologists and then used by feminists to get away from the biologistic referent of the word sex, is now virtually synonymous with the latter word. Yet by using gender we are using a shorthand term which encodes a very crucial point: that our basic social identities as men and women are socially constructed rather than based on fixed biological characteristics. In this sense we can talk about societies in which there are more than two genders (and in the anthropological record there are several such societies), as well as the historical differences in masculinity (femininity) in a given society.

— Young (1988, p. 98)

Since that time this concept has gained widespread acceptance in a range of groups and often for different reasons. Some of these reasons are as follows:

- The need to include men in our analysis:

> Those who worried that women's studies scholarship focused too narrowly and separately on women used the term ... to introduce a relational notion into our analytic vocabulary.
>
> — Scott (1989, p. 16)

- To gain academic acceptance:

> In its simplest recent usage, "gender" is a synonym for "women." Any number of books and articles whose subject is women's history have in the past few years substituted "gender" for "women" in their titles. In some cases this usage ... is about political acceptability in the field. In these instances, the use of "gender" is meant to denote scholarly seriousness of a work, for "gender" has a more neutral and objective sound than does "women."
>
> — Scott (1989, p. 16)

Recently, the phrase "women in development" (WID) is also being replaced in some circles by "gender and development" (GAD) or "gender concerns in development" (GCID) The details of these approaches will be dealt with in more explicitly in Chapter 3.

Today, however, two types of critiques have emerged in relation to the concept of gender. One of these comes from a movement perspective. As noted by Joan W. Scott, gender has become a useful and almost inescapable concept in women's studies and feminist theory (Scott 1989). Many people in the women's movement fear, however, that this is leading to a situation in which women are once more invisible. They note that the fields of WID, GAD, GCID, feminist theory, and women's studies all owe their origins to the women's movement and the struggles of women in the streets, towns, villages, and academies. Yet, today, with the growing acceptance of academic women's studies and gender specialists, the concern with the day-to-day problems and struggles of women and the movement is being marginalized and, indeed, no longer even acknowledged.

The other critique comes from a theoretical perspective. It is now being found that

- The divisions between male and female are not as fixed and clear cut as once thought — the male–female dichotomy is seen as being just as problematic as other dichotomies in Western thought; and

- It is not so simple to extricate what is "sex" from what is "gender," as these two phenomena, as described, intertwine.

Although the concept of gender can never substitute for that of woman, it has added to our understanding of the complexities of human social relations in numerous ways. Clearly, it is a concept that is here to stay.

Gender and society before the development era

It is important that we recall the richness of the history of most developing countries before colonialism and the era of development. It is also important for us to understand the nature of social relations in the earlier periods of that history. As I noted earlier, the Third World, or the South, really comprises most of the world. It is a mistake to speak of this vast and varied area as if it were all the same.

Until recently, most of our history of this region was androcentric. It focused on the period after the encounter with Western Europe and emphasized male action or agency. In addition, it was often first written in Western languages by Western male scholars who, with few exceptions, were Eurocentric and intolerant of the people they studied. As a result, our historical records are laced with racism, sexism, and imperialist sentiments. The following 17th-century European male's description of matrilineality in West Africa is a clear example:

> The Right of Inheritance is very oddly adjusted; as far as I could observe, the Brother's and Sister's Children are the right and lawful Heirs, in the manner following. They do not jointly inherit, but the eldest Son of his Mother is Heir to his Mother's Brother or her Son, as the eldest Daughter is Heiress of her Mother's Sister or her Daughter: neither the Father himself or his Relations as Brothers, Sisters etc. have any claim to the Goods of the Defunct, for what Reason they can't tell: But I am of the Opinion that this Custom was introduc'd on account of the Whoredom of the Women, herein following the custom of some East-Indian Kings who (as Authors Fay) educate their Sister's Son as their own, and appoint him to succeed in the Throne, because they are more sure that their Sister's Son is of their Blood than they can be of their own [*sic*].
>
> — Bosman (1967, p. 203)

Although development theorists paid little attention to the complexities of these societies before the era of development, social anthropologists did. However, they also took with them androcentric and ethnocentric biases that clouded their view of these societies and of gender relations in these societies.

In the heyday of Third World nationalism, in the 1960s and 1970s, indigenous historians sought to correct this wrong. Most of these historians were male or trained in the androcentric worldview, so knowledge of women's experiences in precolonial society continued to be hidden. To counteract centuries of what Peter Worsley (1970) called "imperialist history," nationalist historians often distorted this history to highlight a great and glorious past, stressing the kings and queens, wealth and empire. In so doing, they often ignored the traditional **egalitarianism** of many precolonial societies, in which women had greater power and autonomy and life was more in tune with nature and the environment, not based on its destruction.

Today, as feminist activists and other concerned scholars reevaluate development and modernization, there is a renewed appreciation of the positive features of the ways of life in earlier societies, although we realize the limitations of those times. We also understand the need to preserve and protect the egalitarian and environmentally friendly practices that have survived in our societies and have been adapted to serve people's needs, often outside mainstream political and economic structures.

Exercise 3

Women's knowledge

Collect examples of women's knowledge of medicine and healing and the ways in which these have been passed on from one generation to another.

Gender relations and social change

Since the late 18th century, social scientists have sought to develop a schema to explain the variety and differences in human experience. Early evolutionists incorporated the notion of progress: human development moving from primitive,

backward forms to advanced and developed ones. Functionalist anthropologists in the mid-20th century concentrated on seeing each society as an integrated whole. They could not help interpreting what they observed through their biased perspectives and basing conclusions on their customary assumptions.

Today, although critical scholars no longer attribute value to societies in terms of progress or backwardness, they do recognize that precolonial societies may have been at different stages of social development. These stages are usually described in relation to the production systems that predominated at the time. Like all schemas, however, these descriptions provide only a partial understanding. Most societies cannot be neatly classified in one category or another. Many show signs of being at more than one "stage." In addition, it must be stressed that all societies do not necessarily pass through all the recognized stages.

Some anthropologists totally reject any theory of stages of social development because of their links to the notions of modernization and progress. They argue, instead, for a nonstage approach that examines each society on its own terms and sees movement (social change) taking place in any direction. Transitions from one stage to another, if these are thought to occur at all, are therefore the result of many factors that anthropologists are still exploring, including a society's environment and its historical relationships with other groups. The stages are usually identified as follows:

Hunter–gatherer or foraging societies

Horticultural societies

⇒ Matrilineal descent

⇒ Patrilineal descent

Agricultural or agrarian societies

Pastoral or herding societies

Industrial societies

Various combinations of the above

Feminist anthropologists have also argued that the organization of social and **production relations** — such as social **stratification**, the monogamous family, ownership of property, and forms of work and production — has greatly influenced the differences in gender relations around the world.

In some instances, as discussed earlier, societies were extremely stratified **patriarchies** before the arrival of European colonizers. This was sometimes the result of domination by other patriarchal and highly stratified groups or an existing system of social stratification. In many other instances, however, this was not the case, especially in matrilineal societies, as shown in Fatima Mernissi's description of Morocco before its Islamization:

> The panorama of female sexual rights in pre-Islamic culture reveals that women's sexuality was not bound by the concept of legitimacy. Children belonged to their mother's tribe. Women had sexual freedom to enter into and break off unions with more than one man, either simultaneously or successively. A woman could either reserve herself to one man at a time, on a more or less temporary basis, as in a *mut'a* marriage, or she could be visited by many husbands at different times whenever their nomadic tribe or trade caravan came through the woman's town or camping ground. The husband would come and go; the main unit was the mother and child with an entourage of kinfolk.
>
> — Mernissi 1987, p. 78)

In all situations, women had been able to create spaces and possibilities for autonomy within the structures of subordination existing in their societies (see Case Studies 1–4). However, these strategies were complicated or removed by the imposition of assumptions about a woman's or man's place in the new systems of stratification that were based on notions of class and racial or ethnic superiority.

Case Study 1

The Bari of Columbia

Elisa Buenaventura-Posso and Susan E. Brown, in their study of the Bari, an indigenous people of Columbia, traced the Bari's historical background and described their society as "fully egalitarian," a society without stratification, differential access to resources, or accumulation of wealth; exhibiting full sexual symmetry and individual autonomy; and valuing each person's work as socially equal. Buenaventura-Posso and Brown (1976) made their assessment through analyses of the processes of leadership, stratification, decision-making, division of labour, ritual, interpersonal relationships, and general social atmosphere.

The ferocity with which the Bari resisted usurpation and extinction by powerful external forces for 400 years contrasts sharply with their harmonious, classless, internal social organization and very high regard for peace. In 1772, a colonial envoy noted that "they do not live subject to anyone's domination ... [but] in fraternal union, making decisions by unanimous agreement."

Two hundred years later, a visiting Capuchin monk made similar observations, adding that "there are no privileged classes ... everyone is equal and for everyone exist the same opportunities. The head of the group cannot be called a chief ... but ... primus inter pares. Everyone enjoys absolute freedom within ... required norms." Buenaventura-Posso and Brown concurred and explained that sanctions for inappropriate behaviour among the Bari come through social-control mechanisms such as group pressure and public opinion. There are special positions of responsibility, which may be changed, but they do not carry even temporary authority.

The Bari are forest horticulturists who live in autonomous groups of 40–80, occupying two or more dwellings several days' travel apart from one another. House members belong to three groups, named after the positions of their hearths — east, west, and centre — and the people in these groups cook and share food together. Each group has its own hearth, and each individual has his or her own space. Order is maintained, collective activities are performed, and each individual has a recognized place. No one has more access to strategic resources, authority, or knowledge than any other person.

The organization and division of labour between the sexes and among children are practical, flexible, and complementary, with little prohibition against interchange. Although a few tasks are restricted, many are communal or, like house-building, performed by both sexes. Interdependence is high, and consequently there are no resulting hierarchies, social divisions, or antagonisms between the sexes.

The Bari's few rituals and ceremonies display full sexual symmetry. These rituals and ceremonies help each group maintain alliances with other groups. Both men and women can invite guests of the same sex, exchange gifts, and sing songs about their respective activities over days or weeks. Sexual independence is maintained before and after marriage. Unions are generally stable but are dissolved without a fuss when they are not.

Interpersonal relations are shaped by complex, subtle connections, pacts, alliances, and kinships among the separate, autonomous groups. All Bari are either *ojibara* (ally) or *sadodi* (kin) to one another, and *sagdoji-okjibara* is the linking principle, promoting order and taking the place of genealogical descent. Like earlier observers, Buenaventura-Posso and Brown noted the harmonious, egalitarian, and gentle relations between man and woman, as well as in the general social atmosphere.

Source: Buenaventura-Posso and Brown (1990)

Case Study 2

The Nayar of south India

Studies considering gender hegemonies from medieval times to the early postcolonial period in south India indicate that within the strictures of caste, class, and gender stratifications, Nayar matrilineal social structure vested leadership and power in the male and allowed various degrees of autonomy to women.

Kalpana Kannabiran, in her thesis, "Temple Women in South India: A Study in Political Economy and Social History", suggested that the matrilinearity of the Hindu Nayar caste may hinge, in a sense, on the patrilineal structure of their close, but superior, caste Brahmin neighbours, the Nambudiri (Kannabiran 1992).

Paul Thomas' (1964) observations on the Nayar of Kerala in south India in *Indian Women Through the Ages*, from his research during the early 1950s, are remarkably similar to those of Robin Jeffrey (1993) in her *Politics, Women and Well-Being*.

Kerala has a caste-based society and an agricultural economy with a per capita income well below the national average. Yet, other statistics indicate higher standards of living in most vital aspects than found in the rest of the country: birth rates and infant mortality rates are lower; life expectancy is longer; and education and literacy levels are higher. The figures are particularly striking for women (who live longer in Kerala), and explanations have been sought in the social history and development of the people of the region.

The Nayar constitute a numerous fourth-level martial Hindu caste in Kerala, south India. Until the middle of this century, their social system was matrilineal. Their's was a humane system in which the eldest male managed the family affairs but descent was traced through the female line from a female ancestor. Properties were jointly owned by families in the name of the senior female. A woman was free to move about the locality and had a say in choosing her own husband.

The Nayar marriage ceremony, *Sambandam*, comprised a single reception and the presentation of a gift of cloth from the bridegroom to the bride. Although liaisons did not have to be permanent, there was considerable constancy. Divorce was easy, remarriage was common, and polyandry almost certainly occurred. Women and their children were the responsibility of the maternal family, whose surname they retained. Free from tyrannical husbands, child marriage, *sati*, and *purdah*, women were autonomous, self-reliant, independent, and able to manage men and affairs far better than other women in similar situations elsewhere in India. They never, however, had full equality with men.

Nayar men were soldiers and supervisors for the highest level Hindu Brahmin Nambudiri caste. Its men — like those of the second-level Kshatriya caste — had access to Nayar women through *Sambandam* marriage. Nayar women were responsible for family domestic affairs and child-rearing. Nayar social organization allowed the women considerable sexual freedom and material and social security.

With British colonization, however, persistent pressure, including government legislation, changed much of the matrilineal system. Consequently, although Nayar women have enjoyed higher levels of autonomy and quality of life than other women in equivalent positions elsewhere in India, they have relatively less personal freedom and social security, today, than their female ancestors.

Source: Thomas (1964), Kannabiran (1992), and Jeffrey (1993)

Case Study 3

The Tiwi women of north Australia

In a case study of the contemporary social life of the Tiwi of Melville Island, north Australia, M. Kay Martin and Barbara Voorhies suggested that the social organization of these hunters and gatherers has a dual structure: whereas inheritance and clan membership are patrilineal,

families frequently reside in their maternal camps, with a man often marrying several daughters of one mother, thus making matrilineal affiliation important to both men and women (Martin and Voorhies 1975).

To compare male and female anthropological perspectives on Aboriginal women, Ruby Rohrlich-Leavitt, Barbara Sykes, and Elizabeth Weatherford surveyed various studies, including some on the Tiwi of Australia, and concluded that Tiwi women enjoy partnership with men and the same rights, self-respect, and dignity (Rohrlich-Leavitt et al. 1975). Although men are the social and political leaders in Tiwi society, women play a crucial role in their community's economic survival. They forage and hunt small game to provide most, sometimes all, of the family food supply, and they carry much of the load when their nomadic bands travel. The community fully recognizes the importance of women's contribution and their commensurate participation in other institutions.

Tiwi society requires that all women past the age of puberty marry and that husband and wife enter into real economic cooperation. Both sexes go on joint hunting and fishing excursions. The tools the women make and use satisfy most of the essential needs of the group. Because of their economic contribution, women are respected and assured of just and good treatment. There is no simple division of labour by sex. Both men and women practice hunting and gathering. Land resources, both plant and animal, are associated with women, whereas air and sea resources are associated with men. However, men hunt larger animals, such as the wallaby, which requires particular strength, speed, and close-range dexterity with spears.

Women have the right to own property and to trade some of their handiwork. Among themselves, they also hold *corroborrees* — secret ritual festivals and symbolic dances — that help unify them and give them, as the men's rituals give them, opportunities for drama, recreation, and emotional security. Like the men, the women practice sorcery against undependable partners.

Young people of both sexes have casual premarital affairs, but full sexual intercourse is not sanctioned before puberty. When a girl gets pregnant, her betrothed becomes the child's social father. Usually, a betrothed begins to stay at the girl's parents' camp before puberty so that they will get to know each other by the time she goes to live in his territory.

The men (fathers, brothers, and prospective husband) make the marriage arrangements, but the girl's mother plays a part in the negotiations. A man remains indebted all his life to his mother-in-law, who alone may void the contract if she is dissatisfied with the gifts he provides her.

Polygamy is practiced, and men try to acquire as many wives as they can. Girls are usually much younger than their first husbands, but older widows often choose younger men. Sometimes they agree to exchange sons. Both men and women often have several spouses over a lifetime. Wives are economic assets to a man, as they can free him from subsistence activity, enabling him to pursue the public and ceremonial affairs that bring him power and prestige in the community.

Strong bonds of special affection and respect are recognized between women and their biological children, who have close ties with their mother's group. Women share in the gifts given when their sons are initiated. They visit and exchange gifts with their married daughters, and both sons and daughters care for their mother when she is old.

Both women and men have a deeply rooted belief in the totemic ancestors, and the egalitarian relationships between the sexes are reflected in the myths that depict both sexes as existing together from the first. In their creation myth, the creator deity is female, as are the deities of the sun and the Milky Way.

With increasing age, women become more assertive and wield more power and authority. They have tremendous influence through their mature sons. Older women teach the younger ones economic skills, preside over women's rites and secret *corroborrees*, and settle disputes. Like their male counterparts, they are the guardians of myths and are responsible for passing on tribal law and custom. As such, they support the stability and continuity of tribal life.

Source: Hart and Pilling (1960), Martin and Voorhies (1975), and Rohrlich-Leavitt et al. (1975)

Case Study 4

The Nile Valley civilization

The Civilization of Ancient Egypt, Paul Johnson's (1978) study of Nile Valley civilization from neolithic times, cites the fundamental characteristics of the world's first highly stratified nation-state as stability, permanence, and isolation; and the essence of its culture as majesty and self-confidence. State, religion, culture, and land formed a creative unity lasting three millennia, until the Christian era; it was a civilization circumscribed by the desert and dominated by the great river Nile.

As Egypt's only (and very dependable) source of water, the Nile provided the valley with reliable alluvial deposits, fertility, and a transportation route. It enabled the very early hunter nomads of the valley to transform themselves into farmers and herders, and their exploitation of the Nile allowed them to develop a sound agricultural economy.

Ancient Egypt's social organization was patriarchal and included a system of social stratification. Although inheritance came through the maternal line, men managed their families and occupied all positions of leadership. The sexual division of labour did not allow women to take part in trade or expeditions or become secular officials. Nevertheless, women were afforded high status in ancient Egyptian society, and a child's status was determined by that of its mother.

Outside the domestic sphere, women could become temple dancers, singers, attendants, or high-ranking priestesses. Peasant women worked in the fields, drew water, and sometimes herded livestock. Pictorial evidence also shows that women occupied positions of authority — responsible positions, such manageress of a dining hall, superintendent of a workshop of weavers, head of a wig workshop, or conductor of the singers of the royal harem.

Health care for women was important. Gynaecology was very advanced. Women from wealthy families enjoyed wide property rights and could own slaves, servants, houses, and land; they retained these rights when they married. Women could inherit their father's and husband's estates and could adopt children. Egyptians were particularly fond of children and displayed their affection quite openly. In this polygamous society, men were encouraged to be considerate and faithful to their wives. Unfaithful wives, however, were put to death with their lovers. Auspicious days for lovemaking between husband and wife were determined by the astrologer.

Among the royalty, rulership was a male prerogative but gained through a female line. Kingship passed to the husband of the former king's eldest daughter or to the husband of the former king's first daughter with his favourite senior wife. Although women were forbidden by law from becoming a ruling queen, some women, like Queen Hatshepsut, did in fact rule, and these women intrigued to have their daughters succeed them. The power of Egypt's theocratic monarchy was thus not entirely absolute, but there was little freedom to act against the law. Yet,

the state's remarkable stability and order encouraged tremendous development in agriculture, the arts, and science. Eventually, when Egypt's retreat into the regulated collectivism of its past proved ineffective against persistent external invasion, the country was overtaken, and new people with new religions and languages replaced its ancient civilization.

Source: Johnson (1978) and Mokhtar (1990)

Conclusion

This chapter suggests that the sexual division of labour in our society, today, may not be as fixed as we think. It suggests that the subordination of women and and the dominance of men are neither natural nor eternal. A change toward a more egalitarian society is possible, a change that could fulfill the potentials of all human beings — women and men.

This chapter also recommends that to change these difficult relations between women and men, we have to examine and challenge the systems of inegalitarianism and subordination in our own countries and throughout the world: these could be based on **race** or **ethnicity**, colour, **class**, age, sexual orientation, or nationality. In addition, we need to consider the organization of work and the effects of modern life and work on the environment.

The chapters that follow explore some of these issues in depth and introduce you to some of the theories and approaches developed to more fully understand the issues of gender and development.

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CHAPTER 3

FEMINISM AND DEVELOPMENT: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Introduction

This chapter explores the evolution of theorizing on gender and development. It introduces a number of feminist theoretical frameworks and development frameworks and explains how these perspectives intersected to become two main competing feminist development frameworks: women in development (WID); and gender and development (GAD). This chapter also examines how new and exciting debates and critiques of **globalization**, development, and feminist theorizing are changing the existing frameworks and creating new ones. These discussions highlight the importance of theory in how we understand and act within our social world. They explain how these theoretical perspectives define problems differently and how they suggest different solutions.

Here are the objectives of this chapter:

- To explain the definition and use of theoretical frameworks and the importance of systematically thinking about the social world to create social change;

- To explain the historical context for the emergence and evolution of development and feminist frameworks;

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- To concisely explain the emergence, main ideas, questions raised for research, implications for policy and action, key concepts, and relevant sources of each of the development and feminist frameworks;

- To explain how development and feminist frameworks intersect to become competing feminist development frameworks; and

- To explain how debates and critiques contribute to making frameworks shift and develop over time and lead to new frameworks.

To accomplish these objectives, this chapter has the following components:

- Narrative discussion of the historical context of theorizing about women or gender and development;

- Outlines of the development of various theoretical frameworks;

- Research questions and implications for policy and action, based on the outline of each framework (these are the kinds of questions researchers, policymakers, and practitioners working within that framework would consider);[1]

- Excerpts from research done by a proponent of each framework; and

- Discussion questions about issues raised in the excerpts, to get you assessing and thinking critically about the framework's adequacy and its relevance to your own national context.

What is a theoretical framework?

Feminist theoretical frameworks and development frameworks have influenced thinking and policy. An historical context is important to understanding development and feminist thinking and to explaining when and why these frameworks emerge, how they influence one another, and how they change.

[1] These outlines are not meant to be objective or even critical observations; each framework is presented as if it were written by someone who subscribes to its major tenets.

A framework is a system of ideas or conceptual structures that help us "see" the social world, understand it, explain it, and change it. A framework guides our thinking, research, and action. It provides us with a systematic way of examining social issues and providing recommendations for change.

A framework consists of basic assumptions about the nature of the social world and how it works and about the nature of people and how they act. For example, some people assume that society is basically harmonious and that harmony results from a set of shared values. Others assume that society is in conflict and that conflict is rooted in **class**, **race**, and gender struggles over **power** and access to and control over resources.

A framework also indicates how problems are defined and the kinds of questions to be asked. For example, according to one definition, inequality results from the need to establish unequal incentives to motivate the most talented people to do the most important jobs efficiently in society. According to another definition, it results from the practice of providing differential rewards to keep a less powerful working class fragmented by gender and race.

Different frameworks also suggest different solutions to problems. For example, inefficiencies in society can be taken care of through reforming or adjusting the status quo in a gradual and rational manner. Or inequalities can be abolished through transforming society to redistribute power and resources fairly.

Each framework provides a set of categories or concepts to be used in clarifying a problem or issue. Concepts specify important aspects of the social world; they direct our attention. For example, attention is directed to a key issue by the concept of **efficiency** in the modernization framework, class in a Marxist framework, sexuality in a radical-feminist framework, and **reproduction** in a socialist-feminist framework.

Why are there so many frameworks? Each framework represents an alternative way of looking at the social world. It is possible to hold different sets of assumptions about the same aspects of social reality. Different assumptions lead people to view issues and problems differently. For example, each development framework relies on its own assumptions about the nature of development and how and why it does or does not occur; each raises its own questions and provides its own concepts for examining the process of development; and each suggests its own strategies for change.

The feminist frameworks each rely on a unique assumption about the basis for women's subordination; each raises unique questions and provides unique

concepts for examining women's inequality; and each suggests quite unique strategies for change. Frameworks do compete with each other, and some become dominant over time.

Theoretical frameworks are dynamic and continually evolve and change, and this happens for a variety of reasons:

- People using the framework may find a new way of perceiving a problem, as a result of research findings;
- The framework may be revised to respond to the users' critiques; or
- The framework might change as the researchers, in response to critiques from people using other frameworks, redefine what the critics were "really" saying and incorporate that into their own framework.

In general, it is difficult to convince the adherents of a framework of the validity of another, competing framework. This is somewhat less true of feminist theorists because they generally feel that frameworks are designed to aid their understanding of women's subordination and thereby end it. So they may be more open to views put forward in many other theoretical frameworks.

In this chapter, we examine two competing development frameworks: modernization and dependency. We also look at seven feminist frameworks: liberal, Marxist, radical, black, socialist, postmodernist, and Third World. We discuss how development and feminist frameworks intersected to become the two main competing feminist development frameworks, WID and GAD.

We also explore the exciting debates and critiques that currently influence these frameworks and could result in the emergence of new frameworks. The important point to remember is that frameworks should be measured by their usefulness in building a better society. We can all contribute to ensuring that theoretical frameworks reflect our interests and concerns.

Historical context of theorizing about women or gender and development

Research on women- or gender-and-development issues requires a thorough understanding of both development and feminist theoretical frameworks. Theoretical frameworks fundamentally shape research approaches and are therefore an essential underpinning for feminist research. Theory is not wisdom; it is a set of tools.

Theory should be criticized and redefined in specific social contexts. Most feminist and development theories have their roots in the West and need to be tested and redefined in other contexts. However, one needs a basic theoretical knowledge before undertaking the important process of critique and debate.

Chapter 2 noted that the history of women- or gender-and-development theory is interwoven with the history of policy interventions in developing countries and with the history of the women's movement around the globe. Some of these activities were explicitly informed by theoretical frameworks, whereas others were more implicitly grounded in a worldview. The experiences of policymakers and activists gave rise to revised theoretical formulations of development and feminist concerns. The thinking on these issues and the operationalization of policies over time have drawn on feminist and development theories and have contributed to the further development and, sometimes, the integration of these theories.

Many individuals and organizations have worked for a very long time to improve conditions for women. Local and international women's organizations, such as the YWCA, have had a lengthy presence in developing countries, as well as in the North. Their presence predates both the concern with development per se, which characterized the postwar period, and the wave of international feminism of the past quarter century.

These groups have been concerned at various times with meeting women's practical gender needs and their strategic gender interests (Molyneux 1985; Moser 1989). Practical gender needs relate to women's daily needs in caring for themselves and their children, whereas strategic gender interests relate to the task of changing **gender relations** and challenging women's subordinate position.

Women's organizations have worked for social-welfare causes, reform, and empowerment over the last century in the South, just as they have in the North. At times, they have espoused feminist causes but clothed them in welfare language. In the last 25 years, the intertwining of feminist and development concerns has given rise to a specific planning field (Moser 1993). As we shall see, alternatives have emerged in the conceptualization and operationalization of development approaches to women.

The 1930s

An historical approach to development is important to understanding the evolution of development thinking and policies. Early development initiatives, which had begun to preoccupy economists and colonial officials in the 1930s, largely ignored women. These approaches identified development with modernization and assumed

the wholesale adoption of Western technology, institutions, and beliefs. Buttressed by their technical superiority, Western development specialists defined Westernization and modernization as the same thing. In this modernization paradigm, they posited development as a linear process whereby "backward," tradition-bound peoples would slough off their historic impediments and embrace modern (that is, Western) institutions, technologies, and values (see "Framework A: modernization theory," under "Theoretical frameworks," later in this chapter). The issue was not whether to follow this route but how to achieve this transition as quickly and thoroughly as possible.

The 1940s and 1950s

During the 1940s and 1950s, development planners designed projects aimed to modernize colonies all over the globe. Many of these projects failed, but this did little to undermine most development experts' faith in modernization. When colonial rule was swept away by decolonization, beginning with India in the late 1940s, the newly independent governments hired many of these former colonial development experts to help them fulfill electoral promises, particularly the promise that independence would bring economic development and prosperity for all. The formulation of the modernization paradigm coincided with the emergence of the United States as the hegemonic power of the postwar era. The United States became the model for countries pursuing modernization. US dominance included intellectual hegemony, which was played out in scholarship, policy-making, and research on developing countries.

The 1970s

Both Third World leaders and Western development specialists assumed that Western development policies would position fragile Third World economies for a "**take-off.**" Few questioned whether this prosperity would extend equally to all classes, races, and gender groups. As noted in Chapter 2, Ester Boserup's (1970) *Women's Role in Economic Development* investigated the impact of development projects on Third World women. Boserup discovered that most of these projects ignored women and that many technologically sophisticated projects undermined women's economic opportunities and autonomy. Training in new technologies was usually offered to men, which meant that most "modern" projects improved male opportunities and technological knowledge but reduced women's access to both technology and employment. Boserup's study seriously challenged the argument that benefits from development projects would automatically "trickle down" to women and other disadvantaged groups in Third World nations.

Women involved with development issues in the United States lobbied to bring this evidence to the attention of US policymakers. These women challenged the assumption that modernization would automatically increase gender equality. They began to use the term *women in development* (see "Feminist development theories: applying WID and GAD" later in this chapter) in their efforts to influence the policies of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Their efforts resulted in the Percy Amendment in 1973, which required gender-sensitive social-impact studies for all development projects, with the aim of helping to integrate women into the national economies of their countries. The emphasis on **equal opportunity** for women came out of liberal feminism (see "Framework C: liberal feminism"). WID represents a merging of modernization and liberal-feminist theories.

Key players in some donor agencies tried to initiate changes to encourage development planners to rethink development policy and planning with women in mind. The Canadian, Dutch, and Nordic donor agencies made early advances in this field. For the first time, feminist staff were able to organize to identify issues and agendas. Some agencies created WID offices, where WID staff worked to develop policies and training for agency staff. Gains were made, but resistance was widespread. This limited the impact of the new agency policies on project design and implementation.

WID staff, along with the donor agencies in general, continued to work within the modernization paradigm. That is, they assumed that development was measured by the adoption of Western technologies, institutions, and values. Their innovation was to begin to ask how to include women in the development process. To enhance women's access to development, these planners called for more accurate measurements of women's lived experiences (that is, women-oriented statistics) and for improvements in women's access to education, training, property, and credit and for more and better employment. To achieve these goals, they maintained that women must be integrated into development projects and plans and have a say in policy design and implementation. They argued further that until this happened, development policies would continue to undermine women's status in the Third World. To induce modernization technocrats to pursue these goals, these experts promised that women-oriented policies would enhance women's efficiency and consequently enhance economic development.

The WID approach, with its determination to integrate women into development, slowly became a concern of many governments and donor agencies. The United Nations Decade for Women was launched in 1975 with the Mexico City conference on the theme "Equality, Development and Peace." The World Plan of

Action that emerged from the conference and set the agenda for the Decade for Women established the goal of integrating women into the development process (Moser 1993). In consequence, many governments set up offices for women's affairs. As well, international aid agencies, to prove their commitment to women's advancement, increasingly hired WID experts. These were significant first steps.

It is important to acknowledge that the WID perspective has enhanced our understanding of women's development needs, particularly the need to improve statistical measures of women's work and to provide women with more opportunities for education and employment (Overholt et al. 1984). The WID perspective has provided a checklist for ensuring women's status in societies, a checklist that is both helpful and accessible to development technocrats.

However, the WID approach has important limitations that have tended to restrict its transformative capacity on many levels. Because this approach relies heavily on modernization theory, it generally assumes that Western institutions hold most of the answers and it often ignores the possible contribution of indigenous knowledge. It also tends to see development as an activity of a government-to-government nature and consequently generally refrains from criticizing Third World governments. It sees the state as a solution, rather than a potential problem for the advancement of women,

During the course of the decade, disappointments arose when national women's offices (initiated with much enthusiasm and often quite radical agendas) were co-opted or found their roles and capacities diminished through inadequate funding and limited political leverage. Throughout this period, Third World feminists tended to work independently of government-sanctioned WID efforts, organizing at the grass-roots level on many issues of concern to women and improving communication among women. Their issues and tactics varied, but the goal was always to support and strengthen women, sometimes focusing on practical needs but often mindful of strategic interests to alter the mechanisms of women's subordination.

The types of activity among nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) increased during this period, including outside-initiated, small grass-roots, worker-based, service-oriented, research-based, and specific-issue coalitions. Much of the work was either consciously shaped by a critique of the liberal-feminist and WID frameworks or generated by increasing dissatisfaction with mainstream analyses. The feminist debate on these issues became intense among activists, policymakers, and academics.

Wedded to notions of modernization and efficiency, the WID approach tended to preoccupy itself with women's roles as producers and to ignore their

domestic labour. It rarely addressed fundamental questions about women's subordination. The WID approach generally ignored the impact of global inequities on women in the Third World and the importance of race and class in women's lives. Other theoretical perspectives were required to address some of these fundamental issues.

Some scholars sought answers for women's development issues in Marxism, which had developed the most thorough critique of liberal modernization theory (see "Framework B: Marxist–dependency theory"). However, this approach has little to say about women and fails to question the importance of modernization. Marxist scholars have generally accepted Friedrich Engels' argument that women's subordination is a consequence of the development of private property and capitalism and that a successful class struggle and the demise of the capitalist system are therefore required before gender inequities can be changed. Marxist thinkers have put their energies into the struggle against capitalism, rather than trying to attack **patriarchy**, which they argue is merely an outgrowth of the capitalist system.

Although most Marxists were thus happy to ignore gender, a number of influential feminists working within a Marxist paradigm expanded the debate concerning women and work to include a more nuanced appreciation of reproductive labour and the role of class in women's lives (Sargent 1981) (see "Framework D: Marxist feminism"). This provided important analytical tools for the development of a socialist-feminist perspective (see "Framework F: socialist feminism").

A related strand of development thinking drew on the Marxist critique of Western capitalism for its explanations of Third World poverty. Based largely in Latin America and the Caribbean, but influencing thinkers in other regions, the dependency theorists turned modernization upside down, arguing that it was the cause of Third World underdevelopment, rather than the solution to Third World problems. Dependency theorists, most notably André Gunder Frank (1969, 1979) and Samir Amin (1974), argued that the capitalist "**metropole**" benefited from a dependent, peripheral Third World and that the capitalist system was designed to perpetuate this dependency. They called for separation from the metropole, a critical attitude toward Western technology, and a commitment to Third World self-reliance.

Developments in dependency theory have in some ways paralleled those in radical-feminist thinking in the West: both emerged during a period of serious challenge to existing power structures, and both advocated a degree of separation from the sources of power and domination. The radical-feminist critique of liberal

and Marxist feminism argued that patriarchy exists in all societies and is the fundamental source of inequality. Politically, this suggests the need to create alternative social institutions, separate from men, within which women can fulfill their needs (see "Framework E: radical feminism"). During the 1970s, this approach influenced the thinking and practice of some academics and activists (primarily in NGOs), who called for women's projects that were completely separate from men's. They argued for a development approach to women that recognized the dangers of integrating women into a patriarchal world, and they sought instead to create "women-only" projects, carefully constructed to protect women's interests from patriarchal domination. This approach has sometimes been referred to as women and development (WAD) (Parpart 1989; Rathgeber 1990).

The WAD paradigm stresses the distinctiveness of women's knowledge, women's work, and women's goals and responsibilities. It argues for recognition of this distinctiveness and for acknowledgment of the special roles that women have always played in the development process. For example, the WAD perspective gave rise to a persistent call to recognize that women are the mainstay of agricultural **production** in many areas of Africa, although their contribution has been systematically overlooked and marginalized in national and donor development plans. This concern was captured in the slogan "Give credit where credit is due." Campaigns designed to change policies and place women's issues and concerns on national and international agendas have been a key area of activity for people working within this paradigm, and disseminating information has been an important strategy. Efforts to organize have been oriented both to making mainstream bureaucracies more responsive to women's needs and to strengthening bonds among women through active, autonomous local groups and networks.

Theorists and activists working within this paradigm have debated the issue of integration (in mainstream agencies and programs) versus separate woman-focused organizing. They recognize that mainstream agencies carry the risk of domination by patriarchal interests, whereas autonomy carries the risk of further marginalization and inadequate funding imposed by the small scale of many women-only projects and initiatives. Much of the theorizing of people working within the WAD perspective is undocumented because active engagement at the policy and community levels has been the major, always pressing, priority.

Although the WAD perspective has offered an important corrective to WID's too-ready assumption that male-dominated states can be used to alter gender inequities, it also has its weaknesses. As noted above, marginalization and smallness of scale have limited the transformative potential of women-only organizations, although gains have been made in raising consciousness, publicizing

women's concerns, and bringing them into the policy arena. The WAD approach is also inclined to see women as a class, downplaying differences among women, particularly along racial and ethnic lines, and at times assuming that solutions to problems affecting the world's women can be found in the experiences and agendas of one particular group.

During the 1970s, in the context of ongoing social movements challenging authority, the arguments of the dependency school and the growing concern with Third World poverty influenced liberal development thinking. Officials at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank committed their institutions to waging a war on poverty and providing basic human needs for all. WID specialists also adopted this approach, targeting poor women and their basic human needs as the primary goals of WID policies. As Moser (1989) pointed out, this antipoverty approach recognized, and tried to serve, women's practical gender needs by focusing on improving women's access to income through such efforts as small-scale, income-generating projects. Thus, in the 1970s, radical and orthodox development thinkers and planners agreed on the centrality of poverty alleviation, although they differed on how to bring it about (Jaquette 1982).

The 1980s

In the mid-1980s, political conservatism predominated in Western governments and donor agencies. A growing preoccupation with economic mismanagement and underdevelopment in Third World economies began to replace the concern with basic human needs. Compounded by two oil crises and huge international debts, the global recession hit many Third World countries hard, revealing structural flaws and weak economies.

Where dependency theorists saw debt as a component of the long-term capital flows draining wealth from poorer to richer countries, the international development agencies, particularly the IMF and World Bank, drew a conclusion consistent with the modernization approach: Third World economies required structural adjustment to revive themselves and flourish.

Structural-adjustment programs (SAPs) were designed to reduce government expenditure and increase the power of market forces in Third World economies, thereby increasing their productivity and efficiency. Once again, the assumptions of liberal development thinking dominated the SAPs, including the assumption that economic prosperity (which is an assumed outcome of SAPs) would benefit women as well as men. In this context, the emphasis has been on increasing women's economic contribution to increase overall economic efficiency and bring about equity for women (Moser 1989; Elson 1992). A few development

specialists working on women's issues in the official agencies have begun to question the underlying assumption that structural adjustment would, in the long run, benefit everyone. Some have recognized that women and children have suffered from the short-run dislocations caused by the SAPs, a recognition that has resulted in the implementation of special programs to alleviate the short-term effects of the SAPs on vulnerable groups (women, children, the aged, and the disabled).

Some feminists and development theorists have remained unconvinced by both the WID and the WAD approaches, arguing that neither addresses the fundamental factors that structure and maintain gender inequalities. These scholars and activists have turned to the GAD perspective (see the "GAD perspective," under "Feminist development theories: applying WID and GAD," in this chapter), which emerged in the 1980s as an alternative to WID and WAD. This framework is also referred to as the "empowerment approach" or "gender-aware planning."

This approach emerged from the grass-roots organizational experiences and writings of Third World feminists and has been most clearly articulated by a group called Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN). The process of developing this new paradigm began in the early 1980s. DAWN was launched publicly at the 1985 Nairobi international NGO forum (an event attended by 15 000 women activists and held parallel to the official World Conference on Women). DAWN called for an approach to women's development that recognizes the importance of global and gender inequities (Sen and Grown 1987).

The GAD approach also emerged from the experiences and analysis of Western socialist feminists (see "Framework F: socialist feminism") interested in development issues (Young et al. 1981; Moser 1989; Elson 1992). The GAD perspective calls for a synthesis of the issues of materialist political economy and the radical-feminist issues of patriarchy and **ideology (patriarchal ideology)**. Drawing on the socialist-feminist perspective, the GAD approach argues that women's status in society is deeply affected by their material conditions of life and by their position in the national, regional, and global economies. GAD also recognizes that women are deeply affected by the nature of patriarchal power in their societies at the national, community, and household levels. Moreover, women's material conditions and patriarchal authority are both defined and maintained by the accepted norms and values that define women's and men's roles and duties in a particular society (Sen and Grown 1987).

GAD adopts a two-pronged approach to the study of women and development, investigating women's material conditions and class position, as well as the patriarchal structures and ideas that define and maintain women's subordination. The focus is on relationships between women and men, not on women alone.

Gender relations are seen as the key determinant of women's position in society, not as immutable reflections of the natural order but as socially constructed patterns of behaviour — the **social construction of gender** — which can be changed if this is desired. The GAD approach focuses on the interconnection of gender, class, and race and the social construction of their defining characteristics. Women experience oppression differently, according to their race, class, colonial history, culture, and position in the international economic order (Moser 1993). These points are key in the approaches of black and Third World feminism (see "Framework G: black feminism" and "Current debates and critiques" in this chapter). GAD recognizes the differential impacts of development policies and practices on women and men and sees women as **agents**, not simply as recipients, of development. This perspective thus calls into question both gender relations and the development process.

Within the GAD perspective, a distinction is drawn between women's interests (a biological category that assumes homogeneity) and gender interests (a socially constructed set of relations and material practices). As suggested above, gender interests can be either practical or strategic (Molyneux 1985). Practical gender needs arise out of concrete conditions; these are immediate perceived needs, such as the need to provide food, shelter, education, and health care. Strategic gender interests arise out of an analysis of women's subordination and require changes in the structures of gender, class, and race that define women's position in any given culture. Strategic interests include the goal of gender equality.

The politicization of practical needs and their transformation into strategic interests constitute central aspects of the GAD approach, as does the empowerment of women (and sympathetic men) to achieve this goal (see "Feminist development theories: applying WID and GAD"). The GAD approach provides a way to analyze policies and organizational efforts to determine which ones will both meet short-term practical needs and help to change the structures of subordination. In the 1980s, donor agencies and state machineries consolidated their WID activities, but the GAD perspective increasingly shaped the interests and activities of feminist NGOs and was in turn shaped by those experiences.

The 1990s

Within the NGO sector, a rich diversity of paradigms continued to influence development practice. The WAD approach remained particularly strong, as women continued to organize at the grass-roots level and through broader networks to increase recognition and support for women's special contributions to national development. The continuous pressure applied by organized women's groups

remained significant, forcing governments and other agencies to take women seriously and address their concerns. Activists also challenged feminist scholars and academics to strengthen the links between theory and practice and to revise theories to accommodate new forms of analysis arising from experience. Although some shifts occurred in rhetoric and practice, WID remained the dominant approach of governments, relief and development agencies (both United Nations agencies and NGOs), and bilateral donor agencies.

In some cases, policies and programs that clearly continued to work within the WID paradigm (as defined in this chapter) adopted GAD as their newer, perhaps more fashionable, label. Ironically, although the GAD framework actually goes farther than WID in challenging patriarchal structures, some agencies adopted the term *gender* or GAD to reassure men that their interests and concerns were not being overlooked or undermined by an excessive focus on women. Some agencies that still use the language of WID have moved (usually in response to the pressure of feminist staff members) toward making more far-reaching critiques of the structure of gender relations and toward promoting policies and programs that challenge fundamental inequalities. Labels therefore no longer provide a clear guide to identifying the theoretical paradigm underlying policies and programs; one also needs to examine their content more closely.

This chapter outlines a number of theoretical paradigms and key concepts for the analysis and criticism (if appropriate) of the complex and often contradictory assumptions behind policies and programs. The section entitled "Feminist development theories: applying WID and GAD" provides a practical introduction to the task of applying WID and GAD frameworks. Chapter 4 analyzes in more detail the implications of these various theoretical frameworks for policy, research, and action.

The 1990s brought a new round of critique and debate to challenge how we think about both development and feminism. The next section explores the cutting edge of thinking on globalization, development, and feminism.

Current debates and critiques

Globalization

The changing world economic reality

The 1990s were considerably different from the postwar era, which spawned modernization and dependency theories, policy, and practice. Modernization and dependency theories were grounded in the economic realities of the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s. Tremendous worldwide economic **restructuring** occurred after

the early 1970s. The symptoms of change included the rise of the newly industrializing countries (NICs) in Asia, the debt crisis in other parts of the South, and the end of the postwar boom in much of the industrialized North.

Restructuring became a buzzword for the changing world economy; this new reality was often characterized by the term *globalization.* Although the idea of a world economy is not new, this use of *globalization* highlights the more intense integration of the global economy in the 1990s. Companies and states increasingly thought in terms of global markets and competition. Attention was drawn to global capital and the tremendous power of **transnational corporations** (TNCs). Capital mobility reached new heights, and TNCs began to plan worldwide production, investment, and distribution strategies across continents and nation-states. The North witnessed a loss of jobs as multinationals from the North moved production to the South, creating a "global assembly line." Technological change was rapid; improvements in communications and transportation eliminated economic barriers of distance and facilitated this globalization process. Computerization also altered production processes and enabled firms to move around the world in search of cheaper labour.

In the context of heightened international competition and rapid technological change, capital strove for more "**flexibility**," another buzzword of the 1990s. The increase in the mobility of capital was most dramatic, but some changes also occurred in the international mobility of labour. Migration from the South to the North — both permanent (legal and illegal) and temporary (guest workers) — increased. Household economic strategies now spanned North and South in many cases, as families depended on the remittances of migrant workers. With the influx of immigrants from the South, racial tensions escalated in the North, and much of this tension was over competition for a perceived declining number of jobs.

Although some countries have benefited from this restructuring, many others in the North and South have seen their economies falter. Countries such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States lost much of their manufacturing employment, although employment improved in the 1990s with the growth of services. In the South, the debt crisis has affected many countries, and reversals have occurred in many economic indicators. Africa and Latin America have been particularly hard hit. The old world order has been altered as Japan, Germany, and Southeast Asia challenge economic leadership, American and many European economies falter, and the Communist bloc disintegrates.

Changing world economic realities have put pressure on policy. Liberal "free-market" economic policies have been the order of the day in many struggling countries, including reduced trade barriers (through the General Agreement

on Tariffs and Trade [GATT] and bilateral agreements), deregulation of markets, SAPs, and privatization of government enterprises. Generally, these policies have supported the unfettered mobility of transnational capital. However, state capitalism has characterized the successful economies of Germany, Japan, and Southeast Asia, although the Asian crisis in the 1990s has thrown some doubt on this model. One area in which increased regulation and intervention in the market have had some worldwide currency is the environment. It has also become "global."

Implications for women

These new economic realities and the political reactions to them (that is, policies of structural adjustment, free trade, export-led industrialization, etc.) have had different implications for women and for men. For example, Guy Standing (1989) argued that there was a feminization of the labour force throughout the 1980s in industrializing countries. With the SAPs comes pressure on governments to deregulate. With employers seeking to improve their competitive position through flexible labour practices, more jobs have become "feminized": they have taken on the characteristics of insecure, low-paying jobs with few prospects for advancement. This accounts, in part, for the increase in female labour-force participation, as men are less willing to take these jobs. In many countries, female unemployment rates in the 1980s declined relative to male unemployment rates. Standing blamed this trend on the feminization of labour and the employers' desire to have a cheaper, more disposable or flexible labour supply.

Export-led industrialization has also contributed to the growth of low-wage female employment in developing countries, particularly in the **export-processing zones** (EPZs). During the 1960s and 1970s, corporations developed EPZs as part of a strategy to lower costs by reorganizing production on a global scale. TNCs decrease their production costs by transferring low-skill jobs to EPZs to take advantage of low-cost labour. Export processing is particularly suitable for highly competitive industries in which labour costs constitute a large share of the operating budget, such as in the textile and garment and electronics industries. Women make up the majority of workers in these industries (Tiano 1990), as they are considered more patient and more prepared to do the tedious and monotonous jobs (Gladwin 1993). Women are perceived as being cheaper to employ, more passive, and less likely to unionize.

As the developing world adjusts to the economic crisis, few jobs are being created in the formal sector, with the exception of the EPZs. With fewer formal-sector jobs available, unemployed workers and new entrants in the labour force

are compelled to enter the informal sector to survive. In addition, many formal-sector jobs are "informalized" as employers use subcontracting to increase flexibility and decentralize the production process. For example, recent research has shown that much of the work in EPZs is not direct wage work but indirect and unrecorded work subcontracted to women in their homes (Beneria and Feldman 1992). This labour-intensive, low-paying work involves no overhead or other labour costs to employers and appears to be on the rise as structural adjustment increases the pressure to become more competitive.

As more people enter the informal sector, average wages fall. Women form the largest part of the work force in the informal sector and are concentrated in the more precarious and lowest paying jobs, such as household help. Women also engage in small-scale manufacturing and transport, retail trade, "self-production" (gardens, cooperative child care, labour exchange for house construction), and illegal or quasi-legal activities (beer-brewing, smuggling, begging, drug cultivation) (Cornia et al. 1987; Vickers 1991). They generally earn less than the minimum wage and less than men, even when they have similar occupations. Income differences between women and men are larger in the informal sector than in the formal one (Tokman 1989).

As real wages fall, prices rise, and social services and social-security systems contract, the number of women seeking an income has been increasing. Women's domestic activities have increased, that is, gathering fuel and water, caring for children and the elderly, buying and processing food, preparing and serving meals, doing the laundry, keeping the house clean, nursing the sick, and generally managing the household. On average, women in developing countries are working longer days and putting in longer hours than men.

In most countries, the number of female-headed households has been growing in both rural and urban areas (Brydon and Chant 1989; United Nations 1991). This increase has been a result of many factors, including, significantly, male migration to seek employment. Migration of men leaves female-headed households relying on insufficient and unstable remittances. Surveys on poverty always show that female-headed households are disproportionately represented (CSEGWSA 1989). This is not surprising, as women earn, on average, less than men and have fewer assets and less access to employment and production resources, such as land, capital, and technology. Women also retain responsibility for domestic activities and child care. All of these factors contribute to the feminization of poverty.

These new economic realities are also having negative effects on women in the North. The feminization of the labour force is happening in industrialized

countries as well as the NICs (Armstrong 1993). With the advent of free trade, the introduction of new technologies, and increased use of flexible management strategies, employment has shifted from the goods-producing sector to the service sector and from full-time to nonstandard jobs (part time, part year, temporary, casual). More jobs have the characteristics of female jobs: short term with low pay, no possibility of advancement, and few if any benefits. Although men continue to get more than their fair share of the better jobs, more men are having to move into this "feminized" work.

Some jobs are moving from the North to the South. For example, as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) goes into effect, manufacturing jobs (especially labour-intensive ones such as in textiles and electronics) are moving from Canada and the United States to Mexico, where labour, especially female labour, is cheaper. As unemployment increases and full-time unionized jobs disappear, the power of trade unions to bargain collectively for benefits and wages declines. As jobs become more difficult to find, firms find it easier to gain wage and other concessions from workers. As a result, the conditions of work are eroding and the standard of living is dropping. Families find they need to have more than one income earner, and married women with young children have been entering the labour force in greater numbers. Although working conditions are bad for many workers, they are particularly bad for women. Most women not only are ghettoized into low-paying, low-skill, part-time jobs but also have a second, unpaid job, caring for a family household. Although this describes the impact of restructuring on the majority of women, some women in the South and in the North are doing quite well. Two of the results of restructuring observed in many countries are polarization of incomes and a decline in the number of people in middle-income groups. In other words, a few people become better off and many become worse off.

The majority of women in the industrialized world are working or looking for work outside the home, and most have a second job of caring for children and a household. The division of labour within the household has not changed significantly in most countries, and women continue to do most of the work. Women are concerned about child care, household management, and care of the sick, elderly, or disabled. The burden of these tasks on women is increasing as restructuring of the welfare state occurs. As the state restructures, it cuts back on health care and education costs. It deinstitutionalizes people through early hospital discharges and closures of nursing homes and facilities for the disabled. It also saves money by closing hospitals and cutting school programs. Emphasis is increasingly

placed on volunteerism, self-help, and community care, all of which have strong implications for women and their workload, because women provide much of this work on an unpaid basis.

Women not only increasingly provide unpaid services as the state cuts back, they also fill the majority of state-financed jobs in health, social services, and education. These state jobs provide women with wages and employment conditions better on average then those in the private sector; however, with state restructuring, wages are frozen and jobs disappear. Women and men are becoming unemployed or forced into lower paying jobs in the private sector or the fast-growing informal economy.

Social needs must be met. With the increase in women's participation in the labour force, the need for child care is enormous. As the population ages, care is also increasingly needed for the elderly. Female-headed single-parent families are on the increase, and so are their needs, as their real incomes are decreasing. If people cannot afford to meet their needs through the market and if the state or employer does not meet them either, then the household (and that usually means women) must meet them. As the state cuts back social services it implicitly assumes a gender division of labour in which women in the household or in the community are expected to carry out these activities and meet these needs without pay. The government's divesting itself of many of the welfare state's responsibilities implicitly assumes the availability of women in the home to provide these services. Restructuring and adjustment increase women's workload, perpetuate the traditional gender division of labour, reinforce gender relations, and maintain the notion that women are naturally suited for caring work.

Although women's "position" and "condition" in the South differ from those in the North, adjustment to the new economic realities in both regions appears to depend on the assumption of gender differences.[2] People take it for granted that women's wages will be low if they work for pay and that their household work is elastic and can be stretched to cover costs no longer covered by employers or the state (Moser 1989). With the implementation of adjustment, the working day has become longer for women. Some women can handle their increased workload by hiring help, but the vast majority of women cannot do this. A single income is not enough to support a family, and more women and youths

[2] Women's *condition* refers to the material conditions of their everyday lives as women experience them, whereas their *position* refers to their social status relative to that of men (Moffat et al. 1991). See "Tools of GAD analysis," under "Feminist development theories: applying WID and GAD," later in this chapter.

have had to find employment. This is particularly the case in single-parent families headed by women, and the number of these families is increasing all over the world. Women in almost every society are paid less than men in both the formal and informal economies. As wages decline, women are under pressure to increase their hours of work. With prices rising and food subsidies being eliminated in the South and with household incomes declining in the North, women's unpaid work in the home is increasing as women try to stretch their resources to meet their families' needs.

Theoretical debates

Although *globalization* and *restructuring* are widely used to describe the current economic context, they connote no particular theory of economic development. They are labels used by all sides in the current debate. Globalization has motivated the analyses of countless national and international reports on economic policy from all points of view on the political spectrum.

Globalization is used to justify a hands-off policy approach in many countries — the theoretical assumption is that the market itself is now breaking down distinctions between the North and South and will lead to **economic growth** in the South, if this is profitable. This can be interpreted as consistent with neoclassical economics and the modernization approach to development, in which developing countries are expected to follow the path of those in the industrialized world. The example of the Southeast Asian NICs has been used to inspire confidence in this interpretation (or misinterpretation), as they are thought to demonstrate that developing countries can achieve self-sustaining growth. The Asian crisis in the late 1990s undermined this argument, but the return of prosperity to much of the region has reinforced neoclassical economic policies, albeit with a greater concern for **social capital**. The barriers to development most focused on by neoclassical economics continue to be those created by well-intentioned government interference: market-price supports, trade restrictions, and so on. The SAPs are designed to remove those barriers.

Although the expression *modernization theory* may no longer be in vogue, the spirit of the analysis, drawing on neoclassical free-market economics, is alive and well. The economic analysis of development that focuses on an unfettered, free global market now dominates economic policy in much of the North and South. The Japanese model, in contrast, involves an active role for the state in industrial policy, which in fact differs from the welfare-state model that many

Western countries are trying to escape. Debates continue to rage on how to synthesize these two models.

Globalization also dominates discussion on the left. Theorists from the traditions of Marxism, dependency theory, and political economy are grappling with how to understand the changed economic realities. Their debate is about how fundamental the transformation is and whether they need new tools of analysis. At one extreme are those who see a dramatic reconfiguration of world capitalism. Piore and Sabel (1984) called this reconfiguration a "second industrial divide," similar in significance to the industrial revolution. Piore and Sabel's approach to the analysis has been labeled "flexible specialization," as they have argued that changes in technology and markets have brought an end to the dominance of "mass production" and have increased the possibility of much more decentralized, craft-based production. In terms of development, this would mean new opportunities for previously developing regions and countries to compete globally.

Writing from a more explicitly Marxist perspective, analysts of the French regulationist school have argued that **Fordism**, the dominant **mode of production** and regulation in the postwar era, has undergone a crisis and that we are now in an era of **post-Fordism**, with a realignment of capital–labour relations, nationally and internationally; changes in capital accumulation, requiring corporations to adopt new, more flexible strategies (in both the labour process and the product market); and the requisite changes in the institutional–regulatory environment to meet the new requirements of capital. Both the flexible specialization and regulationist analyses of restructuring originated in the experience and perspectives of the North. Considerable debate focuses on how to apply this approach in understanding developments in the South. Many political economists are grappling with the dynamics of the new world economic order and its implications for development in the South. Some political economists reject the notion that the new world economy is a new system, arguing that the underlying dynamics of capitalism are unchanged and that the existing analytical tools can, with modification, be used to understand the new conjuncture (Bienefeld 1993).

All writers in the political-economy and Marxist traditions are critical of hands-off policies, arguing that such policies favour capital and do not necessarily lead to any sustainable development for the bulk of the population. Such writers see an important role for the state in both the South and the North (Bienefeld 1993).

Both free-market and political-economy interpretations of globalization recognize the increasing complexity of the relationships between North and South,

in contrast to the ways their relationship is depicted in the original modernization and dependency theories. The modernization framework sees the basic relationship as one of the North "helping" the traditional South to climb the ladder of development and become like the modern North. Dependency theory sees the North as having created a situation of dependency in the South that the North uses to enrich itself. On this view, the North increases its own development by maintaining and exploiting the dependency of the South. However, current economic realities call both of these interpretations into question. What we now see is a more complex series of relationships, a more complex world.

TNCs are more wealthy and more powerful than many individual nations in either the North or the South. Their control and allegiance know no national boundaries. Although North-based TNCs may continue to enrich themselves, this no longer necessarily translates into investment or job growth in Northern countries. Some nations in the South, such as the emerging NICs, are experiencing rapid economic growth, and some nations in the North are experiencing negative or static growth.

Although it is important to understand the complexity of the changes occurring at the global level, it is also important to understand how these changes are affecting people's lives. Rather than seeing these changes in terms of an evolutionary process — that is, in terms of how societies move (or are kept from moving) from an underdeveloped to a developed state — we must ask what people do to construct their political, social, and economic lives and how they adapt to or resist changes in the conditions confronting them. We must consider not simply the larger structures and institutions but also the local culture and knowledge, as well as the importance of language, in our analysis.

These aspects are emphasized in recent postmodernist and poststructuralist critiques of socioeconomic theory. Their critiques have led to new thinking about development (as discussed in the next section, "Rethinking historical change, deconstructing developmentalism") and feminism (see "Framework H: postmodern feminism").

Both the modernization and Marxist approaches to development grew out of European enlightenment thought, which emphasized universal "truth," rational scientific thought, and the belief in progress. The development enterprise, whether drawing on modernization or Marxist perspectives, is largely rooted in this idea of progress toward a "modern" ideal, progress conceived as a linear process informed by scientific economic theory. Some scholars on the left are adopting a "post-Marxist" approach to development. Acknowledging the limitations of classical Marxist analysis, particularly its economistic, linear character, these scholars

have emphasized, instead, the fluid, contingent nature of capitalist development, the importance of human agency, and the complexity of social transformation (Corbridge 1990; Schuurman 1993; Slater 1993). Scholars who draw more on the postmodernist perspective have challenged the very essence of mainstream and leftist development discourse, questioning the universal pretensions of modernity and calling for a new approach to development that acknowledges differences and searches out previously silenced voices and knowledge.

Questions raised for research

1. What impact has restructuring had on women's paid and unpaid work?

2. What are the conditions of work and incomes in the informal economy?

3. How does migration affect the household?

4. To what extent has restructuring created polarization and increased inequality of earnings and incomes? For men? For women? For households?

5. What strategies are TNCs using to increase competitiveness? How have flexible management strategies affected female and male workers?

Implications for policy and action

1. Globalization brings an emphasis on freer trade, which is resulting in multilateral changes in trade policy (through GATT) and the formation of regional trading blocs, such as the European Community and NAFTA.

2. Social policies are subordinate to economic policies, and the former, it is often argued, hinder competition and are unaffordable.

3. EPZs and export-oriented policies are aimed at facilitating global capitalism and increasing a nation's exposure to the world market.

4. Groups such as trade unions and women's organizations are trying to resist deteriorating working conditions and levels of social services.

5. The ability of nation-states to form policy is severely restricted by international institutions such as the IMF and by the power of TNCs.

Box 1

Global feminization through flexible labour

The supply-side economic model implies a global strategy to stimulate economic growth by opening up economies and liberalizing trade. With this model, export-led growth is the only feasible strategy for development. Cost competitiveness is elevated to utmost significance, and labour-market regulations are considered "rigidities" that raise costs and lower living standards and employment. An irony is that in the 1980s many of the previous objectives of economic growth, notably a whole set of labour and social rights, became increasingly perceived as costs and rigidities.

The goal of "rolling back the state" emphasizes rewards for merit and combines fiscal reform with a minimalist rather than "redistributive" welfare state; poverty alleviation and universal social security are no longer priorities. A consequence of increasing "selectivity" or "targeting" has been that fewer people are entitled to state benefits in industrialized countries. This has given a boost to "additional-worker" effects (pushing more women into the labour market), the informal economy, and precarious forms of working (those without rights to benefits have been obliged to find whatever income-earning work they can). It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the leaders have become the led. International competition from low-income countries with lower labour costs and few labour rights has weakened the rights and benefits of those in the low end of the labour market of many industrialized economies. This has undermined workers' income security, and the suffering is most likely to be felt in the economically and socially vulnerable groups.

The supply-side model rejects neocorporatist state planning and policies for income security but puts its faith in market mechanisms instead. This has eroded the strength of "insiders" in the labour market — notably unionized (male) wage workers and puts pressure on governments to deregulate labour markets, weakening both employment-security legislation and customary practices preserving job security. In country after country, including many developing countries, governments have made it easier for employers to dismiss workers or reduce the size of their labour force. For example, the Philippines plans to introduce legislation to exempt most enterprises from various labour laws.

Governments have thus encouraged more flexible job structures, making it easier for firms to alter job boundaries and the technical division of labour. This has reduced the rights of existing employees and increased the use of so-called external labour markets, allowing employers to substitute lower-cost labour. Job flexibility has also decreased the value to employers of employment continuity and on-the-job experience.

Supply-side economics can affect income security even more directly. Governments have been urged to remove or weaken minimum-wage legislation on the grounds that such wages reduce employment. One might question the logic of that argument — a likely consequence of weaker wage protection is a growth in jobs paying "individual" rather than "family" wages. Research shows that when such low-wage jobs spread, they are mostly filled by women. Even in many developing countries where minimum-wage legislation was only weakly enforced, it at least set standards and had demonstrable effects. Deregulation sanctions and encourages bad practices.

(continued)

Box 1 *(concluded)*

The structural-adjustment policies imposed on developing countries by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other international and national donor agencies are another facet of the supply-side agenda. To assess what is happening to women in the labour market, we must appreciate what this orthodox strategy involves:

- The overwhelming emphasis is on trade liberalization and export-led industrialization. This has meant cuts in subsidies for domestic "nontradeable" products, often staple food items (with such effects as lengthening a woman's working day).
- It has meant macroeconomic deflation to reduce domestic consumption or living standards so that resources can be shifted to export industries, often adversely affecting the low-income women who produce basic consumer goods.
- It focuses on cost-cutting to increase international competitiveness. In practice, this means lowering unit labour costs, which of course means that firms will employ workers prepared or forced to take low-wage jobs.
- It often leads to new production techniques, although usually as part of the search for least-cost methods. This, no doubt, has increased the scope for more refined technical divisions of labour.

In sum, supply-side economics pressures governments to repeal labour-market regulations, cut the public sector, and privatize public enterprises and services, with the intention of improving efficiency and renewing growth, but these measures erode employment security and ultimately reduce employment.

In the context of this global supply-side perspective, and stimulated by new technology, more aggressive international competition (from Japan and the newly industrialized countries), deregulation, erosion of union strength, and international economic instability, enterprises everywhere are seeking to reduce the fixed costs of labour. A reduced reliance on full-time salaried workers with fringe benefits is a global trend. Private- and public-sector enterprises in both developed and developing economies are thus making greater use of casual, temporary, part-time, and contract workers. And this practice further undermines workers' employment and income security.

A shift has occurred, particularly in industrialized countries, from direct to indirect forms of employment: larger firms are subcontracting to smaller units of production, networking, and using "homeworkers" and other forms of outsourcing that are not covered by labour or other regulations and bear the risks and uncertainty of fluctuating demand. But these trends have also been occurring in industrializing economies, where until recently one assumed that the long-term trend of industrial development would involve a shift from unregulated, informal labour to secure, regular employment.

This is the context in which to assess the changing labour- market positions of both men and women in many parts of the world.

Source: Standing (1989)

Questions on excerpt (Box 1)

1. What does Standing mean by a "supply-side agenda"?

2. How have workers been hurt by this supply-side agenda?

General discussion questions

1. How has your country been affected by economic restructuring?

2. How do people experience restructuring on a daily basis in your country?

3. Have jobs become feminized in your country?

4. Are there EPZs in your country? If so, what are their hiring practices and conditions of work?

5. How can wages and working conditions be maintained or improved while capital is so mobile and countries are so concerned with competitiveness?

Rethinking historical change, deconstructing developmentalism

The dictionary definition of *development*, discussed in Chapter 2, referred to a process of unfolding, maturing, and evolving. When applied to plants and other organisms, the evolutionary implications of the term are unproblematic: a fully developed plant, an adult animal, or even a human animal has certain well-defined and fully predictable characteristics. If it lacks these characteristics, we are justified in saying that the organism is underdeveloped or undeveloped.

Using *development* in reference to human societies is much more problematic. As noted in the previous section, societies do not actually follow a linear path of progress, contrary to the assumptions of both modernization and Marxist theorists. Societies can be restructured, deindustrialized, and all too easily dislocated, culturally and materially, from the course they have set for themselves. Nor does global capitalism produce global uniformity within or among nations. Globalization produces, instead, a characteristic unevenness as advances take place in some nations, regions, genders, ethnic groups, and classes while others encounter new forms of subordination and generate new forms of **resistance**.

This chapter outlines some of the theoretical issues and debates arising from critiques of the concept of development. These include the recognition of developmentalism as being an ideology generated in the context of the persistent inequalities of the postcolonial world. Exciting new areas for research arising from these critiques include reexamining local histories and diversity as products of our common global history and scrutinizing the language and practice of development as modes of domination.

In Chapter 2 and earlier in this chapter (and also see "Framework A: modernization theory"), we reviewed the stages-of-development model espoused by modernization theorists. This model is based on the dichotomies underdeveloped–developed and traditional–modern. The Marxist framework, likewise, depends on the evolutionary assumption that all societies will progress from precapitalism to capitalism and finally to socialism, the inevitable endpoint. As we saw, both frameworks explain a failure to evolve in the expected ways as being caused by **obstacles to growth** or barriers that distort the normal process.

In the past two decades, a number of writers have questioned the evolutionary assumption underlying modernization theory and much of Marxist analysis. They have challenged the idea that human history is a movement toward a predefined "higher" state. The alternative theories that have emerged focus on people as the agents or creators of their own histories, rather than on "development" as a natural unfolding of events that no one controls. The idea that people are the agents of history applies not only to people's explicit plans and programs but also to the ordinary activities of everyday life that sustain or reshape the cultural ideas, economic practices, and institutions making up the status quo (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1979).

Within anthropology, the challenge to the evolutionary, or stages, model of historical change has led to a reexamination of the world system and a critique of earlier studies portraying certain societies as "primitive," as if they had somehow remained whole, pristine, static, and isolated while the rest of the world made drastic changes. For example, for a long time anthropological studies portrayed the bushpeople of the Kalahari as exemplary primitives: egalitarian, self-sufficient, "traditional" hunters–gatherers. More recent studies that take history and political economy into account have shown that these people were actually pushed by colonial authorities into remote areas of the desert and marginalized from the trading,

wage labour, and other more varied economic activities in which they had previously engaged. Both their primitivism and their "traditional" practices were, in fact, creative adaptations to the constraints and pressures of colonialism and the global economy (Pratt 1986; Wilmsen 1989).

Thus, central to the current rethinking of historical change is the recognition that all currently existing societies are contemporaneous: they have all existed for the same duration of time, and they have all changed and adapted (Wolf 1982). Contrary to modernization models, no society has been left behind or stuck in the past, and there are no pure, traditional societies just waiting to evolve into modern ones. Nor are any societies "precapitalist," as Marxist evolutionary theories would suggest: all societies have been deeply and fundamentally affected by global capitalism, and for several centuries none have operated independently of the global economy. Quite evidently, globalization has not meant that all societies have become the same, economically or culturally. Diverse local histories have emerged from particular interactions of the local and the global as people have accommodated, and resisted, the conditions they encountered and have pursued their daily activities in culturally meaningful ways.

Recognizing that a capitalist mode of production in one sector and region and a noncapitalist mode of production in another sector and region were both created by the same historical movement (Roseberry 1989) is a major challenge to the modernization framework. This challenge draws on dependency theory but goes beyond it in its emphasis on culture and people as the agents of their own histories. Dependency theorists often portray local communities as passive victims, with their development progressively undermined by rich countries, and thus these theorists have failed to recognize the diverse ways that global capitalism has intruded on the local scene and the particular ways local practices and resistance have shaped and reshaped capitalism.

Rethinking historical change therefore implies that people commonly described as "primitive," "traditional," "backward," or "underdeveloped" are not frozen in a static past (as in modernization models) but represent particular local, creative adaptations to economic and cultural conditions. Local histories are unique and often "convoluted" (Wilber and Jameson 1984). They do not represent the steady march of progress. They are neither passive reflections of unitary world-capitalist forces (as in dependency models) nor yet autonomous from them, as whole and unchanging "cultures" outside of history (as in some modernization models).

The reexamination of local histories has become an important focus of current research. Researchers who reject evolutionary models no longer rely on generalizations to explain development or its failure but try to understand the more specific, local reasons leading to the ways people construct their social and economic life and their adaptations to, and struggles over, the material and cultural conditions of their existence (Hill 1986; Pred and Watts 1992).

A further line of research emerging from the critique of modernization and other evolutionary theories has been a closer scrutiny of the origins and effects of developmentalism, the ideology or worldview underlying modernization (Long and Long 1992; Sachs 1992; Schuurman 1993). This ideology legitimizes the persistent inequalities of the postcolonial era. As an ideology, developmentalism had its roots in European ethnocentrism. It incorporated, almost unchanged, the static representations of the past and of the traditional (and inferior), unchanging "other" that had characterized and justified the "civilizing" mission of centuries of colonialism (Asad 1973; Said 1985).

Modernization in the postcolonial period has been perhaps more insidious than colonialism, as it seems to imply that if people in poor countries worked harder and followed appropriate policies their countries would eventually "catch up" and become like the dominant nations. It thus places the blame more squarely on their failures and shortcomings, whereas colonial regimes had been more prepared to admit that their own presence in the colonies made it impossible, not to say inappropriate, for any such emulation to occur. The attempt to understand the historical creation of the ideologies supporting colonialism, modernization, and "development" has involved turning the mirror back on Western culture and knowledge and examining its own assumptions and biases (Said 1985; Bernal 1987; Roseberry and O'Brien 1991; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992).

In addition to examining the ideology underlying the modernization framework, critics have reexamined the practices through which Western nations have imposed modernization on, and exerted control over, the South in the postcolonial era. These practices include **labeling**, that is, using terms such as *backward* and *underdeveloped*; and deploying experts, projects, and programs that assert that modernization is possible if certain prescriptions are followed.

Sometimes described as "postmodern," one strand in the critique of the practices of modernization-style development takes its principal theoretical orientation from the work of Michel Foucault. He examined the workings of state power

through the process of "normalization." This is the process through which a citizenry is reorganized and labeled according to bureaucratically imposed categories that privilege or punish according to certain standards and rationales. The arbitrary nature of these standards is disguised, so they come to appear normal and self-evident. For example, once a community is labeled "traditional," everything about it comes to appear less rational and less relevant than the attributes of a "modern" community, as if the label itself provided the diagnosis of a problem and proposed a solution: no further investigation needed. The label "female-headed household" is similarly problematic: it appears to name a category of households with a similar "problem" — no man present — when actually the experiences, resources, and cultural contexts of these households imply diverse predicaments, and lack of a male may not be the key characteristic.

Through the process of labeling and normalization, individuals, classes, genders, ethnic groups, and even nations are redefined according to one-dimensional labels that simplify and therefore belie their complex histories and motivations. They are portrayed as passive "clients," "victims," "participants," "target-group members," or "cases" in programs apparently intended for their benefit (Escobar 1984; Wood 1985; Ferguson 1990; DuBois 1991).

A related strand of critique has focused on development agencies and the experts who impose Western categories and technical knowledge that displace local knowledge and expertise. Some national elites in the South, city bred and trained in Western educational systems, are equally guilty of such impositions. They may even have more difficulty recognizing the value of indigenous knowledge, as their class status and privilege, unlike those of the foreign expert, are based on sustaining the distinctions they can draw between themselves and the poorer masses (Chambers 1983). The move to recognize and value indigenous knowledge is growing among development practitioners (Chambers 1983, 1997; Edwards 1989; Nindi 1990; Moore 1992).

Feminist theorizing about the operation of power in the production (and silencing) of knowledge and the significance of starting from the experiences and standpoints of women (and other oppressed groups) has provided a major contribution to the critiques and rethinking of standard research methodologies based on a hierarchy between the researcher and the researched (Harding 1987; Maguire 1987; Kirby and McKenna 1989). Feminists and others concerned with liberation, such as the educator Paolo Freire, have developed and shared techniques such as

popular theatre, participatory action research, and other participatory strategies to address the problems of hierarchy, to facilitate the sharing of knowledge rather than imposing it, and to link research directly to movements for social change. In this area, effective practices are harder to achieve than is suggested in theories of popular education, conscientization, and participation (Rahnema 1990). At times, these participatory methodologies have been co-opted to serve the interests of the people in power. Co-optation can be very subtle, as power and hierarchy so easily reassert themselves. Sometimes, inadvertently, the self-appointed liberators end up imposing their own agendas:

> But the enthusiasm for liberating others has only infrequently been matched by any respect for the categories, particularly the native "half baked" theories of oppression used by others. For, to accept such home-brewed theories is in effect to cut out the role of the experts on revolution and de-expertise dissent ... . Ideologues are always embarrassed by their targeted beneficiaries, allegedly stuck in an earlier stage of history and disinclined to show much interest in the good turn going to be done to them ... . Human nature being what it is, while everyone likes to be a social engineer, few like to be the objects of social engineering ... . To survive beyond the tenure of the modern knowledge systems, the language of liberation will have to take into account, respectfully, the quests for freedom which are articulated in other languages and other forms, sometimes even through the language of silence.
>
> — Nandy (1989, p. 271)

Stimulated by such critiques, feminists and others have tried to identify the modes of resistance that oppressed people use to counter the process of normalization and contest the imposition of labels, programs, and practices that disadvantage them.

Earlier generations of Marxist scholars looked forward to a revolution as the principal mode of resistance against class oppression. Many feminists have pinned their hopes on collective action and the mass organization of women to counter gender oppression. But the recent work of Marxists and feminists recognizes resistance in its more subtle forms. Those oppressed because of their class, race, or gender — often **multiple jeopardies** — may be unable to take the risk of overt and collective action (Scott 1985). This does not necessarily mean they are passive or ignorant of the forces that oppress them. They do not suffer

from false consciousness, and many have no need for "consciousness-raising." It is simply that outsiders concerned about liberation, looking for more dramatic rebellions, have often failed to notice covert and indirect strategies of resistance. Although these strategies are perhaps low key, they are nevertheless effective in registering dissent and whittling away at conditions of oppression to the extent that circumstances allow.

Feminists have documented many strategies of women's resistance, some of which have existed for centuries and others of which have been generated more recently to meet new conditions (Risseeuw 1988; Abu-Lughod 1990). In the development field, examples of resistance might include sabotage and general noncompliance, poor participation in "participatory" schemes imposed from above, refusal of technical advice and input judged by poor farmers as being inappropriate to their needs, and preservation of shamanism and other spiritual practices that put the hegemony of scientific logic into question (Bernstein 1979; Nandy 1989; Ferguson 1990; Scott 1990). Dominant groups attribute many forms of women's and men's resistance to ignorance, backwardness, laziness, and irrelevant traditionalism.

What are farmers really saying when they state that they are "too busy" to attend extension meetings? Or when, apparently daydreaming, they are a few seconds late doffing their hats to the landlord? Or just a trifle slow to obey an order? What are women saying when they state that forms of birth control imposed on them by well-meaning population planners "don't agree" with their systems or are contrary to their traditions? Or when they keep their savings hidden from their husbands but don't directly challenge the husband's authority to determine household spending? Or when they insist to their male kin that it is the spirits who forbid the sale of land to outsiders? Or when they state to urban or Western feminists that feminism is not for them?

In situations in which direct challenges to systems of power would be punished, perhaps severely, indirect forms of resistance keep the oppressor guessing. What do they really mean? "One can never be sure and the strength of resistance lies in the fact that one can never be sure" (Nandy 1989, pp. 268–269). If neither oppressors nor self-appointed liberators can ever be sure, this poses problems that new theories and practices must address.

Postmodern approaches to development studies focus on unpacking the power relations and hidden agendas implicit in language and **discourse**. This type

of analysis — also known as **deconstruction** — provides powerful analytical tools equally applicable to the discourse of official agencies and institutions, the discourse of those seeking to promote radical change, and the discourse of everyday life, which is used to articulate both power and resistance. One can see this entire chapter, even this whole manual, as an exercise in deconstruction, because we are examining hidden assumptions behind particular bodies of theory and practice. A clear way to demonstrate the uses of deconstruction is to examine key words and the ways their meaning shifts as they are deployed in varying contexts in the service of specific agendas.

We have seen how the term *development* is deployed by theorists and practitioners who draw on quite different conceptual frameworks, with different processes and goals. Other key terms meriting closer scrutiny include *equity*, *participation*, and *sustainable development*. These words, separately and in combination, are used to refer to vastly different scenarios. As critics (Chambers 1997; Lele 1991; Moore 1992) have pointed out, the diversity of meanings attributed to these key terms is not simply a matter of confusion. Ambiguity is actually a key aspect of the effective deployment of these words to meet specific agendas. Everyone, whatever their political persuasion, can agree that equity, participation, and sustainability are desirable. People may think that policies and programs couched in these terms reflect a broad consensus on the goals and processes of development, but this practice masks major differences and reduces the scope of critical debate to the issue of selecting the most efficient delivery mechanisms. Labels, language, and discourse in general have political effects in the world and have strategic potential to benefit or harm certain groups when deployed in particular ways.

Within a modernization framework, *equity* refers to equal legal rights to participate in an ever-expanding global capitalist system (sustained growth). Equity does not, in this framework, imply equal effective opportunity to participate. The modernization framework does not recognize the systemic class, race, or **gender barriers** that negate the idea of an open society in which every individual makes progress according to his or her merits. Participation, here, does not imply making any choices about goals or lifestyles — it assumes that one can be modern in only one way. No ecological or temporal limits and no recognition of the uneven costs and benefits of the global economy accompany the idea of sustained growth.

Within the institutional framework of development agencies, these same terms have a different set of meanings and carry different assumptions. *Equity* becomes the equal right and obligation to participate in development programs and projects determined by outside agencies (government, nongovernmental, national, international). Nonparticipation is taken as evidence of backwardness, as these programs and projects are designed by "experts" to "develop" local economic and political systems. Sustainability in this context is often associated with the ideas of efficiency and low cost. If the programs have been well designed and participation is high, they are supposed to continue indefinitely, with minimal resources from government. Examples include centrally designed community health-care systems that are intended to reduce the need and demand for high-quality medical services or road improvements to be undertaken and maintained by villagers.

A third set of meanings for these same terms can be drawn from a more radical framework, with empowerment as its central objective. *Equity*, in this case, means equal effective power (overcoming race, class, and gender barriers) to participate in defining the goals and agenda of development processes that meet every human's need for a secure and decent livelihood, both for present and for future generations (sustainable development). The starting point for achieving these goals has to be the recognition of differences (along gender, race, and other dimensions). Sensitivity to difference (race, class, gender, region, history, etc.) is an essential component of attempts to develop new visions and plan for change: one group's liberation or "development" may otherwise cause another group to be neglected or, worse still, further oppressed. Third World feminists and those identifying with postmodernism have made major contributions to critique and new theorizing on questions of power and difference. Their work is examined in the next section ("Rethinking gender, race, and identity in a global context").

Questions raised for research

1. What can be learned about conditions of integration into the world economic system from examining regional precolonial and colonial history?

2. What material and cultural struggles are reflected in daily life as it can be observed today?

3. What are the principal terms and labels used to describe the process of development and to represent the ways of life of those apparently in need of development?

4. Through what forms of practice (beliefs, speech, actions, modes of organization, etc.) is resistance expressed by subordinated groups, and why does it take these forms?

5. What is the vision of "development" or progress held by a particular social group; what are the members of this group trying to improve about their lives and conditions; and what start can be made on the local and global changes needed to achieve their goals?

Implications for policy and action

1. Liberated from the idea that development involves pushing or pulling people down a preestablished path, development practitioners can focus on understanding the variety of goals that people in particular places and times are trying to achieve and can work with them to explore and overcome the constraints that frustrate them.

2. Sensitivity to differences (race, class, gender, region, history, etc.) is an essential component of attempts to develop new visions and to plan for change: one group's liberation or "development" may cause another group to be neglected or further oppressed.

3. However severely a social group may be oppressed, it is not without its own analysis of the causes and nature of the oppression and its own strategies of resistance. Changes promoted by outsiders without a full understanding of these strategies and conditions can undermine the well-being of the people they are intended to help. Caution, consultation, creativity, and a willingness to learn and adapt, rather than impose, are key characteristics of effective development partnerships.

4. Labels, language, and discourse in general have political effects and strategic potential to benefit or harm certain groups. This aspect needs careful attention in policy and action agendas.

Box 2

Dilemmas of development discourse: the crisis of developmentalism and the comparative method

What these pairs of perspectives — modernisation theory and Marxism, development thinking and dependency theory — have in common is economism, centrism and teleology: economism because economic growth is the centrepiece of social change, teleology in that the common assumption is goal-oriented development, centrism because development (or underdevelopment. according to the dependency view) is led from where it is furthest advanced — the metropolitan world. As such they are variations on a theme. This testifies to the strength and complexity of developmentalism as a paradigm. Part of this strength is that developmentalism is a layered, composite discourse which combines several discourses: liberal and radical, secular and religious ... .

Universalizing from western experiences developmentalism created an ahistorical model of change which, on the one hand, created a "third world" which was but an historical construct, and on the other, constructed "the West" which had no basis in historical reality either. The actual modernisation paths of western countries differed among themselves (e.g., early, late industrializers) and differed from the ideology of "development." Different countries applied different combinations of mercantilism and free trade, varying according to periods and contexts. Thus, ethnocentrism to characterize the bias of developmentalism would not even be a correct term. The divergence among western countries is much larger than the ideology of modernity and development suggests. A concept such as democracy does not carry the same meaning even among western countries ... .

Postmodernism is a western deconstruction of western modernism, and to address the problem of developmentalism, more is required. What matters most and comes across least in many analyses of development discourse is the complexity and "holism" of western developmentalism. Developmentalism is not merely a policy of economic and social change, or a philosophy of history. It reflects the ethos of western culture and is intimately intertwined with western history and culture. Ultimately, the problem of developmentalism cannot be settled in terms of political economy, not in terms of social philosophy, the critique of ideas or the dissembly of discourse: it requires a profound historical and cultural review of the western project. This task we might term the deconstruction of the West (using a fashionable term but also extending its use, for deconstruction refers to the analysis of texts).

The deconstruction of the West is about returning the West to world history. This follows from the logic of decolonization. It also follows from the crisis of the western development model, not least in the West itself. This may yield a basis for reopening the debate on rationality and values. Here I will only indicate briefly what directions the deconstruction of the West might take.

(continued)

Box 2 *(concluded)*

The deconstruction of the West can be taken as a historical as well as a conceptual project. Taken as a historical project the key question is: to what extent is what we call "western civilization" actually a universal human heritage, which comes to us, for historical and geographical reasons, in the guise of a western synthesis? In this context, certain forms of being "anti-western" are as irrelevant as, for instance, being anti-algebra, which in the first place is not western but Arabic in origin, and in the second place does not make sense. In a conceptual sense this translates into the question of what, in "western" contributions, is particularist and what is universal, what is culture specific and what is general or generalizable. ...

The analysis of western discourses is important, but wider cultural confrontation is also required: the analysis of cognitive patterns underlying discourse, of western iconography and art, of western popular culture. Here we approach the point of reversal: the erstwhile model examined as a problem. Part of the project of analysis of the West in terms formerly reserved for history's backwaters. The analysis of western fetishism, not as a fad but as an act of therapy. ...

These enquiries pave the way for a more specific project: the deconstruction of "development." This again can be taken in several modes. It can be taken in the sense of the deconstruction of development discourse. This approach has been adopted in this essay in a historical-interpretative fashion. It may be taken also in a stricter sense of deconstruction development policies and take the form of the disaggregation of policy formulations, for example, between those that are (a) inevitable, (b) necessary, (c) desirable or acceptable under certain specified conditions, and (d) nonsensical and reflecting western biases and ethnocentrism. Accordingly, the deconstruction of development is the prerequisite for its reconstruction. This cannot be a single reconstruction but should be, given varying itineraries and circumstances in different countries, i.e., polycentric reconstructions.

— Pieterse (1992, pp. 5–29)

Questions on excerpt (Box 2)

1. What is the problem with using a traditional–modern dichotomy in talking about development?

2. Why is it necessary to deconstruct the West and reexamine its history and cultural ethos?

Box 3

The politics of development-policy labeling

By definition, then, such processes (if which "labelling" is one) do not appear significant ... yet. We start from the premise that they are. It is therefore our current project to convince others through the following case studies that such "deep" structures should occupy a more prominent position in the analysis of the state, and the politics of development policy in particular. It is a programme of recognizing the political in the apparently non-political. It also becomes a way of understanding the state through an examination of certain practices of intervention and agency involvement in development. ...

So the issue is not whether we label people, but which labels are created, and whose labels prevail to define a whole situation or policy area, under what conditions and with what effects? ...

A central feature of this labelling process is the differentiation and disaggregation of the individual, and the individual's subsequent identification with a principal label such as "landless," "sharecropper," or, in another context, "single parent." Individuals are overdetermined in this way. The list of such labels can be continued more or less indefinitely. As suggested above, labels like "refugee," "youth," or "woman" look inevitable, given, benevolent, or natural. However, they are evidence that choices have been made between which designation of people to adopt. Remember that it is not whether, but which, by whom, under what conditions, for what purpose, with what effects! The process whereby the individual is differentiated is highly significant to our theme. The principle is familiar from structural–functional sociology or role theory, or from the discussion in public administration of compartmentalization, the case, precedents and standardization. ...

Labelling then refers to the weighting applied to such differentiated elements. "Problems" requiring attention and policy are constructed and defined in this way, leading to one label or element representing the entire situation of an individual or a family. Take, for example, the designation "landless," which is prominent in Bangladesh government and development agency rhetoric. It appears both uncontroversial and benevolent. That is to say, it is difficult to dispute now that a rapid increase in rural landlessness constitutes a problem, and that it signifies good intentions to devise policies for the landless as a target group. However, this designation relies upon a differentiation between a poor person's (or a family's) many roles and the choice to focus on one of them. To be without sufficient land for family subsistence is clearly very important in rural Bangladesh, but the circumstances of possession of, access to or rights over land are very complex and variable. Although the term "landless" appears to refer to a sufficiently strong category upon which to predict a range of behaviour, it is not true that the designation has uniform implications for the people thus labelled. It does not reveal how such people actually survive. It relies upon the crude, over-simplified variable of nonpossession of land to tell this story of the varied relationships through which survival is arranged. ...

(continued)

Box 3 *(concluded)*

Another approach to this process of differentiation and weighting is to distinguish between the notions of "case" and "story." The "case" (i.e., a compartmentalized aspect abstracted from a person's total situation or "story") is institutionalized over time through labels most familiarly, of course, through stereotyping. Government programmes transform people into objects — as recipients, applicants, claimants, clients, or even participants. It will be necessary to make significant conceptual distinctions between some of these terms, but for the moment they can together be regarded as evidence of de-linking — the separation of people from the "story" and their representation as a "case." In some discussions, this might be recognized as the familiar process of bureaucratic alienation and even regarded as the inevitable, necessary cost (or, for some, risk) of maintaining administrative justice.

More is involved, however. There are fundamental political consequences of such de-linking. both contemporary and historical connections are either severed or re-interpreted. Identities (family, kin, clan, neighbourhood, age group) are broken, to be re-established on the basis of a person's relationship to an actual or potential category of state activity. The designation thereby acquires a logic in which specified kinds of behaviour and interaction are demanded....

At the same time, separation of case from story (i.e., the tendency away from self-evidence) is an index of power for the possessor of the case. To remove people from their own story as a precondition for their access to publicly managed resources and services is a central feature of the political disorganization of subordinated classes. Authoritative labelling, defining the boundaries of competence or relevance in policy fields and bureaucratic encounters, has this function. Within the donative discourse of development policy, programmes are directed towards activity which is weakly linked or de-linked by ideological representation or practice to multidimensional systems of exchange or social structural history. The donative discourse brings the notion development very close to relief and charity — people become "refugees," "itinerants," "slum dwellers," "vagrants," and so on.

— Wood (1985, pp. 347–373)

Questions on excerpt (Box 3)

1. If labels are only words, why do they matter?

2. What connections are being drawn here between power, knowledge, and domination?

General discussion questions

1. Are the terms *traditional* and *modern* used in development discourse in your country? What political messages do they carry? Which groups, regions, or activities are labeled "traditional" or "modern"?

2. What attempts have been made in your country to articulate alternative visions of development? Whose interests do these visions serve?

3. To what extent are indigenous forms of knowledge, which are based in experience rather than in formal education, valued in your country? What are the forums in which it is expressed?

4. What forms of resistance to imposed categories and agendas are found among oppressed groups in your country?

5. How have activists, including feminists, worked to overcome the barriers to sharing that are created by unequal power between themselves and those they seek to understand and assist?

6. What meanings do the terms *equity*, *participation*, and *sustainability* currently have in your country's or organization's policies and programs?

Rethinking gender, race, and identity in a global context

Responding to considerable pressure from women around the world, the United Nations declared 1975 as International Women's Year. That year, the first United Nations-sponsored intergovernmental conference on women opened, with much fanfare and optimism, in Mexico City. The participants came together to celebrate and strengthen global sisterhood. Although the conference organizers acknowledged differences among the world's women, they confidently expected that the common bonds between women, particularly their oppression by men, would provide the glue needed to foster global sisterhood (Pietila and Vickers 1990; Tinker 1990).

However, this conference, along with an international conference on women and development held at Wellesley College in the United States in 1976, revealed some important divisions among women in the South and North. The

vision of an easy global sisterhood fell to pieces as women from the South voiced their concerns about the domination of research agendas and publications by women from the North. They questioned the relevance for women in the South of much North-based feminist research. They pointed to the specific problems of the South — particularly their disadvantaged position in the world economy and the destructive legacy of colonialism, racism, and imperial capitalism — and called for feminist research on women's lives in the specific context of Southern problems and possibilities (Wong 1981).

Scholars and activists in the South increasingly turned their attention to the specific problems and preoccupations of their regions, particularly the impacts of race, colonialism, and global inequalities on women. Drawing on their own experiences and those of feminist activists and theorists in the South, along with the writings of black and minority scholars in the North, of dependency theorists, and of some Marxist feminists, a Third World, or indigenous, feminism began to emerge, distinguishing itself from much feminist research in the North. Although scholars working within this emerging perspective recognized the complexity of Third World "realities" and the gender inequalities of the South, they initially emphasized the "commonality and power of the global economic and political processes that set the context for diverse national and regional experiences, and often constrain the possibilities for alternative strategies and actions" (Sen and Grown 1987, p. 9). Considerable debate occurred about which approach to take. Some scholars remained committed to the liberal perspective and thus focused on family, kinship relations, and women's place in the home and in the workplace (Sudarkasa 1973; Mukherjee 1978; Oppong 1983). Others stood more squarely in the radical tradition and consequently emphasized the role of class and international capitalism in women's subordination and political action (Jelin 1980; Arizpe and Aranda 1981; Kishwar and Vanita 1984; Mbilinyi 1984; Ng 1985). However, Third World scholars generally agreed on the need to focus on the poor, especially poor women; on the importance of global economic inequalities; and on the need to ground solutions to women's problems in the realities and experiences of women in the South. Nevertheless, most scholars and activists in the South, like their counterparts in the North, "did not entirely relinquish the fascination of finding global explanations to the subordination of women" (Vargas 1992, p. 200; see also Sen and Grown 1987; Borque and Warren 1990; Mazumdar and Sharma 1990).

Institutions for research and activism blossomed in the South and played a key role in these debates. The Association of African Women for Research and Development, launched in 1977, sponsored networking among African researchers and publication of articles on methodology and development for women in Africa (AAWORD 1983). The research carried out by the Institute of Social and Economic Research and by the Women and Development Unit of the University of the West Indies has provided both theoretical and methodological insights into Caribbean women's lives (Barriteau 1992). The Center for the Development of Brazilian Women, founded in 1975, has provided an umbrella for Brazilian feminists largely concerned with the economic dimensions of women's subordination (Alvarez 1989). A series of meetings called Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Encounters has been held since 1981, giving feminists from the region an opportunity to discuss both substantive and organizational concerns (Vargas 1992). The Gender and Development Unit of the Asian and Pacific Development Center, the Pacific and Asian Women's Forum, and the Asian Women's Research and Action Network have stimulated important research on women in the region. Manushi, in India, which started in 1979, has provided a vehicle for Indian feminists to develop their own brand of feminist theorizing and action (Kishwar and Vanita 1984). Indian feminism flowered in the 1980s, inspiring the creation of organizations such as the Economists Interested in Women's Issues Group and the Centre for Women's Development Studies, in New Delhi. DAWN, a Third World women's organization, grew from a small seed planted in Bangladore, India, into an international forum for women in the South concerned with development strategies, policies, theories, and research. It has been concerned particularly with the impact of development on poor people, especially women (Sen and Grown 1987).

The flowering of research institutions and research in the South provided a platform from which feminists in the South and the North could begin to share concerns and ideas on a more equal footing. The focus on global political economy and the interaction between gender and class resonated with, and influenced, feminists in the North working within the socialist-feminist perspective. In the 1980s, forums such as the mid-decade United Nations meeting in Copenhagen and the 1985 NGO forum, held alongside the final meeting of the United Nations Decade for Women, in Nairobi, provided a meeting ground for feminists working within this perspective in the South and the North. Both agreed on the centrality of economic and political factors and the importance of class, gender relations,

and the sexual division of labour, particularly women's productive and reproductive labour (Young et al. 1981; Mies 1989). However, Third World and black feminists focused more specifically on issues of race, ethnicity, and culture and called for a socialist feminism with these elements at the centre of its analysis (Sen and Grown 1987).

In recent years, some scholars in the South have become sceptical about Western-based "solutions" and theories, whether based on liberal-feminist or Marxist–socialist-feminist perspectives. This scepticism has no doubt been reinforced by global restructuring (with its blurring of the North–South divide), the limits imposed on economic growth by growing environmental degradation, and the demise of socialism as a feasible alternative to liberal, neoclassical, economic-market-oriented "solutions" to the world's development problems. This scholarship has contributed to, and drawn on, postmodernist thought, with its emphasis on knowledge, language, and power and its scepticism about the **grand theory**, particularly Western hegemony over the definition of modernity (Said 1985; Foucault 1980). It has also drawn on standpoint feminism, with its focus on women's lived experiences (Harding 1991), and postmodernist feminism, which adopts a postmodernist stance toward difference, discourse, and grand theory, without abandoning feminism's commitment to gender equality (Flax 1990; Nicholson 1990; Hennessy 1993; Parpart 1993).

One strand in this critique has focused on Northern scholars and development experts' **representation** of Third World peoples. Drawing on the literature on deconstruction and the postcolonial critiques of Said (1985), Spivak (1990), and others, scholars such as Lazreg (1988), Ong (1988), Minh-ha (1989), and Sangari and Vaid (1989) have shown how Northern representations of Third World women as the vulnerable, helpless, backward "other" have reflected and perpetuated deeply held Western biases. Indeed, Aihwa Ong (1988, p. 80) insisted that "for feminists looking overseas, the non-feminist Other is not so much patriarchy as the non-Western women."

This critique of colonial–postcolonial representation has aroused considerable interest in the relationship between power, knowledge, and language and discourse. Feminist scholars in the South have become increasingly vocal about the need for studies to give voice to the complex, diverse, and multilayered realities of Third World women. The importance of recovering women's previously silenced voices and knowledges has inspired studies such as the diary of Rigoberta

Menchú (Burgos-Debray 1984), the life stories of Bengali women (Kalekar 1991), and the story of a rural Tanzanian woman (Mbilinyi 1989). Environmentalists such as Vandana Shiva (1988) and Bina Agarwal (1991) have emphasized the complex, sophisticated environmental knowledge of poor women in the South and the potential it holds for sustainable development. Scholars have also begun making more liberal use of direct quotes in their writings to let informants speak for themselves (Ong 1987; Bozzoli and Nkotsoe 1991; Okeke 1994). The focus on indigenous knowledge and recovery of previously subjugated knowledges continues to be an important theme among Southern researchers.

The growing scepticism about the universal claims of Western theories, especially their control over the definition of modernity, has undermined the search for universals and shifted the focus of many Southern scholars to spatially and culturally specific local studies. Community studies have provided in-depth analyses of women's daily lives in the South. Latin American scholars have emphasized the urban poor (Jelin 1990; Findji 1992), and African scholars have more often focused on rural communities (see the articles in Momsen and Kinnaird 1993). Environment, gender, and community have been of major interest to scholars and activists in all parts of the South. Vandana Shiva (1988) in India and Wangari Mathaii in Kenya, for example, have focused on Third World women's special relationship to and knowledge of the environment. Although this literature is not always sensitive to difference, especially along class lines, it does emphasize the material and spatial contexts of the lives of women in the South, especially poor women (Agarwal 1991).

This focus on context and knowledge has spawned an increasing recognition of the importance of **identity** and difference. Increasingly, scholars in the South have abandoned the search for the "Third World woman" and turned their attention to the many differences among women in the South. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, recent Feminist Encounters have had to acknowledge women's diversity in the region and the need to adopt a more democratic and pluralistic approach to women's issues (Vargas 1992). Studies of religious, cultural, ethnic, national, and other identities have blossomed as scholars recognize the strength of these constructs on both women's (and men's) self-perceptions and actions. Religious fundamentalism, with its patriarchal tendencies, has been a persistent theme in Southern feminist scholarship (Mernissi 1987; Imam 1994; Kumar 1994; Mumtaz 1994). The role of race in women's lives, particularly in postcolonial societies, has become a major scholarly preoccupation (Barriteau 1992).

Ethnicity, once associated with premodern "tradition" and thus relegated to the purview of historians and anthropologists, has resurfaced and been acknowledged as a crucial element in present-day societies in the South (and North). The recovery and strengthening of local traditions have been seen as a way to challenge destructive Western representations of Third World women and to create institutions and value systems rooted in one's own history.

However, this process is a two-edged sword, as many local traditions are sexist and seek to maintain women's subordination. Hindu culture, for example, has "a powerful traditional discourse that values woman's place as long as she keeps to the place prescribed" (Narayan 1989, p. 259). Yet, these same traditions have provided a basis for critiquing destructive colonial discourses. To undermine such traditions is no easy task. Nevertheless, young scholars in the South are increasingly willing to challenge cultural traditions that perpetuate women's subordination (Amadiume 1987; Vargas 1992; Mukabi-Kabiria et al. 1993; Okeke 1994). This scholarship is an important reminder that **positivism** and modernity are not the only forces working against women's interests.

The focus on identity, difference, and culture has undermined the notion that a few universal divisions (such as class or race) can identify and determine people's lives. Scholars from the South (and North) are increasingly aware of the complexity of people's daily existence. Women's lives in the South are built around multiple axes — such as race, class, gender, culture, age, and ethnicity — which interact in complex and often unexpected ways, over both time and place. In Latin America, the search to understand this process has led to a recognition of the plurality of women's experiences and

> the possibility of multiple representations and identities ... . The acknowledgment of these multiple and diverse rationalities refutes the idea of an emancipatory process that articulates aspirations within one dynamic only and through an exclusive and privileged axis.
>
> — Vega (1988, p. 28)

African and Asian scholars have also begun to focus on the multiple identities and oppressions of women in their regions and on the need to undertake a more nuanced, complex, and contextual analysis of women's daily lives (Ong 1987; Rajan 1993; Okeke 1994).

Scholars in the South engaged in the current debates on difference, culture, and identity are calling for fundamental rethinking of women's position in regard

to economic and political issues. Economic development, especially the economic problems facing women, continues to be a central preoccupation for feminist scholars and activists in the South. Much of their writing is still deeply influenced by either liberal modernization perspectives (Thomson and Sarikahputi 1989; Viswanath 1991) or socialist-feminist analysis (Heyser 1987; Meena 1991; Eviota 1992; Perez-Aleman 1992). However, scholars from the South are increasingly arguing for a new approach to development, one that takes women's multiple, fluid identities and their local knowledge into account. Providing the answers to development problems is less and less seen as the prerogative of the North. Scholars in the South are increasingly demanding that development policies and plans be embedded in the specific, complex, and diverse realities of their own societies, rather than being "cooked up" by mainstream development "experts" in the North (Ong 1987; Bunch and Carillo 1990; Barriteau 1992; Tadria 1993). As Bina Agarwal pointed out, the South needs

> an alternative transformational approach to development [that] would ... concern both how gender relations and relations between people and the non-human world are conceptualised, and how they are concretised in terms of the distribution of property, power and knowledge.
>
> — Agarwal (1991, p. 58)

The focus on difference, multiple identities, and discourse has also affected the study of women's political action, both at the level of the state and in social movements.

Feminist scholars in the South, although concerned that the focus on difference and multiple identities could undermine feminist politics and rarely sympathetic to the extreme relativism of "high postmodernism," are also increasingly aware of the need to acknowledge the implications of difference and discourse for women's resistance and collective action. As Vargas pointed out,

> The Latin American women's movement shows that it is no longer possible to speak of women's identity, anchored and built on their experiences as a subordinate gender ... . We are living in a time, not only in Latin America, characterized by the simultaneous emergence of new social subjects, multiple rationalities and identities, expressed in the social movements.
>
> — Vargas (1992, p. 196)

As Vargas also pointed out, Latin American feminists have realized that the feminist movement

> cannot be based only on a single dynamic or on an exclusive, privileged axis, but must be grounded in the articulation of differences, of the multiple and diverse rationalities already present within it.
>
> — Vargas (1992, p. 212)

For this to happen, women must recognize and welcome competing identities and discourses and discover ways to turn them into a basis for political action. In Kenya, for example, feminists have placed the gendered character of culture and language at the centre of their struggle for women's democratic rights (Mukabi-Kabira et al. 1993; Nzomo 1993).

Identity has become a political battleground. Religious, ethnic, and cultural identities compete for women's political allegiance, sometimes to reduce their participation and sometimes to mobilize it. Both the new discourse of identity and "traditional" claims to knowledge and authority influence women's political activities. In Pakistan, for example, fundamentalist Muslim groups are pushing women out of politics (Mumtaz 1994), and in northern Nigeria a Muslim women's organization is attempting to redefine women's political rights within Islam. Other women are caught between their Muslim heritage and a desire to mobilize women against patriarchal traditions (Imam 1994). Culture, language, and identity have thus become central issues in the study of women's political action in the South, both for mobilization and for resistance. And they promise to remain so (Radcliffe and Westwood 1993).

The writings of scholars and activists in the South have influenced, and been influenced by, scholarship in the North. Minority scholars in the North, especially black women, have found the focus on difference and multiple representation particularly important. Their devastating critiques of Western scholarship, with its claims to "know" women in the South and minority women in the North, have reinforced Southern scholarship. Both minority scholarship in the North and scholarly writing in the South have undermined Northern-feminist hegemony and set the stage for a more considered approach to difference (hooks 1991; Mohanty et al. 1992). Scholarship on the multiple oppressions of black and minority women in the North (King 1988; James and Busia 1993) has reinforced studies from the South (and North) that point to the crucial roles played by race, class, ethnicity, and gender in women's lives. The issue of multiple identities and differences, the importance of language and discourse and their connection to power, and the need to recover women's voices and knowledge have become core elements in current feminist thinking.

The focus on difference, identity, and discourse has played itself out in diverse ways within feminist scholarship in the North. Many feminists have incorporated elements of this thinking into their analysis but remain basically tied to established feminist perspectives. Sandra Harding (1992), for example, has accepted the implications of multiple identities and the constructed subject without abandoning her commitment to standpoint feminism. Many socialist feminists continue to write on issues of political economy but often with a new emphasis on culture, language, and difference (Beneria and Feldman 1992; Mies and Shiva 1993). Some feminists in the North have been drawn to postmodern thinking, which spawned many of the current debates. A few feminist postmodernists, such as Luce Irigaray (1985), place postmodern ideas at the centre of their analysis. Others adopt a more synthetic approach. Some of these postmodernist feminists — most notably Jane Flax (1990) and Judith Butler and Joan Scott (1992) — have believed that postmodernist thinking can be readily incorporated into feminist theory and politics. Others — such as Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson (1990), Rosemary Hennessy (1993), and Kathleen Canning (1994) — have called for a strategic engagement of feminist and postmodernist thought, but one that transforms both perspectives, rather than simply creating an alliance between the two. Fraser and Nicholson believed that the two approaches complemented each other:

> Post-modernists offer sophisticated and persuasive criticisms of foundationalism and **essentialism**, but their conceptions of social criticism tend to be anemic. Feminists offer robust conceptions of social criticism, but they tend at times to lapse into foundationalism and essentialism.
>
> — Fraser and Nicholson (1990, p. 20)

They called for a critical engagement between the two, one that combines "a postmodernist incredulity toward **metanarratives** with the social-critical power of feminism" (Fraser and Nicholson 1990, p. 34).

Clearly, the encounter between feminists in the North and South, as well as among feminists with diverse approaches and perspectives, is ongoing, indeterminate, and fluid. This contested terrain will no doubt continue to foster debate and negotiation. It is becoming global, drawing on the thinking and writing of scholars all over the world. Feminism, one hopes, has arrived at a point at which differences and ambiguities can be celebrated, without sacrificing the search for

> broader, richer, more complex, and multilayered feminist solidarity; the sort of solidarity which is essential for overcoming the oppression of women in its "endless variety and monotonous similarity."
>
> — Fraser and Nicholson (1990, p. 35)

Questions raised for research

1. Do the specific realities of women in the South (and of many women in the North) — particularly colonialism, poverty, and culture — raise issues that are not adequately addressed in existing feminist theory?

2. How do race, class, and gender intersect to influence women's lives?

3. How do the construction and representation of women by those who control the dominant discourse affect women's lives?

4. Why is it important to search for women's voices and knowledge, particularly those that have been hidden from history or silenced altogether? What can these voices add to feminist theorizing?

5. What is the connection between language and power? What do we learn by analyzing the words people use in describing one another and themselves? How do words and discourse affect action?

Implications for policy and action

1. Feminist writers in the South argue that policies should be grounded in the material, spatial, ideological and discursive contexts of women's lives.

2. It is important to create and strengthen institutes and organizations in the South that can build the capacity of Southern researchers and activists and to foster a research and action agenda that is based on the priorities and concerns of women in the South.

3. Policymakers must recognize that knowledge is found on many levels and that the voices and opinions of the less powerful and less educated may offer more relevant solutions to development problems than all the "experts" in the North.

4. Hidden assumptions embedded in policies and programs are a vehicle for the exertion of power over others and should be exposed.

5. Policies should emerge from a participatory process that includes the voices of all women concerned.

Box 4

The inadequacy of the dominant research methodology

Despite decades of research activity in African societies, social and economic problems are worsening and several African countries are on the brink of economic collapse. Women are particularly affected since many of the policies and historical processes designed to integrate Africa into the world economic system have been detrimental to them. The differential integration of African men and women into the world economic system resulted in the deterioration of the status of African women and is an aspect of the political economy of European patriarchy. As a consequence of European penetration into Africa, the devaluation and neglect of the productive and reproductive labour of women within subsistence economies continues to determine the position of the majority of African women. Instead of studying the impact of these processes on African societies, most research has concentrated on producing essentially descriptive and useless data.

One of the most serious constraints to research on women's issues in Africa is related to the matrix of the dominant research methodology influencing African social science research. Developed and controlled by Europeans, the methodology cannot be separated from the political, economic, and cultural domination of Africa by Europe and the subsequent marginalisation of the majority of African women.

As a product of the value maintaining institutions of imperialism, this methodology reflects inequality in the power relations between African countries and European countries and also within these countries. Knowledge and scholarship are defined in western terms promoting the premises, value systems, and philosophies of European societies.

For the most part, this methodology has had a negative and disruptive effect on African systems of knowledge, science, technology, art, production, reproduction, etc. It has also sustained a process of economic exploitation, underdevelopment, and inequality. European interests in African social systems stemmed from and resulted in conceptual orientations, perspectives, methodologies, and research tools that reinforced this unequal relationship.

Positivism, social Darwinism, structural-functionalism, acculturation, development theory, etc. have all been spawned from theoretical frameworks which imposed European superiority, stressed stability and order as a means of maintaining European colonialism, and viewed 'civilization' as progress through unilineal stages of evolution. Dichotomous models further mystified reality by stressing unrelatedness rather than wholeness. The powerful organic links between entities were ignored and represented in conceptual frameworks as dichotomies, such as rural/urban, formal/informal, public/private, traditional/modern, developed/developing. These are presented as mutually exclusive rather than organically linked. Even the continent of Africa had its geographical integrity dichotomized into two or three separate zones.

(continued)

Box 4 *(concluded)*

In this matrix, the ideology of racism has played and continues to play a very important role. Categorising Africans as a subspecies of humanity was sustained by "scientific research" and justified European domination. This ideology helped structure the international money economy and in multi-racial societies in Europe, the Americas, Australia, and Africa, color or descent from color became an important determinant of socio-economic status and access to prestige and political power.

The exploitation of Africa was not restricted to mineral and vegetable resources or the cheap labour and markets. Research also had an exploitative commercial function. Raw data became part of the "cargo" extracted from Africa for processing and expropriation in the West. Like most money-making international business activities, research often represents interests and priorities that are more beneficial to non-Africans than to Africans. Most research programs designed and executed by outsiders are of theoretical and academic importance to foreign researchers. They often fulfill PhD requirements at European and American universities or cover salaries of scholars — so called "experts" and advisers from non-African institutions. Some of these research activities are components of development projects costing millions of dollars and benefiting profit-making development agencies in Europe and the United States.

Most of the research on African women belongs to this tradition and reflects a structure very much in keeping with the unequal structure of the world economic system. Data on women in Africa facilitated the exploitation of African women as guinea pigs, consumers, and cheap sources of labour. Of equal importance has been the overriding interest in fertility data on African women inspired by neo-Malthusian projections used to justify targeting African women for aggressive population control activities.

— Steady (1983, pp. 12–13)

Box 5

Development crises and alternative visions

For many women problems of nationality, class, and race are inextricably linked to their specific oppression as women. Defining feminism to include the struggle against all forms of oppression is both legitimate and necessary. In many instances gender equality must be accompanied by changes on these other fronts. But at the same time the struggle against gender subordination cannot be compromised during the struggle against other forms of oppression or be relegated to a future when they may be wiped out.

(continued)

Box 5 *(concluded)*

Many third world women are acutely conscious of the need for this clarification and self-affirmation. Throughout the Decade they have faced accusations from two sides: from those who dismiss them as not being truly "feminist" because of their unwillingness to separate the struggle against gender subordination from that against other oppressions and from those who accuse them of dividing class or national struggles and sometimes of uncritically following women's liberation movements imported from outside. This is why we strongly affirm that feminism strives for the broadest and deepest development of society and human beings free of all systems of domination. Such a global vision has been articulated before particularly at strategy sessions in Bangkok in 1979 and at Stony Point New York in 1980. This book builds on those earlier initiatives, sharpens our analysis and strengthens our attempts at change. While we refer to this as a "third world" perspective it includes all those who share our vision: from the South countries, from oppressed and disadvantaged groups and sectors of the women's movement within the North and all others who are committed to working towards its fulfillment.

In this context we believe that it is from the perspective of the most oppressed (i.e. women who suffer on account of class, race and nationality) that we can most clearly grasp the nature of the links in the chain of oppression and explore the kinds of actions that we must now take. Such a perspective implies that a development process that shrinks and poisons the pie available to poor people and then leaves women scrambling for a larger relative share is not in women's interest. We reject the belief that it is possible to obtain sustainable improvements in women's economic and social position under conditions of growing relative inequality if not absolute poverty for both women and men. Equality for women is impossible within the existing economic, political and cultural processes that reserve resources, power and control for small groups of people. But neither is development possible without greater equity for and participation by women.

Our vision of feminism has at its very core a process of economic and social development geared to human needs through wider control over and access to economic and political power. The substance of this book evolved out of the experience of women who have attempted in practical and analytical ways to come to grips with the implications of such a vision. Our purpose was not to expand or present new data or research results but rather to place the diverse body of micro-level case studies, projects and organizing attempts in a wider and more unified context. We hope thereby, through the collective process that this book represents, to move toward a framework that can reknit the fabric of development theory and action by drawing together the strands of improved living standards, socially responsible management and use of resources, elimination of gender subordination and socioeconomic inequality, and the organizational restructuring that can bring these about.

— Sen and Grown (1987, pp. 19–20)

Questions on the excerpts (Boxes 4 and 5)

1. How is the oppression of women linked to problems of nationality, class, and race?

2. Should feminism be defined to include the struggles against all forms of oppression? How can that be achieved, particularly for women in the South?

3. Are research methods created in the North appropriate for studying the lives of women in the South?

General discussion questions

1. How has feminist theorizing been influenced by the focus on identity, specificity, and experiences of women around the world?

2. Many feminists believe poverty is a crucial issue for women and, indeed, that it is the prism through which women's oppression should be analyzed. Has feminist theory adequately addressed this issue?

3. Should research on women in the South be carried out only by women from the South? What about men? What about sympathetic female (or male) researchers from the North?

4. Discuss the way women in the South have been represented by Northern scholars and activists, as well as by their own elites. Note the use of terms such as *vulnerable groups*. How does such language and discourse affect policies concerning women in both the South and the North?

5. Why do postmodernist feminists believe that existing social-science theories exclude the experience of women? Are there other feminist approaches that argue along similar lines?

6. Can a postmodernist-feminist approach foster feminist theorizing that is inclusive, celebrates diversity and difference, and yet maintains a commitment to gender equality? Can this approach offer new insights or tools for feminist scholars and activists around the world?

Conclusion

Grounded in an increased sensitivity to the diverse material and cultural realities of everyday life, current debates in feminist theory and development theory reflect common concerns with the politics of identity. Both recognize the need to engage in fundamental "revisioning," although the mechanisms to undertake such a project on neutral or global grounds remain elusive. Power relations pervade the contexts in which visions of a better world are generated. They also pervade the contexts in which theoretical frameworks are routinely produced and in which research and practice are undertaken. This does not mean, however, that we should give up the attempt to communicate with each other and cooperate in building a better world. Increasing global links among feminist theorists, activists, and practitioners indicate that dialogue is possible and productive. In the long run, it may not be the racial, national, or North–South differences, but the class differences between educated urban women and poorer rural or urban women facing a daily struggle for survival, that prove to be more difficult to overcome. This means that each of us needs to approach the tasks of theorizing, researching, developing policies, and working for change with greater humility than has often been the case.

In an increasingly global but unequal and uncertain world, it is more crucial than ever to make the effort to understand where an individual or group is "coming from"; how they are situated in relation to a specific historical, cultural, and economic context; their existing patterns of life and resistance; and the priorities that stem from them. This certainly implies a major step away from the grand schemes and blueprints of modernization policies and from the revolutionary, reformatory, or even educational zeal characteristic of movements for radical change, whether socialist or feminist in orientation.

Strategy is becoming increasingly important to action agendas: engaging in patient, consultative work to determine when and how to intervene to support and strengthen, rather than critiquing or undermining, the efforts of women striving to improve their situation. Research, if it is to support action agendas, needs to be more integrated than it has often been in the past; less focused on one issue or sector; and more adept at identifying the relations between power, meaning, practices, resources, and constraints in the configurations that present themselves at particular places and times. This also implies that research and action should be more closely linked and that more research should be carried out by, and for,

those whose situation it is intended to improve. Such work, along with that of feminist activists in general, has provided crucial sources of insight that influence the development of theory and practice on a broader scale.

This chapter reviews feminist and development theories and those that combine concerns with women or gender and development. Each of the frameworks and approaches presented here continues to evolve, developing new lines of questioning as horizons shift and new issues emerge. Each has been open to the insights offered by other frameworks while maintaining a unique focus. Each has made, and continues to make, a contribution to knowledge and understanding, policy, and action. For example, black-feminist and Third World-feminist critiques have offered insights to those working within the socialist-feminist and GAD frameworks and have required them to pay more serious attention to race and other differences among women. At the same time, the socialist-feminist insistence on the centrality of gender and class has been an important counterbalance to some postmodern approaches that highlight issues of difference but do not always give sustained attention to the political and economic questions of who benefits and who loses from the ways that differences are linked to power and resources. The postmodern attention to language has, nevertheless, been very productive in highlighting some of the ways power actually pervades our everyday lives and the institutions surrounding us. Each framework has its strengths and weaknesses, its areas of insight, and its areas of blindness.

Theoretical frameworks have a positive role to play in all research and action agendas, suggesting a particular line of questioning and helping the analyst identify where to start, what to focus on, and how to relate one issue to another in the attempt to generate a full understanding of a problem. As we have seen, frameworks are not static but shift and evolve over time, although their underlying assumptions usually endure, and these enable us to distinguish one framework from another, even when some elements are common to more than one framework. It is the collective work of activists, scholars, researchers, and writers that leads to the emergence of new theoretical approaches over time.

Much of the empirical research and development policy and programing undertaken by government and nongovernmental agencies takes place without any explicit reference to theory. Nevertheless, certain assumptions about the nature of social problems and their solutions underlie their work. It is important to be able

to identify such assumptions so that one can examine and, if necessary, critique them. One would then be in a position to propose alternative approaches based on different assumptions and engage in new theorizing that makes explicit the assumptions, concerns, and social visions on which alternatives could be based.

Both recognizing the assumptions underlying theory and engaging in our own theorizing are important to the process of bringing about social change. Unacknowledged or hidden assumptions embedded in research, policy, and programs constitute a vehicle for exerting power over others. Making the assumptions underlying our own goals and visions explicit is a means to empowerment, inviting others to engage in critical debate, opening up to many voices, and strengthening the potential for collective revisioning on an open and equal basis.

The application of theoretical frameworks in policy and programing is further examined in the next section.

Theoretical frameworks

Framework A: modernization theory

Modernization theory emerged in the 1930s, with the early development initiatives of colonial rulers and economists, and gained momentum in the postwar and postcolonial periods. Western economists and sociologists began to theorize in the 1950s about how to promote "development" in the newly independent countries, and development planners designed projects to modernize "less-developed" countries all over the globe. Modernization aimed to turn these economies and societies into images of the industrialized, high mass-consumption, democratic societies of the Western world. Obstacles to growth were identified in traditional cultural practices and values, as well as in social and economic infrastructures. Observable, cultural, economic, and political divergence from the model provided by the West was enough to identify a country and its institutions and practices as "premodern" and in need of immediate change (see Chapter 2).

Leading modernization writers in sociology in the 1950s and 1960s, such as Talcott Parsons and Daniel Lerner in the United States (see for example, Parsons 1951; Lerner 1958), drew on the early analyses of social change conducted by Émile Durkheim and Max Weber at the turn of the century. In economics, the modernization approach has been closely tied to mainstream neoclassical economics, which dominates economic policy in the United Kingdom and the United

States and emphasizes the benefits of the free market, using a model of "rational" choice. Prominent early writers of this school included Walter Rostow and Arthur Lewis. Modernization was the dominant approach underlying development research and policy in the postwar period and continues to guide development efforts today.

The basic idea of modernization is that development is a natural, linear process away from traditional social and economic practices toward a Western-style economy:

> It is possible to identify all societies, in their economic dimensions, as lying within one of the five categories: the traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, take-off, the drive to maturity, and the age of high mass consumption.
>
> — Rostow (1960, p. 4)

The measures of success include gross national product (GNP), income levels, employment rates, education levels, and industrial structure, and all of which emphasize the adoption of Western economic institutions, technologies, and values. The challenge is to identify barriers to self-sustaining growth. These barriers may be technological, educational, or cultural. Intervention, according to the proponents of this approach, is needed to overcome obstacles that tend to be in the country itself, rather than in the functioning of the international economy. Ways are sought to integrate developing economies into the international market. Some writers emphasize a dual economy, with coexisting traditional and modern sectors.

A number of assumptions operate in modernization theory:

- Economic growth will benefit all members of society through trickle-down effects and other "spread" (indirect, multiplier) effects;
- Access to cash and markets will improve conditions for people;
- Macroeconomic policies are gender neutral and benefit all of society; and
- Modern technology is superior to traditional technologies (nonmarket processes tend to be ignored in the economic analysis).

Modernization theory has been the dominant guide to the policies of the main international financial institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank, as well as the main aid organizations, such as USAID. Modernization theory can be used to justify either a *laissez-faire* approach to development policy (emphasis on the market) or an economic-planning approach in which intervention is thought to be needed to remove obstacles and create industrialization.

Questions raised for research

1. What are the obstacles to Western-style growth?

2. What macroeconomic policies and sectoral policies would foster growth? What are the impacts of various policies, in terms of growth, incomes, and employment levels?

3. How can the diffusion of Western education and technology be facilitated?

Implications for policy and action

1. Policies may be needed to facilitate the development of modern economic institutions and the extension of the cash economy (for example, policies to provide credit and financing for income-generating projects). Policies are needed to improve basic human and physical capital (literacy, education, health, roads, etc.).

2. Policies should be tailored to promote the development of leading sectors, which would then create spread effects. The emphasis will change over time as various approaches are tried and found to fail. The approaches include industrialization via import substitution, emphasis on capital-goods production, emphasis on building infrastructure, emphasis on external trade (exports), and emphasis on basic needs.

3. Policies in current modernization thinking emphasize structural adjustment: the market, debt reduction, export-led growth, and the elimination of price subsidies.

Box 6

The stages of economic growth: a noncommunist manifesto

The preconditions for take-off

The second stage of growth embraces societies in the process of transition; that is, the period when the preconditions for take-off are developed; for it takes time to transform a traditional society in the ways necessary for it to exploit the fruits of modern science, to fend off diminishing returns, and thus to enjoy the blessings and choices opened up by the march of compound interest.

The preconditions for take-off were initially developed in a clearly marked way in Western Europe of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as the insights of modern science began to be translated into new production functions in both agriculture and industry, in a setting given dynamism by the lateral expansion of world markets and the international competition for them. But all that lies behind the break-up of the Middle Ages is relevant to the creation of the preconditions for take-off in Western Europe. Among the Western European states, Britain (favoured by geography, natural resources, trading possibilities, social and political structure) was the first to develop fully the preconditions for take-off.

The more general case in modern history, however, saw the stage of preconditions arise not endogenously but from some external intrusion by more advanced societies. These invasions — literal or figurative — shocked the traditional society and began or hastened its undoing; but they also set in motion ideas and sentiments which initiated the process by which a modern alternative to the traditional society was constructed out of the old culture.

The idea spreads not merely that economic progress is possible, but that economic progress is a necessary condition for some other purpose judged to be good, be it national dignity, private profit, the general welfare, or a better life for the children. Education, for some at least, broadens and changes to suit the needs of modern economic activity. New types of enterprising men come forward — in the private economy, in government, or both — willing to mobilize savings and to take risks in pursuit of profit or modernisation. Banks and other institutions for mobilizing capital appear. Investment increases, notably in transport, communications, and in raw materials in which other nations may have an economic interest. The scope of commerce, internal and external, widens. And, here and there, modern manufacturing enterprise appears, using the new methods. But all this activity proceeds at a limited pace within an economy and a society still mainly characterized by traditional low-productivity methods, by the old social structure and values, and by the regionally based political institutions, that developed in conjunction with them.

(continued)

Box 6 *(concluded)*

In many recent cases, for example, the traditional society persisted side by side with modern economic activities, conducted for limited economic purposes by a colonial or quasi-colonial power.

The take-off

We come now to the great watershed in the life of modern societies: the third stage in this sequence, the take-off. The take-off is the interval when the old blocks and resistance to steady growth are finally overcome. The forces making for economic progress, which yielded limited bursts and enclaves of modern activity, expand and come to dominate the society. Growth becomes its normal conditions. Compound interest becomes built, as it were, into its habits and institutional structure.

— Rostow (1960, pp. 6–7)

Questions on excerpt (Box 6)

1. What social and political changes would Rostow say are essential to economic progress?

2. What is the implicit attitude toward traditional society and its values?

General discussion questions

1. Using the modernization approach, what policies would you urge on your government for reducing rural poverty?

2. What does your country hope to achieve by education? Is this aim consistent with a modernization approach?

3. What kind of data would a modernization economist use in evaluating the impact of the SAPs? What information do you think would be needed?

4. Can you think of policies used in your country that fit the modernization approach? What was their impact on the well-being of women?

5. Do you think development is possible without imitating Western cultures?

Framework B: Marxist–dependency theory

Karl Marx provided many of the concepts and analytical tools commonly used to discuss inequitable social relations. He believed that differing material interests, based on one's economic position and the way one earned a living, resulted in differing perceptions of social reality and relegated individuals and families to social classes. Conflict between these classes was seen as the driving force underlying political and social strife. Marx believed that the contradictions within capitalism would eventually lead to overproduction, underconsumption, depression, and the overthrow of capitalism by the working class. Yet, capitalism continued to flourish, albeit with periodic depressions, and, indeed, it gradually established a hegemony across the globe.

Vladimir Lenin, in an effort to explain this, concluded that imperial expansion enabled capitalism to temporarily circumvent the problem of overproduction. The colonies served as captive markets to absorb both surplus production and capital. He predicted that finance capital would become increasingly crucial to this process and would eventually control the global economy.

In the 1960s, continuing underdevelopment in Latin America inspired some social scientists, who drew on Lenin's explanation of imperialism, to explore the impact of this unequal relationship on the economies and peoples of the South. They rejected the liberal assumption, central to the modernization approach, that underdevelopment was due to inadequate national policies and insufficient understanding of Western technology in the South, arguing instead that underdevelopment was largely a result of unequal and exploitative economic relations between the dominant powers in the North (the **metropole**) and their client states in the South (the **periphery**). They examined patterns of trade or exchange between developing and industrialized countries and concluded that

- Economic underdevelopment is created by a persistent outflow of economic surplus;

- The prospects for economic development in any one country are determined by its position in the international economy, and that position is historically determined;

- Present-day underdeveloped and developing countries cannot expect to pass through the same phases of economic development as advanced capitalist countries because internal conditions are different; and

- Industrially advanced countries at various stages of development have been able to use underdeveloped economies as sources of cheap raw materials, as markets for their goods, and as outlets for surplus capital.

This view, called dependency theory, dominated leftist development scholarship in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The perpetuation of these unequal relations, it was argued, is managed by a clientele class in the South (**Comprador class**) that collaborates with the dominant capitalist class in the North. Market and technology transfers are thus structured to perpetuate underdevelopment in the South and domination by the North. To overcome this, dependency theorists called for the overthrow of this clientele class, an end to links with the North, and a focus on self-reliant development. This perspective and its prescriptions attracted many intellectuals (and some policymakers) in the South, who saw in it both an explanation for their legacy of underdevelopment and a means to overcome that legacy.

Most liberals and neoclassical economists, working within a modernization paradigm, rejected the dependency approach outright. Some — such as proponents of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean model, led by Raúl Prebisch — recognized that deteriorating terms of trade in the periphery affected accumulations of capital and consequently the rate of economic growth (Blomström and Hettne 1984).

Some Marxists raised questions as well. Dependency theorists, according to their critics, had simply turned modernization on its head, arguing against capitalism and technology transfers. Scholars such as Colin Leys pointed out that the roles of classes and interest groups in the South had been ignored. Marxists such as Bill Warren (1980) found the prospects for capitalist development relatively good in many underdeveloped countries. Capitalism, he argued, did not cause underdevelopment. Classes and contradictions within Third World nations and their impact on relations with the North must be understood if one is to properly evaluate Third World development. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the focus of the Marxist literature on development was on how the capitalist mode of production articulated with other modes of production, particularly social formations. This mode of analysis supplanted dependency theory in the 1980s.

Although dependency theory no longer dominates political economy or Marxist analysis of development, remnants are still found in the emerging

political-economy interpretations of recent global economic changes (see "Globalization," under "Current debates and critiques," earlier in this chapter).

Questions raised for research

1. What are the capital flows, technology transfers, and economic relations between the South and the North?

2. What role do Third World elites play in development (or underdevelopment) in the South?

3. How have classes and contradictions within Third World countries affected their relations with the North? What have been the consequences of those relations for development?

4. How does the capitalist mode of production interact with other modes of production, such as independent commodity production (for example, on small family farms)?

Implications for policy and action

1. Policymakers should consider cutting links with the North and fostering self-reliant development.

2. Policies should be designed to encourage people in the South to build internal development; and policies should permit local elites to challenge the domination of capital from the North.

3. Action should be directed to developing alternatives to capitalism.

4. Modes-of-production theorists focus on the growth potential of the indigenous business class and see the members of this class as better leaders of development than the foreign business owners.

Box 7

Development theory in transition

The crystallized theory of dependence

André Gunder Frank joined the circle of Latin American *dependentistas* [dependency theorists] during the mid-1960s, and he soon became one of the driving forces behind the early development of the dependency school. He became internationally known for his critique of the established development theory. ... it should be mentioned that outside Latin America the dependency school has been more or less identified with Frank.

Frank was one of the first in Latin America to work with an alternative theory of the Latin American economic development. The earliest results from this attempt were presented in a book entitled *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, published in 1967. In this book, which was an analysis of the economic history of Brazil and Chile, he came to the conclusion that "development and underdevelopment are two sides of the same coin." Thus, according to Frank, it was the incorporation into the world capitalist system that led to development in some areas and underdevelopment in others.

Following Baran, Frank stressed that it was the utilization of the economic surplus that had caused development and underdevelopment. Frank's analysis accentuated the monopolistic structure of capitalism and its effects on the real and the potential surplus. The world capitalist system was characterized by a metropolis–satellite structure, where the metropolis exploited the satellite. While this had facilitated the expropriation of large portions of the underdeveloped countries' actual surplus, it had also prevented these countries from realizing their potential surplus. The monopoly structure was found at all levels, i.e., the international, the national, and the local level, and created a situation of exploitation which, in turn, caused the "chain-like" flow of the surplus from the remotest Latin American village to Wall Street in New York.

The monopoly capitalist structure and the surplus expropriation/appropriation contradiction run through the entire Chilean economy, past and present. Indeed, it is this exploitative relation which in chain-like fashion extends the capitalist link between the capitalist world and national metropolises to the regional centres (part of whose surplus they appropriate), and from these to local centres, and so on to large landowners or merchants who expropriate surplus from small peasants or tenants, and sometimes even from these latter to landless laborers exploited by them in turn. At each step along the way, the relatively few capitalists above exercise moncpoly power over the many below, expropriating some or all of their economic surplus and, to the extent that they are not expropriated in turn by the still fewer above them, appropriating it for their own use. Thus at each point, the international, national and local capitalist system generates economic development for the few and underdevelopment for the many.

— Blomström and Hettne (1984, pp. 66–67)

Questions on excerpt (Box 7)

1. Why does Frank believe development and underdevelopment are two sides of the same coin?

2. How does the metropolis exploit the satellite, or Third World, countries?

3. Do you have to understand the global capitalist system to understand the causes of underdevelopment in the Third World?

General discussion questions

1. Has the dependency approach been used in your country? What have been its strengths and weaknesses when applied in your country?

2. How is your country linked to international capitalism (trade, exchange rate, industry ownership, foreign investment)?

3. What has your country gained and lost from these linkages?

4. Why did Southern intellectuals find the dependency school so attractive?

Framework C: liberal feminism

Liberal feminism is rooted in the tradition of 16th- and 17th-century liberal philosophy, which focused on the ideals of equality and liberty. The liberal conception of equality was based on the belief that all men had the potential to be rational and that any inequality had to be justified in rational terms. The liberal conception of liberty meant that people were governed only with their consent and only within certain limits, generally defined in terms of the **public and private spheres** (the former the government can regulate; the latter it cannot). Liberals continue to debate just where the line should be drawn between the two spheres, but they agree that it must be drawn to preserve liberty. These ideas are important underpinnings of liberal-feminist thought.

The first Western feminist theorist, Mary Wollstonecraft, in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, argued that women's capacity to reason was equal to that of men and that biological sex differences were irrelevant to the granting of political rights (Wollstonecraft 1792). She argued that the reason women appeared to be intellectually inferior was due to their inferior education and, therefore, was a result of inequality, rather than a justification for it. Twentieth-century liberal feminists have also used this distinction between biological facts and social norms when they draw the distinction between sex (biological) and gender (historical, social, and cultural) differences between women and men. Liberal feminists see women's subordination as resulting from gendered norms, rather than from biological sex, and aim to change these norms. Liberal feminists argue that the inequality of women and men cannot be justified on rational terms and trust that rational men can be convinced of the folly of perpetuating that inequality.

Liberal feminists focus on equal opportunities for women and men. Their concern that women should receive equal opportunities in education and before the law has motivated worldwide campaigns for women's voting and property rights. These feminists are also concerned that job opportunities be equally open to women so that women can achieve positions of power in government and business. Liberal-feminist activists are concerned with ensuring that laws and policies do not discriminate against women and that women have equal opportunities in all aspects of life.

Contemporary liberal feminists, like other liberals, draw a distinction between the public and private spheres of life. They argue that women should have the right to choose on issues such as abortion, pornography, and prostitution. This commitment to the existence of public and private spheres distinguishes liberal-feminist theory from other feminist theories. However, it should be noted that liberal-feminist theorists draw the line between public and private differently than other liberal theorists. Because they concentrate on such issues as domestic violence and the economic vulnerability of homemakers, they argue that some regulation of domestic life is needed to protect women's safety and well-being.

Questions raised for research

1. What are the barriers to women's equal participation in the economic, social, and cultural life of their communities and countries?

2. How can these obstacles be removed? How can attitudes, laws, and practices be changed?

3. How are women affected by various policies? Do policies hinder or facilitate women's well-being and opportunities?

Implications for policy and action

1. Liberal-feminist theory has been the dominant guide for setting up special women's departments and machinery in government. These departments promote the interests of women within the existing socioeconomic system.

2. Policies are proposed to remove discriminatory practices in institutions, or actions are taken to create alternative institutions that support women. For example, if women have unequal access to credit, then bank policy can be changed or special programs can be set up for women's credit.

3. Liberal feminists are interested in increasing the proportion of women in elected and appointed government positions.

4. Liberal feminists are interested in reforms that will improve the condition of women and are less concerned with issues of empowerment and changing the position of women.

Box 8

Feminist politics and human nature

Liberal feminists believe that sex discrimination is unjust because it deprives women of equal rights to pursue their own self-interest. Women as a group are not allowed the same freedoms or opportunities granted to men as a group. In a discriminatory situation, an individual woman does not receive the same consideration as an individual man. Whereas man is judged on his actual interests and abilities, a woman's interests and abilities are assumed to be limited in certain ways because of her sex. In other words, a man is judged on his merits as an individual; a woman is judged on her assumed merits as a female. Liberal feminists believe that justice requires equal opportunities and equal consideration for every individual regardless of sex. This view is obviously connected with the liberal conception of human beings as essentially rational agents. On this conception, sex is a purely "accidental" or non-essential feature of human nature. The sex of an individual should be considered only when it is relevant to the individual's ability to perform a specific task or to take advantage of a certain opportunity.

Within contemporary society, liberals believe that women suffer a variety of forms of discrimination. The most obvious form is legislation that provides different responsibilities, obligations, and opportunities for women and for men. Both Britain and the United States, for example, have so-called "protective" labor legislation that applies to women only and may establish maximum hours of work, minimum wages, mandatory rest periods, or may restrict certain types of nighttime work. Liberal feminists complain that these laws are used to exclude women from better-paying jobs and to deny them promotion. ...

In spite of these sorts of legal discrimination, liberal feminists believe that most discrimination against women is not mandated by the legal system but is rather informal or based on custom. An extremely significant form of customary discrimination consists in reluctance to appoint qualified women to certain jobs, particularly prestigious, well-paying or supervisory positions, and in reluctance to allow women to gain necessary qualifications for those positions, perhaps by refusing them entrance into professional schools or other job-training programs. Such discrimination begins in the nursery, where male and female infants are perceived and handled differently, and continues in the educational system, where boys are encouraged to train for prestigious or well-paying "masculine" occupations while girls are channeled into preparing for the lower-paying but more "feminine" service occupations. Women also suffer discrimination in obtaining credit to buy a house or to start a business and they may have more difficulty than men in renting accommodation. Liberals view all these sorts of discrimination as unjust because they deprive women of equal opportunities for pursuing their own self-interest, as they define that interest.

(continued)

Box 8 *(concluded)*

Informal discrimination is manifested not only in assumptions that women are not suited to certain sorts of work; it can also be expressed through assumptions that women are particularly well-suited for other sorts of work. Within contemporary society, there are strong expectations, often shared even by women themselves, that women should take primary responsibility for the work involved in raising children and in running a home. Women are also expected to provide sexual satisfaction for their husbands or their male partners. Within the paid labor force, they are expected to perform similar sorts of work; providing sexual titillation if not satisfaction to men and other sorts of nurturing services to men, women and children.

If this sexual division of labor were freely chosen, liberal feminists would have no grounds for challenging it. In fact, however, they assume that it is not freely chosen, that women congregate in these occupations because discrimination denies them access to the prestigious, powerful, and well-paying positions that are held predominantly by men. Behind this assumption, one can see the characteristic liberal values about what constitutes desirable or fulfilling work. The work that women typically perform is not well-paying and has little conventional prestige and liberal feminists show little inclination to challenge the conventional valuation of that work. Liberal feminists view childcare and housework as forms of unskilled labor, servicing the despised body and requiring little exercise of the respected mind. ...

Women's relegation to certain kinds of work degrades them not only while they are performing that work. According to liberal feminism, the conditions of women's work also diminish their liberty and autonomy in the rest of their lives. Women are paid so little that they figure disproportionately among the poor and most contemporary liberals recognize that poverty makes it difficult or impossible for individuals to exercise their formal or legal rights. For instance, poor people cannot exercise their right to travel when they cannot afford the fares; their right of free expression is diminished by their lack of control over the media; and their right to stand for public office is worth little when they cannot afford to finance an electoral campaign. Instead of saying that poorer individuals have less liberty or fewer rights than wealthier ones, Rawls prefers to say that "the worth of liberty" is less for poor people. However one expresses the point, liberal feminists complain that poverty makes most women unequal to most men.

— Jaggar (1983, pp. 176–177)

Questions on excerpt (Box 8)

1. How is liberal feminists' commitment to equality as a human-rights issue reflected in their political strategies?

2. Explain why liberal feminists have been accused of focusing on "getting ahead" rather than ending the oppression of all women?

General discussion questions

1. Does your government have a women's bureau? What kinds of issues does it address?

2. What obstacles and barriers to participation in various spheres of economic, political, and social life do women in your country experience? What would it take to remove these obstacles and barriers?

3. Have changes in legislation that were intended to promote equality achieved their goal? Why not?

Framework D: Marxist feminism

Classical Marxism argues that throughout history people have found many different means of feeding, sheltering, clothing, and reproducing themselves, that is, of producing their material life. In producing their material life, people work together and enter into social relations with one another. The means and social relations of production constitute the modes of production. Marxists argue that human nature is the result of specific modes of production. People are shaped by the general form of society (the mode of production) and by each person's specific place or class in that society (the relations of production). People, however, are capable of radically transforming their society and thus ultimately changing their own natures.

The subordination of women came into existence with the mode of production that introduced private property. In Engels' 1884 classic, *The Origin of the Family: Private Property and the State*, he argued that when hunting–gathering was replaced by agriculture, a more efficient and productive mode of production, a few men got control of the productive resources and transformed them into private property. The social relations of production were that some men owned property and others did not. This was the first society with a class structure. Engels then speculated that women were subordinated to guarantee that men who owned property would be able to pass it on to their own biological offspring, thereby maintaining the class structure (Engels 1970).

Contemporary Marxist feminists continue this line of argument by asserting that capitalism, the current form of class society, perpetuates the subordination of women by enforcing their economic dependence on men. They argue that keeping women subordinate is functional to the capitalist system in a number of ways. Women give birth to the new labour force and continue to do unpaid domestic labour. Women also form a **reserve army of labour**, that is, they provide a cheap and available labour force to compete for existing jobs, thereby creating downward pressure on wages. As homemakers and mothers, women support the process of profit-making, both as consumers of goods and services for the household and as unpaid caregivers who subsidize and disguise the real costs of reproducing and maintaining the work force.

Questions raised for research

1. What is the relationship of the family household to the economy?

2. Does domestic labour create value?

3. Do women form a reserve army of labour?

4. How do class and gender interact to create women's subordination?

Implications for policy and action

1. To the extent that Marxist feminists concern themselves with policies, they argue in favour of policies that deal with issues such as occupational segregation, low pay, poverty, and discrimination. They feel that fighting for such policies will expose the fact that it is not possible to remedy these problems under capitalism. Capitalism may extend privileges to a few token women, but it cannot afford to permit most women to be the economic and social equals of men.

2. Marxist feminists argue that because the subordination of women is maintained by the capitalist system, then that system should be the primary target of women's political activism. Women must organize, but not with other women from the capitalist class who, with their husbands, have an interest in maintaining the status quo. Rather, they must organize with the male working class to abolish the capitalist system and establish a new mode of production — a socialist system. Only with socialism will classes disappear and the true basis of gender equality be established.

Box 9

Women in class struggle

Therefore, it is fundamentally the institution of the nuclear family as it exists under capitalism and the consequent limitations of a woman's "proper" function in the production and reproduction of the proletariat (motherhood) that facilitates capital's super-exploitation of female labor in capitalist commodity production. The labor theory of value holds that wages at real value comprise the costs of the production and reproduction of labor power. Inflation, unemployment and undervalued labor power (depressed wages) exert a constant pressure to force women out of the home and into the labor force. This has always been characteristic of capitalism, as Marx pointed out long ago, but today the employment of women is steadily increasing. Furthermore, working-class women are constantly circulating through the labor force: 1) women work before marriage and during early marriage; 2) women leave the labor force when their children are in infancy and early childhood; and then 3) they return to the labor market when their children reach late childhood or are grown. This rhythm is upset anytime there are contractions and expansions of employment and wage levels. Contraction and expansion of wage levels operate to regulate the utilization of female labor as a part of the industrial reserve army. Women tend to be forced into the labor market 1) when there is a demand for greater masses of labor power, and/or 2) when demands for cheap labor power can be met by women's undervalued wages or women's part-time work. Conversely, women are forced out of the labor market in periods of glut on the market simply because they can be reabsorbed into the nuclear family.

The circulation of women through the waged labor force, women's principal identification of themselves as wives and mothers and thus only "temporary workers" (which produces negative or very weak class consciousness), and institutionalized discrimination against women all serve to facilitate the super-exploitation that is expressed by 1) the denial by capital of compensation for labor consumed in production and reproduction of labor power; 2) the systematic undervaluation of waged female labor; 3) forcing women disproportionately into the worst and most degrading jobs; and 4) forcing women into part-time or full-time work in addition to full responsibility for domestic labor (thus married working women hold down two full-time jobs, but are paid wages for only one).

Upon investigation, working-class women are clearly the most oppressed, super-exploited sector of the entire proletariat. The greatest burdens are carried by racial and national minority women. The root of women's subjugation and exploitation is not the human family as such, but the nuclear family as it is organized and exploited under advanced capitalism. ...

The conflict between men and women, husbands and wives, is not some "petty bourgeois feminist plot" to divide the working class, but a real product of the cruel and exploitative social relations of capitalism. In fact, no sphere of a working-class woman's life is free from exploitation facilitated by institutionalized male supremacy.

— Dixon (1980, pp. 9–11)

Questions on excerpt (Box 9)

1. What does it mean to say that women form a reserve army of labour?

2. How are women "super-exploited" by the capitalist system?

General discussion questions

1. Are women economically dependent on men in your country, and if so, in what way?

2. Does the family household function to support the capitalist system in your country?

3. Do women form a reserve army of labour for the capitalist system in your country? Explain?

4. Do rich women experience gender inequality in the same way as poor women do?

5. Do women always belong to the same class as their husbands or fathers?

Framework E: radical feminism

Radical feminism emerged in the 1960s in the United States in response to the sexism experienced by women working within the civil-rights and antiwar movements. Many of the activists in those movements were inspired by Marxist theory, which was also felt to be sexist. Traditional Marxism stated that class was the prime factor in the oppression of working people and that gender equality would follow upon the abolition of class society. Radical feminists argued that making gender equality secondary to class equality diminished the importance of, and deferred action on, women's concerns.

Radical feminists insist that women's subordination does not depend on other forms of domination, such as class. They argue that patriarchy, or the domination of women by men, is primary: it existed in virtually every known society, even those without classes. Women's subordination, as it is deeply embedded in individual psyches and social practices, is more difficult to change than class.

Although radical feminists all agree on the primacy of women's subordination, they have a variety of views on the origins and nature of this subordination. Shulamith Firestone (1970), in *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution*, argued that women's subordination is rooted in their biology, that is, their

reproductive physiology. She argued that only with advanced technology, such as "test-tube babies," would women achieve equality and no longer be dependent on men. Other radical feminists argue that women are biologically superior to men because of their capacity to give birth. Still others argue that it is not the nature of sex differences that should concern feminists but the social norms that devalue female biology. Many radical feminists argue that women's subordination is rooted in male control over women's fertility and sexuality, that is, over women's bodies.

Radical feminists are concerned with sexuality. They start from the view that humans are sexual beings and that sex makes a difference from the very beginning. They are also concerned about the relationship between human biology and human social arrangements. Radical feminists argue that procreation and sexuality, which have been seen as private issues, are in fact political issues inasmuch as they are fundamentally organized by male power. Relegating these practices to the private realm delegitimizes women's struggle to change them. Radical feminists have declared that "**the personal is political.**"

Questions raised for research

1. How are women made to feel that they must become mothers?

2. How can women achieve control over conception and abortion?

3. What are the institutions through which men control women's sexuality?

Implications for policy and action

1. In their daily lives, radical feminists attempt to create alternative social institutions within which women can fulfill their needs. Some of these alternatives are women's health centres, women's educational projects, women's businesses, and services for women in crisis.

2. Radical feminists pursue policies that focus on women's right to make choices about motherhood, conception, abortion, and sexual orientation.

3. Radical feminists argue that social activists should be concerned with challenging women's subordination and should work toward transforming society to abolish patriarchy and achieve equality for women.

Box 10

Gendered language

Among the most pressing items on the agenda for research on adult development is the need to delineate in women's own terms the experience of their adult life. My own work in that direction indicates that the inclusion of women's experience brings to developmental understanding a new perspective on relationships that changes the basic constructs of interpretation. The concept of identity expands to include the experience of interconnection. The moral domain is similarly enlarged by the inclusion of responsibility and care in relationships. And the underlying epistemology correspondingly shifts from the Greek ideal of knowledge as a correspondence between mind and form to the Biblical conception of knowing as a process of human relationship.

Given the evidence of different perspectives in the representation of adulthood by women and men, there is a need for research that elucidates the effects of these differences in marriage, family, and work relationships. My research suggests that men and women may speak different languages that they assume are the same, using similar words to encode disparate experiences of self and social relationships. Because these languages share an overlapping moral vocabulary, they contain a propensity for systematic mistranslation, creating misunderstandings which impede communication and limit the potential for cooperation and care in relationships. At the same time, however, these languages articulate with one another in critical ways. Just as the language of responsibilities provides a weblike imagery of relationships to replace a hierarchical ordering that dissolves with the coming of equality, so the language of rights underlines the importance of including in the network of care not only the other but also the self.

As we have listened for centuries to the voices of men and the theories of development that their experience informs, so we have come more recently to notice not only the silence of women but the difficulty in hearing what they say when they speak. Yet in the different voice of women lies the truth of an ethic of care, the tie between relationship and responsibility, and the origins of aggression in the failure of connection. The failure to see the different reality of women's lives and to hear the differences in their voices stems in part from the assumption that there is a single mode of social experience and interpretation. By positing instead two different modes, we arrive at a more complex rendition of human experience which sees the truth of separation and attachment in the lives of women and men and recognizes how these truths are carried by different modes of language and thought.

— Gilligan (1982, pp. 173–174)

Questions on excerpt (Box 10)

1. What is the male argument about women's place in the social relations of reproduction?

2. Why do women and men often misunderstand each other?

3. What is the radical-feminist version of this argument?

General discussion questions

1. Do men dominate women in your country? If so, what form does this domination take? Is "tradition" used to legitimate male authority over women?

2. Do women have reproductive freedom in your country? If not, why not?

3. Are women subjected to male violence in your country? If so, what form does this violence take?

4. What are the formal and informal mechanisms through which women assert power in your society?

5. How have these changed over time?

6. Does the radical-feminist concept "the personal is political" have relevance for women of all backgrounds?

Framework F: socialist feminism

The activities of socialist feminists emerged in the second half of the 1970s. Many feminists were dissatisfied with traditional Marxism, which saw women's subordination as secondary to class subordination. They also felt discomfort with the new radical feminism, which ignored class and saw patriarchy, or women's subordination, as the primary form of subordination. Socialist feminists argued that class and women's subordination were of equal importance and had to be challenged simultaneously.

In attempts to develop a theory and practice to achieve this end, socialist feminists drew on the Marxist historical-materialist method. Their aim was to revise Marxism by incorporating radical-feminist insights. In so doing, they felt

they would provide a new basis for analysis and a new strategy for political action that would challenge both male dominance and capitalism.

Socialist feminists redefined the radical-feminist conception of patriarchy so that it meant a set of hierarchical relations with a material base in men's control over women's sexuality, procreation, and labour power. They added an historical dimension to the concept of patriarchy, arguing that it takes different forms in different historical periods and in different racial, cultural, political, economic, and religious contexts. They also argued that the Marxist definition of economic activity had to be expanded to include both productive and reproductive work. Socialist feminists insisted on the equal importance of the reproduction of children and the production of commodities. Socialist feminists were concerned with the relationship between reproduction and production and the capitalist male-dominated structure of both.

Juliet Mitchell, in her very early classic collection of essays, *Women: The Longest Revolution*, argued that there were four interlocking structures to be considered in women's subordination (Mitchell 1984). These were production, reproduction, sexuality, and child-rearing. To understand women's subordination, she said, it was necessary to understand not only how the needs for food, clothing, and shelter are met but also how the need for sexuality, children, and emotional nurturance are met. Socialist feminists continue to be concerned about these issues.

By the mid-1980s, many socialist feminists were arguing that we should begin the analysis of subordination with the experience of women. They also incorporated the social construction of gender into their analysis. They argued that if we are to understand and abolish women's subordination, it is essential that we examine the processes by which gender characteristics are defined and gender relations are constructed. Socialist feminists also expanded their analysis to incorporate issues of difference and include consideration of race, ethnicity, religion, and sexual preference, as well as colonialism and imperialism.

By the late 1980s, Kate Young and others were advocating a holistic approach to the analysis of women's situation. In making this recommendation, Young examined three overlapping areas of concern:

- The psychosocial, which focuses on the processes of acquiring masculine and feminine identities and the content of these identities;

- The sociobiological, which focuses not on whether there are biological, psychological, or physiological differences between women and men but

on why differences between women and men result in a higher value being placed on what men do; and

- The sociopolitical, which focuses on how subjectivity, or the way people feel about themselves as members of a particular race or class, contributes to structuring gender relations, as well as on how gender contributes to the structuring of the political and economic system.

Questions raised for research

1. What is the relationship between production and reproduction?

2. Have economic restructuring and structural adjustment affected women and men differently?

3. What effects have changes in class relations had on women and men of different races and ethnic groups?

4. How have sexuality, procreation, and motherhood been constructed at various times and in various cultures?

Implications for policy and action

1. Socialist feminists are concerned with promoting policies to eliminate gender segregation in domestic and wage labour, eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace, achieve equal pay for work of equal value, increase women's control over their conditions of work, transform the conditions in which women can make reproductive choices, and increase public responsibility for child care.

2. Socialist feminists consciously attempt to incorporate socialist-feminist values of equality, cooperation, sharing, and political commitment into their living arrangements. They also believe that community-based political activities are a necessary part of the socialist-feminist transformation of society.

3. Socialist-feminist activists have a vision of a society that excludes gender, class, and race structures and the ideologies that underlie them. They are interested in transforming current societies into societies consistent with this vision.

Box 11

The unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism

The struggle against capital and patriarchy cannot be successful if the study and practice of the issues of feminism is abandoned. A struggle aimed only at capitalist relations of oppression will fail, since their underlying supports in patriarchal relations of oppression will be overlooked. And the analysis of patriarchy is essential to a definition of the kind of socialism useful to women. While men and women share a need to overthrow capitalism they retain interests particular to their gender group. It is not clear — from our sketch, from history, or from male socialists — that the socialism being struggled for is the same for both men and women. For a humane socialism would require not only consensus on what the new society should look like and what a healthy person should look like, but more concretely, it would require that men relinquish their privilege.

As women we must not allow ourselves to be talked out of the urgency and importance of our tasks, as we have so many times in the past. We must fight the attempted coercion, both subtle and not so subtle, to abandon feminist objectives.

This suggests two strategic considerations. First, a struggle to establish socialism must be a struggle in which groups with different interests form an alliance. Women should not trust men to liberate them after the revolution, in part, because there is no reason to think they would know how; in part, because there is no necessity for them to do so. In fact, their immediate self-interest lies in our continued oppression. Instead we must have our own organizations and our own power base. Second, we think the sexual division of labor within capitalism has given women a practice in which we have learned to understand what human interdependence and needs are. While men have long struggled against capital, women know what to struggle for. As a general rule, men's position in patriarchy and capitalism prevents them from recognizing both human needs for nurturance, sharing, and growth, and the potential for meeting those needs in a nonhierarchical, nonpatriarchal society. But even if we raise their consciousness, men might assess the potential gains against the potential losses and choose the status quo. Men have more to lose than their chains.

As feminist socialists, we must organize a practice which addresses both the struggle against patriarchy and the struggle against capitalism. We must insist that the society we want to create is a society in which recognition of interdependence is liberation rather than shame, nurturance is a universal, not an oppressive practice, and in which women do not continue to support the false as well as the concrete freedoms of men.

— Hartmann (1981, pp. 32–33)

Questions on excerpt (Box 11)

1. What is the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy, and why must both be opposed?

2. Why must women develop their own power base to accomplish change?

General discussion questions

1. What are the women's organizations in your country? What vision of society do these women's organizations have? What kinds of change are they advocating? Are these changes consistent with a socialist-feminist analysis?

2. Have economic restructuring and structural adjustment taken place in your country? If so, have women and men been affected differently?

3. Do any policies exist in your country that support more equal distribution of household work between women and men? If yes, what are they, and how do they work? If no, why not?

4. What problems do you see in applying a socialist-feminist analysis to the experience or condition of women in the South?

Framework G: black feminism

Historians of the African diaspora have long recognized that black people, including women, have had their own particular experiences of the New World and Europe. Black women in the diaspora have suffered a double jeopardy — being women and being black. Most have had to endure economic hardships as well. The history of black women's struggles against the multiple oppressions of race, sex, and class has been an inspiration to black women, and these struggles have inspired a growing body of literature and scholarship. For example, the life of Sojourner Truth, the mid-19th century antislavery activist and women's-rights advocate, highlights black women's long involvement in the fight for equality and justice and their historic challenge to white feminists to see the debate for women's rights as one that requires the inclusion of all women, whatever their race or class.

And yet feminist scholars from North America and Europe have often ignored the specificities of black women's experiences. They have focused, for the most part, on the experiences of white women, particularly white, middle-class women. Black feminists have criticized white-feminist scholars for confining their theories largely to their own history and culture and for ignoring the impact of asymmetrical race relations on gender experiences and relations, our understanding of the self, and theory. As Audre Lorde warned radical feminist Mary Daly in 1979, women's oppression knows no ethnic or racial boundaries, and feminist theorizing that ignores the experiences of black women encourages its own demise (Lorde 1984). Faced with a white feminism that (until challenged) insisted on defining a feminism largely hostile to the realities of black women, 20th century black feminists recognized the need to collect the earlier works of black women and to undertake black-feminist theorizing.

Feminists from the black community have sought alternative explanations for the condition of black women's lives in the history of their own people, and they have discovered important differences. During the Middle Ages, for example, Western women had almost no civil rights, whereas African women had important civil rights and considerable status. In the United Kingdom and the United States, black women have generally experienced the family as a site of resistance against racism more than as a site of gender oppression. Colonial and racist structures also affected black patriarchal structures and authority. Black-feminist theorizing has emerged from this analysis of the concrete experiences and cultures of black people. Scholars working within this perspective do not reject the theorizing of white feminists; rather, they call for feminisms that acknowledge the importance of race for women's lives, particularly the way race compounds the experience of class and gender relations. The writings of black-feminist scholars have contributed important insights to feminist theorizing. The experience of the multiple jeopardies of race, class, and gender has led black feminists such as Deborah King (1988) and Fiona Williams (1989) to argue for a feminism that recognizes the need to analyze the simultaneous impacts of these factors on the lives of women of colour. As Williams (1989, p. 69) pointed out, "the simultaneous experience of racism and sexism [and classism] not only compounds those oppressions, but reconstitutes them in specific ways." The multiple oppressions facing black women

are not simply additive: they interact in complex ways, leading to multiple consciousness and action. This interactive, multilayered approach to the study of women's lives has influenced feminist theorizing and put the analysis of multiple jeopardies and consciousness on the feminist agenda.

Black-feminist scholarship has also contributed to feminist epistemology. Black feminists have emphasized the importance of concrete experience as a criterion of meaning, the need to use dialogue in assessing knowledge claims, and the importance of developing an ethic of caring and personal accountability in one's research (Collins 1989). They have also stressed the historical, specific nature of black women's experience and the need to develop an approach to the study of women embedded in the concrete specificities of women's lives, rather than generalizing from the experiences of a small group of often privileged women. Although feminists of various persuasions have also raised these themes, black-feminist scholarship has underscored the crucial nature of these considerations and added a powerful voice to those advocating a more experientially grounded approach to the study of women.

Black-feminist scholarship has developed a political agenda, a black-feminist manifesto (CRC 1982), which calls for the development of a feminist politics that is both antiracist and antisexist. The manifesto argues for the need to struggle with white women against sexism, whether by white men or by black men. At the same time, black feminists call for solidarity with black men around the issue of race. This approach has found considerable support in developing countries, where women have often joined men in their struggles against global inequalities while challenging sexist behaviour at home. The black-feminist manifesto thus offers a potential solution to the long-standing reluctance of many black women to engage in white-dominated feminist politics, as well as providing a theoretical critique of the radical- and socialist-feminist political agendas.

Black feminism thus asserts the primacy of race for women's lives and experiences, particularly the struggles of black women against slavery, colonialism, imperialism, and racism. Black feminism, with its sister perspective, Third World, or indigenous, feminism, holds out the hope that different feminisms, grounded in the specificities of women's multifarious experiences, may provide the basis for a comparative **global feminism** that celebrates difference without abandoning the search for common political and intellectual agendas. As Audre Lorde argued in 1979, "Difference must be not merely tolerated, but seen as a

fund of necessary polarities between which our creativity can spark like a dialectic (Lorde 1984)."

Questions raised for research

1. What are the specific historical conditions under which black women have experienced their lives in Africa and in the diaspora?

2. How do sexism and racism intersect? Discuss the consequences of this intersection for black women (and black men) and for white women (and white men).

3. How have global economic inequalities, including colonialism and imperialism, affected black women's experience of the multiple jeopardies of sex, race, and class?

4. How do black women's experiences and knowledges challenge the assumptions of other feminist theories?

5. How has African culture affected the lives and experiences of black women in the diaspora?

6. Are there divisions and hierarchies (particularly along class lines) within the black community in the diaspora? If so, have they influenced black women's lives? What are the theoretical implications of these divisions?

Implications for policy and action

1. Policies and programs for women should acknowledge and take into account the impact of race on gender experiences and relations.

2. Policymakers should investigate the needs and socioeconomic conditions of black women so that they can design policies relevant to those needs.

3. Programs for women should address the impacts of the multiple jeopardies of race, sex, and class for many women, and program design should reflect the complexities of this multilevel reality for many women.

Box 12

Talking back: thinking feminist, thinking black

Towards the end of 1987 I spoke at Tufts University at an annual dinner for black women. My topic was "Black Women in Predominantly White Institutions." I was excited by the idea of talking with so many young black women but surprised when these women suggested that sexism was not a political issue of concern to black women, that the serious issue was racism. I've heard this response many times, yet somehow I did not expect that I would need to prove over and over that sexism ensures that many black females will be exploited and victimized. Confronted by these young black women to whom sexism was not important, I felt that feminism had failed to develop a politics that addresses black women. Particularly, I felt that black women active in black liberation struggles in the 1960s and early 1970s, who had spoken and written on sexism (remember the anthology *The Black Woman*, edited by Toni Cade Bambara?) had let our younger sisters down by not making more of a sustained political effort so that black women (and black people) would have greater understanding of the impact of sexist oppression on our lives.

When I began to share my own experiences of racism and sexism, pointing to incidents (particularly in relationships with black men), a veil was lifted. Suddenly the group acknowledged what had been previously denied — the ways sexism wounds us as black women. I had talked earlier about the way many black women students in predominantly white institutions keep silent in classes, stating emphatically that our progress in such places requires us to have a voice, to not remain silent. In the ensuing discussion, women commented on black fathers who had told their daughters "nobody wants a loud-talking black woman." ... the group expressed ambivalent feelings about speaking, particularly on political issues in classroom settings where they were often attacked or unsupported by other black women students. ...

Many black women insist that they do not join the feminist movement because they cannot bond with white women who are racist. If one argues that there really are some white women who are resisting and challenging racism, who are genuinely committed to ending white supremacy, one is accused of being naive, of not acknowledging history. Most black women, rich and poor, have contact with white women, usually in work settings. In such settings black women cooperate with white women despite racism. Yet black women are reluctant to express solidarity with white feminists. Black women's consciousness is shaped by internalized racism and by reactionary white women's concerns as they are expressed in popular culture, such as daytime soap operas or in the world of white fashion and cosmetic products, which masses of black women consume without rejecting this racist propaganda and devaluing of black women. ...

(continued)

Box 12 *(concluded)*

It is our collective responsibility as individual black women committed to feminist movement to work at making space where black women who are just beginning to explore feminist issues can do so without fear of hostile treatment, quick judgements, dismissals, etc. ...

Black women need to construct a model of feminist theorising and scholarship that is inclusive, that widens our options, that enhances our understanding of black experience and gender. Significantly, the most basic task confronting black feminists (irrespective of the terms we use to identify ourselves) is to educate one another and black people about sexism, about the ways resisting sexism can empower black women, a process which makes sharing feminist vision more difficult. Radford-Hill identifies "the crisis of black womanhood" as a serious problem that must be considered politically, asserting that "the extent to which black feminists can articulate and solve the crisis of black womanhood is the extent to which black women will undergo feminist transformation."

Black women must identify ways feminist thought and practice can aid in our process of self-recovery and share that knowledge with our sisters. This is the base on which to build political solidarity. When that grounding exists black women will be fully engaged in feminist movement that transforms self, community, and society.

— hooks (1988, pp. 177–182)

Questions on excerpt (Box 12)

1. Why is it important to recover the history of black women's resistance to racism?

2. How do black women's acts of resistance challenge the two prevailing approaches to the consciousness of oppressed groups?

3. Do black women have a self-defined standpoint on their own oppression? Should they work with white feminists on political action?

4. Has feminism failed to develop a politics to address the concerns of black women? If so, how can we change that?

5. How does sexism affect black women (and white women)? How can resisting sexism empower black women (and white women)?

General discussion questions

1. Why do so many black women feel they have little to gain from the feminist movement in North America and the United Kingdom?

2. Have you experienced sexism from men of your own race or ethnic group?

3. Do you think it is possible to be feminist without being racist? Can feminist thought and practice incorporate the experience and standpoint of black women?

4. What has black-feminist theorizing contributed to feminist theories?

5. Is there a black women's reality? Is it affected by factors such as class, regional ties, culture, and ethnicity?

6. Does the radical-feminist concept "the personal is political" have relevance for black women?

Framework H: postmodernist feminism

In the last few decades, postmodernist critiques have increasingly dominated scholarship in the humanities and social sciences. Postmodernism is not easily encapsulated in one phrase or idea, as it is actually an amalgam of often purposely ambiguous and fluid ideas. But above all, postmodernists question the **metatheories** that "explain" the modern age, particularly the belief that rational thought and technological innovation can guarantee progress and enlightenment. These theories, whether in the Marxist or the liberal tradition, are no longer seen as "the truth" but simply as privileged discourses that deny and silence competing, dissident voices.

The struggle for a universalist knowledge has been abandoned. A search has begun for previously silenced voices, for the specificity and power of language and its relation to knowledge, context, and locality. The concern with discourse

and language has spawned an interest in the construction of identity and the concept of difference, particularly the tendency for people to define those they see as different ("other") in opposition to their own perceived strengths or sense of identity. European and North American scholarship, benefiting from its hegemonic position in world discourse, has dominated the construction of such definitions.

Feminists have reacted to postmodernism in various ways. Some reject it because it undermines feminism's political goals (Brodribb 1992). Others believe that standpoint-feminist theory offers similar critiques of male-establishment knowledge, but from a female, rather than a largely white-male, perspective (Harding 1992). They point out that most postmodernist writers have been white males. However, a number of feminists have sought a middle ground. They emphasize the similarities and compatibilities of feminism and postmodernism — both, after all, call for the development of new paradigms of social criticism that do not rely on traditional philosophical underpinnings. They believe feminist theorizing and action can be strengthened by postmodernism's sophisticated and persuasive criticisms of foundationalism and essentialism, its focus on difference, and its analysis of the relationship between language, power, and knowledge. At the same time, they believe postmodernism has much to learn from the socio-critical power of feminism, particularly its attention to gender. Some feminists believe this "marriage" can be achieved with little difficulty (Butler and Scott 1992), whereas others expect it to alter both perspectives (Flax 1990; Nicholson 1990; Canning 1994).

Postmodernist-feminist thought has attracted considerable attention among Third World and minority feminists, who have found it useful in their critiques of Western feminism, particularly its tendency to conflate the experiences of Western women with those of women everywhere, thus ignoring important differences and undermining the possibility of global feminist cooperation based on the multiple realities of the world's women. Indeed, postcolonial critiques from the South, along with writings on identity, difference, and indigenous knowledge (Ong 1988; Agarwal 1991; Barriteau 1992), have contributed much to postmodernist-feminist theorizing. The encounter between feminism and postmodernism is clearly ongoing, indeterminate, and fluid. It has drawn on feminist scholarship in the North and the South and holds the possibility of a feminism that recognizes the importance of difference and local complexities, without abandoning attention to

political and economic structures. A postmodern feminism that adopts feminism's political agenda while recognizing the relationship between language and subjectivity and their connection to other aspects of material life can provide a perspective in which we can celebrate differences and ambiguities without sacrificing the search for a "broader, richer, more complex and multilayered feminist solidarity" (Fraser and Nicholson 1990, p. 35; see also Hennessy 1993; Sylvester 1994).

Questions raised for research

1. How can women's voices and knowledge, particularly those that have been hidden from history or silenced altogether, be heard and revealed?

2. How do the words that people use to describe one another and themselves influence action?

3. How do some groups represent and categorize others, and what impacts do these constructions and representations have on action?

Implications for policy and action

1. The postmodernist-feminist approach reminds policymakers that knowledge is found on many levels and that the voices and opinions of the less powerful may offer more solutions to development problems than all the "experts" in the North.

2. This approach reminds policymakers that language is important and that phrases and labels influence the ways policies are perceived and acted on.

3. This approach calls for policies that acknowledge difference and try to understand the needs of diverse groups, particularly needs based on racial and cultural identities, and reminds policymakers of the importance of formulating policies to address these needs.

Box 13

The construct of a postmodernist-feminist theory for Caribbean social-science research

Social science research on Caribbean women represents a significant development for feminist theory building. This body of work has established the realities shaping the lives of Caribbean women. It has initiated the groundwork for critiquing the gendered epistemologies derived uncritically from Enlightenment political discourses and which inform Caribbean social science research. For research on Caribbean women to transcend the mere addition of women to the literature, the need to expose the gendered nature of Enlightenment theories becomes in itself both an epistemological and political project. Without confronting and deconstructing these theories, research on women produce findings which do not challenge the concept and practice of patriarchy, and can often unwittingly reinforce it. ...

Post-modernist feminists oppose the notion of a singular privileged, knowable, universal truth, a God's eye view as the fundamental principle in social science epistemologies. The epistemologies of the Enlightenment claim to have the key to what constitutes knowledge. They claim, therefore, to have the only authority to adjudicate between truth and falsehood. That claim in turn rests on the assumption of a supra rational mind. This claim to a supra rational mind is exceedingly powerful. All discourses derived from the Enlightenment tradition are able to marginalize and deem irrelevant social groups, localized knowledges and areas of knowledge having no interest for Enlightenment philosophy. They had the authority to do so because the claim to a supra rational mind allows a privileged access to truth. ...

Post-modernist feminists reject the binary opposites and dichotomies created by the artificial separation of the mind from the body, truth from falsehood, and subject from object. Post-modernist feminists posit that these dualisms were created when Enlightenment philosophy adopted rationality as the key to knowledge.

The challenge to post-modernist feminists in theory building is greater and more encompassing. Where post-modernists locate all Enlightenment claims in their historic and cultural contexts, post-modernist feminists posit that existing social sciences epistemologies exclude the experience of women because of the gendered reality of all social relations. Post-modernist feminist theorizing argues that not only are the Enlightenment perspectives the perspectives of particularly privileged groups and societies, but they are the perspectives of androcentric, European societies. Enlightenment theorizing represents the epistemologies of the European worldview. It denies the visibility and relevance of the approaches to knowledge from the third world and the Caribbean as part of it. It is what Jayawardina has referred to as "hidden from history" and to which can be added "deemed irrelevant as a source of knowledge."

— Barriteau (1992, pp. 1–4)

Questions on excerpt (Box 13)

1. How can postmodernist-feminist theory assist in the development of a theory grounded in the realities of Caribbean women's lives?

2. How does enlightenment thinking undermine local knowledge and marginalize certain social groups?

3. How has social-science research on Caribbean women contributed to feminist theory-building?

General discussion questions

1. How do postmodernist feminists view the claims of Enlightenment theorists, particularly liberal and Marxist theorists?

2. Do the founding fathers of postmodernist thinking pay attention to women or gender? Has this been a problem for feminists interested in postmodern perspectives?

3. Does postmodernism undermine feminist politics? If so, how? Can this be overcome?

4. What can the study of binary opposites and representation tell us about the impact of colonialism and developmentalism on women in the South?

Feminist development theories: applying WID and GAD

This section provides tools and exercises to help you become familiar with, and operationalize, the two major feminist development theories. The tools are drawn from *Two Halves Make a Whole: Balancing Gender Relations in Development* (Moffat et al. 1991) but are somewhat revised. This section also provides three case studies that highlight the significance of the WID and GAD frameworks. These case studies show that when you approach a problem from a particular framework, you identify a certain set of problems and arrive at certain types of strategies and solutions. WID tends to focus on practical needs, whereas GAD focuses on both practical needs and strategic interests (Tables 1 and 2). In addition to focusing on everyday problems, GAD is concerned with addressing the root inequalities (of both gender and class) that create many of the practical problems women experience in their daily lives.

Table 1. Comparison of WID and GAD.

	WID	GAD
The approach	An approach that views the absence of women in development plans and policies as the problem	An approach to development that focuses on global and gender inequalities
The focus	Women	Socially constructed relations between women and men, with special focus on the subordination of women
The problem	The exclusion of women (half of productive resources) from the development process	Unequal power relations (rich vs poor; women vs men), which prevents equitable development and women's full participation
The goal	More efficient, effective development that includes women	Equitable, sustainable development, with women and men as decision-makers
The solution	Integrate women into the existing development process	Empower the disadvantaged and women and transform unequal relations
The strategies	• Focus on women's projects, on women's components of projects, and on integrated projects • Increase women's productivity and income • Increase women's ability to look after the household	• Reconceptualize the development process, taking gender and global inequalities into account • Identify and address practical needs, as determined by women and men, to improve their condition; at the same time, address women's strategic interests • Address strategic interests of the poor through people-centred development

Source: Based on Moffat et al. (1991).
Note: GAD, gender and development; WID, women in development.

Tools of GAD analysis

TOOL 1: GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR — Most societies allocate different roles, responsibilities, and activities to women and men, according to what is considered appropriate in a particular culture. This is called the gender division of labour. An examination of the gender division of labour usually shows that although both women and men work to maintain themselves and their households, there tends to be differences in the nature of their work and in the ways it is valued. These differences are a central aspect of gender relations.

Table 2. Practical needs and strategic interests.

Practical needs	*Strategic interests*
• Tend to be immediate, short-term	• Tend to be long-term
• Are unique to particular women, according to the roles assigned to them in the gender division of labour in their society	• May be viewed as being relevant to all women (e.g., all women experience some inequality relative to men, but the degree varies by class, race, religion, age, etc.)
• Relate to daily needs: food, housing, income, health, children, safety	• Relate to disadvantaged position: subordination, lack of resources and education, vulnerability to poverty and violence, etc.
• Are easily identifiable by women	• Are not always identifiable by women (e.g., women may be unaware of the basis of disadvantage or potential for change)
• Can be addressed by providing specific inputs: food, handpumps, clinics, etc.	• Can be addressed by consciousness-raising, increasing self-confidence, providing education, strengthening women's organizations, fostering political mobilization, etc.
Addressing practical needs	*Addressing strategic interests*
• Tends to involve women as beneficiaries and perhaps as participants	• Involves women as agents or enables women to become agents
• Can improve the condition of women's lives	• Can improve the position of women in society
• Generally, does not alter traditional roles and relationships	• Can empower women and transform gender relations and attitudes

Source: Based on Moffat et al. (1991).

TOOL 2: TYPES OF WORK — Women and men, and to some extent boys and girls, are likely to be involved in three main areas of work: productive, reproductive, and community work. In many societies, however, women do almost all of the reproductive and much of the productive work. Any intervention in one area will affect the others.

TOOL 3: ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER RESOURCES AND BENEFITS — Women's subordinate position can limit their access to, and control over, resources and benefits. In some cases, women may have access (the opportunity to make use of something) to resources and benefits, but no control (the ability to define its use and impose that definition on others). For example, women may have access to land but no control over its long-term use or ownership.

TOOL 4: INFLUENCING FACTORS — Gender relations (including the division of labour, the type of work women and men do, and their respective levels of access and control) change to some degree over time in any society. Many factors influence, shape, and change these relations. For example, gender relations are affected by such factors as changes in the economy, environment, religion, culture, and political situation.

TOOL 5: CONDITION AND POSITION — A distinction can be drawn between the day-to-day condition of women and their position in society. As noted in footnote 2, women's "condition" refers to their material state — their immediate sphere of experience. A woman would describe her condition in terms of the work she does, where she lives, what she needs for herself and her children (clean water, food, education), etc. "Position" refers to women's social and economic standing *relative to that of men.* It is measured, by male–female disparities in wages and employment opportunities, participation in legislative bodies, vulnerability to poverty and violence, etc. Development activities tend to focus on women's condition, aiming to improve their ability to carry out traditional roles and responsibilities. Little attention has been paid to enhancing women's position or promoting their ability to participate fully with men as agents of development and change.

TOOL 6: PRACTICAL NEEDS AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS — Practical needs are linked to women's condition. They can be readily identified and usually relate to unsatisfactory living conditions and lack of resources. For example, practical needs are usually related to immediate needs, such as those for food and water, the health and education of children, and increased income. Practical needs and family survival are always priorities. The satisfaction of these needs is a prerequisite for women's ability to promote their strategic interests. Strategic interests for women arise from their position in society (disadvantaged) relative to that of men. Strategic interests are long-term, related to improving women's position. For example, empowering women to have more opportunities, greater access to resources, and more equal participation with men in decision-making would be in the long-term strategic interest of the majority of the world's men and women alike.

TOOL 7: LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION — The formulation of more gender-aware policies requires women's (and men's) involvement as participants, beneficiaries, and agents. Women benefit significantly if their decision-making capacity and status are increased through a process of consultation. Passive recipients of assistance

they become agents of change when they organize themselves to address their own needs and plan solutions and when their voices are heard and taken into account.

TOOL 8: POTENTIAL FOR TRANSFORMATION — Women's subordinate position is not a static state, nor is it experienced the same way by all women. Throughout history and around the world, women have challenged gender inequality and the limitations it imposes on their potential as human beings. Significant gains have been and will continue to be made everywhere through the struggle of women, sometimes with men's support. In all societies, transformatory processes are creating a better life, addressing inequalities, and improving the position of women. Women's movements have a long history in most countries, and an awareness of these movements should be part of our gender analysis.

Exercise 1

Applying WID and GAD frameworks

The adequacy of theoretical frameworks is best tested through their application to real-world situations. A framework provides a particular line of questioning. It helps the analyst identify where to start, what to focus on, and how to relate one issue to another. The objective is to generate a full understanding of the nature of the problem in order to propose effective solutions. Different frameworks highlight different issues and suggest different courses of action.

The following questions may be used to guide discussion of the case-study scenarios outlined below:

1. Using the WID perspective, what questions would you ask and what types of information would you need to obtain to understand the causes of the problem and propose solutions?
2. Using the GAD perspective, what questions would you ask and what types of information would you need to obtain to understand the causes of the problem and propose solutions?
3. Apply the tools of GAD analysis outlined above and comment on their usefulness in relation to the case study.
4. Are there other questions unrelated to either the WID or the GAD framework that should be posed in this context? If so, what are they?

Case Study 1

Violence against women

Violence against women is an increasingly serious problem in country *X*. Domestic violence is a major component. Sexual jealousies and suspicions caused by women leaving the home to work are a factor. So, too, is the management of domestic finances. Men expect women to be able to stretch the household's income to cover all necessities and leave some over for entertainment. Women are also routinely harassed by strangers on the street and by their supervisors at their places of work.

Case Study 2

Small-scale trading

Small-scale trading is a significant source of income for women in country *X*, but their earnings remain low, and opportunities for occupational mobility are limited. The government provides little support for this sector. Poverty among women is widespread.

Case Study 3

Women and forest resources

Women in country *X* are the major users of forest resources to provide, for example, fuelwood, fodder, and raw materials for the manufacture of baskets for home use and sale. Women's productive activities are not recognized by the forestry service, and their use of the forest tends to be viewed as harmful to the environment.

Sample exercise answer: Case Study 1

WID perspective

Women may need to modify their behaviour to reduce their exposure to violence. This might involve the development of more home-based work opportunities to avoid going to an outside workplace; improved financial-management skills to make cash stretch farther and reduce tensions over money; and training in avoiding violence on the streets (through such tactics as walking in groups, refusing night shifts, not wearing sexually provocative clothing, and asking men from their household to accompany them at all times). Shelters should also be provided to assist women in urgent need. While they are in the shelter they should have access

to the above types of training and counseling. A governmental or nongovernmental agency should be provide this training, along with other services for women. Laws should be passed to strengthen penalties for violence against women.

GAD perspective

Women may need to modify their behaviour in the short term to avoid further injury, but in the long term the major modification required is in men, as they are the perpetrators of this violence. The cultural values and social institutions that give men power over women in their households, on the streets, and in the workplace need to be changed. This will require massive and long-term public education. It will probably involve new legislation or the enforcement of existing legislation to ensure zero tolerance of domestic violence so that assaults in the home are prosecuted in the same way as assaults between strangers would be; sexual-harassment regulations are actively implemented through workplace committees; and women and men each regard the effective maintenance of safe streets as a public priority. Occupational segregation should also be eliminated so that women can have economic power and can, if necessary, be financially independent and women are no longer viewed as inferior workers doing inferior jobs.

Tools of GAD analysis

TOOL 1: GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR — Definitely part of the problem in Case Study 1 is that women's and men's work in different spheres allocates them differential financial and social power.

TOOL 2: TYPES OF WORK — Women's involvement in productive work seems to be little recognized, as they are punished by their husbands for leaving the home; and they shoulder the burden of domestic budgeting (as part of their reproductive work), leaving them vulnerable to accusations of mismanaging income. To make up the shortfall of cash from an inadequate income, they seek paid productive work outside. The demands placed on women in these two spheres are contradictory. This probably lowers their self-esteem, as they feel they are failing to meet expectations. All this contributes, directly and indirectly, to the cycle of violence in which they are trapped.

TOOL 3: ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER RESOURCES AND BENEFITS — Men have access to better jobs than women do, although some men may be unemployed or

paid low wages, which possibly increases domestic stress. Women have access to household income but do not really control it in the sense of being free to decide on spending priorities. It seems they must meet their husbands' expectations and requirements above all else.

TOOL 4: INFLUENCING FACTORS — Violence in this case is increasing, not static, so something must be changing in the environment to explain it. Research should focus on factors such as changing patterns of work, prices, and ideas about appropriate behaviour for women and men.

TOOL 5: CONDITION AND POSITION — Women's condition is a problem: they experience violence in their daily lives. Their position relative to that of men seems to be the cause of the problem.

TOOL 6: PRACTICAL NEEDS AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS — Immediate practical needs include those for shelters, jobs, housing, medical care, and counselling. Strategic interests include measures to improve women's position relative to that of men; these measures should focus on both empowering women and bringing about long-term societal change in men's attitudes and behaviour.

TOOL 7: LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION — Women need to organize to empower themselves and to bring about long-term change. They should participate in efforts to provide many of the practical services needed by women experiencing violence, but they should not take sole responsibility for providing these: getting male-dominated governmental and nongovernmental agencies to acknowledge these problems and take some responsibility for solving them would be an essential part of long-term change. Women who have been the victims of violence should be involved in solving the short- and long-term problems, thereby moving from the status of passive victim to that of active decision-maker.

TOOL 8: POTENTIAL FOR TRANSFORMATION — A mixed strategy of meeting practical needs while bringing about long-term changes has good potential to transform society. As the problem in this case study has ramifications in the areas of law, policing, economics, welfare, health, education, and media, its solution might involve a great number of agencies and individuals and thereby transform institutions and personal styles of life.

Additional questions

1. Is the violence concentrated in certain social classes or ethnic groups?

2. What economic, cultural, historical, or political factors may account for its concentration in certain classes or groups?

3. How do approaches need to be modified when issues of violence are compounded by questions of race or class oppression?

4. Are there diverse opinions on the nature and causes of violence, or is there a broad consensus?

5. How might a greater diversity of voices be better heard?

6. What kind of strategies do women already use to avoid, resist, or survive violence?

7. Can these strategies be shared and built up into a larger force for change, based on women's knowledge and experience?

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CHAPTER 4

FEMINIST THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, RESEARCH, AND ACTION

V. Eudine Barriteau

Introduction

This chapter integrates our understanding of feminist theories, gender issues, and development paradigms. It outlines the shift in the development discourse and documents and discusses alternative approaches to development. It attempts to reveal how these shape development policies, research agendas, and feminist activism.

The discussions of development, feminist theories, and feminist development frameworks in the preceding chapters are particularly useful for women in developing countries. This information serves many purposes:

- It enables us to expose and "interrogate" the contradictions and complications in development theory and practice;

- It provides analytical tools that reveal how development paradigms have influenced national policies;

- It shows the impact of these policies on legislation, education, welfare reform, culture, and other economic and social issues affecting women's lives;

- It enables us to analyze the policies of international development and financial institutions and agencies, such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank), the International

Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM);

- It indicates the factors that should be considered to create just, gender-sensitive development policies; and

- It indicates alternative approaches and practices for destabilizing the traditional models of development, which are inimical to the well-being of women.

Feminist theorizing, the experiences of women in developing countries, and feminist critiques of development policies have had various effects on the creation of new policies, the shape of research agendas, and the nature of ongoing activism. These principal areas diverge substantially, even though conceptually and practically they continue to interact and influence each other.

Overview

The development policies of international institutions and national governments continue to reflect the influence of the liberal-feminist framework. These policies maintain an incremental, reformist approach to working within the modernization paradigm. They still focus on bringing women "into" development, the women-in-development (WID) approach. As these policies are explored the assumptions of liberal feminism and the modernization paradigm become easy to detect.

The influence of feminist theorizing on current research on women and development (WAD) is far more wide-ranging (Moser n.d.). There have been substantive changes in the nature and scope of this research. Many more feminists in the South are undertaking research. They are attempting to redefine the WID and gender-and-development (GAD) discourse. They are also committed to ensuring that the historical perspective of women's movements and women's organizations in the South become an integral part of the discourse. Their work documents the lives and struggles of women in the South. They seek to challenge and correct the assumptions with which women's movements and organizations in the South began their work during the United Nations' First Development Decade.

At the international level, the work of such groups as Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) has now mushroomed into a global

analysis of key development issues. DAWN is a network of feminists, researchers, activists, and policymakers that was formed in Bangalore, India, in 1984 and formalized in workshops at the NGO forum in Nairobi in 1985. DAWN has questioned the impact of development on poor peoples, especially women, in light of current global economic and political crises. The group's agenda focuses on the themes of environment, reproductive rights, population, and alternative economic frameworks.

On the issue of human development and economic growth, DAWN has inverted the traditional question, What kind of human development can best promote economic competitiveness and growth? Gita Sen, on behalf of DAWN, has asked instead, What kind of economic development can best promote human development? Sen, who is DAWN's Research Co-ordinator on Alternative Economic Frameworks, argued that if this became the central question of development, different answers would be sought and different policies would be designed and implemented (Sen and Grown 1987).

Concerning the issues of nationalistic or economic wars, the emergence of competitive trading blocs, and the changing role of multilateral institutions, DAWN put three central questions on the research agenda of Southern feminists:

- What role can and should we play in bringing about internal peace?
- How will trading blocs affect our employment and responsibilities for livelihoods?
- How can we improve consciousness about development in cooperation with Northern groups?

Women's nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and feminist researchers and activists in the North are synthesizing their research concerns with those of feminists in the South. Alternative Women in Development (AltWID), a network of Northern feminists, based in Washington, DC, published a study of the impacts of Reaganomics on women in the United States, *Reagonomics and Women: Structural Adjustment U.S. Style — 1980–1992* (AltWID 1992). The study showed that Reaganomics had the same impacts on women in the United States as structural-adjustment policies have in the South. Establishing this link was an important

analytical contribution. Both the structural-adjustment policies and Reaganomics are nurtured by, and have the same ideological roots in, neoclassical economics.

In another publication, *Breaking Boundaries: Women, Free Trade and Economic Integration* (AltWID n.d.), AltWID explained why free trade is a women's issue. It noted that market policies are not gender blind and pointed out that "the impact of supply side policies has altered family life; relations between women, men and children; women's and men's roles; and women's relative economic status." AltWID has also collaborated with feminist networks in the North and South on projects, conferences, and political strategies.

Other feminist researchers in the North recognized the need to contextualize the discourse on development to show its effect on women and development. This is an application of the analytical strategies they used in critiquing the metanarratives of social theory to show its gendered and exclusionary nature. This work complements the research and activism of indigenous feminisms. Current feminist research on development issues is now more engaged and covers all development issues. It also incorporates insights gained from gender analysis to investigate the environmental debate and sustainable-development issues.

The women's movement and women's activism have exploded with vibrant programs and scholarship in both the North and the South. In the last two decades, women's NGOs have grown and diversified, and the nature of their activism has changed in many cases. Many NGOs that were set up in the 19th century or early 20th century often attempted to supplement the welfare activities of the state, or they experimented with reformist policies. More recently, women-centred NGOs in the South have frequently been at the frontiers of the movement to promote alternative development practices. An example of this is a coalition of women's NGOs in the Philippines, which in 1986 formulated the National Women's Development Plan. This became a crucial part of the country's national lobby on the debt crisis in the same year (women's organizations and networks are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5).

Several countries have introduced new women-related research institutes and institutionalized women's-studies programs. China, India, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe have all started women-centred research institutions. At the University of the West Indies, the Women and Development Studies Program was institutionalized as the Centre for Gender and Development Studies.

What distinguishes these networks, institutes, and centres from earlier women-related organizations is that they seek to give women, children, and men priority in discussions of development. They actively pursue alternative approaches to WAD, and their very existence serves as a reminder of the failures of earlier, modernization-oriented development policy for women.

Exercise 1

Exploring feminist research

1. Identify and discuss the kinds of feminist research on WAD undertaken in your country or region.
2. Who is doing this research? Women's bureaus, universities, women-centred NGOs?
3. Is this research helping to change the information on WAD? How will it influence development policy and planning?

The shift in the discourse on development

Feminist development critiques and feminist activism have radically altered the discourse on development. It is no longer possible to deal with development issues by focusing simply on ways to improve savings and investment functions or on the most efficient industrialization strategies to increase exports. Feminists have exposed the fallacy of using sterile measures of economic growth to assess the attainment of goals.

The initial WID policy statement (Percy Amendment to the US *Foreign Assistance Act* of 1973 [GOUS 1978]) assumed a consensus on the relationship between states (represented by national governments) and market economies. This consensus is ideological in origin. Its roots lie in neoclassical economics and liberal political ideology. Combined as the doctrine of liberalism or neoliberalism, they pose particular problems for women.

The main problem is the public–private dichotomy, which devalues women's reproductive work while maintaining that women can gain equality by participating more in the public sphere of the state and formal economic production (see "Framework C: liberal feminism" in Chapter 3). WID maintained a consensus on accepting the rationale of markets as expounded in the modernization paradigm. You will recall that this centres on the efficiency of resource allocation, the restructuring of production and distribution, and the liberalization of trade and investment but remains oblivious to the concerns of gender relations. WID's main thrust was to make the ideology of market economics more humane, that is, inclusive of the needs of women as defined by WID.

Several changes and crises in the political economy and culture of North–South relations contributed to reshaping development discourse. Most of the South experienced severe economic crises in the 1970s and 1980s, although a small group (notably the Asian newly industrialized countries) forged ahead. In the 1990s, Eastern Europe, Russia, and Southeast Asia experienced economic crises as the effects of globalization began to be felt around the world. Women, children, and men lived (and still live) the contradictions of development policies promoting mass consumption even as it leads to increased poverty and marginalization. In their daily lives, people in the South experience development policies as modernization, which can produce the following effects:

- Increases in economic growth but weak employment generation (India);
- Increases in economic growth but environmental and human degradation (Brazil); and
- No increase or, in some cases, declines in economic growth, accompanied by declines in human and physical infrastructure (the Caribbean).

Gita Sen of DAWN observed that for the first time in two decades feminist development critiques brought together people and their needs in the dialogue on development. In the 1970s, the dialogue was dominated by the dependency critique. The debate was about the creation of dependency and the requirements of basic-needs programs. It involved neither gender analysis nor the WID framework (Sen and Grown 1987).

The 1980s introduced a reversal of trends in the South. As in other periods of crisis, it became an excellent time to consider previously ignored issues and put

them on the agenda. The 1980s also marked the beginning of the GAD critique, which solidified in the 1990s. The activism and research of the international women's movement revealed the potential for "engendering" the concept of human development. It made unequal gender relations a central concern of development. Southern, and some Northern, feminists insist that development policies cannot succeed if they are not "engendered." In 1986, DAWN defined *development* as "socially responsible management and use of resources, the elimination of gender subordination and social inequality and the organizational restructuring that can bring these about" (Sen and Grown 1987, p. 2). The indigenous-feminist theorizing informing this definition stresses the need for economic and social change, empowerment of women, and progressive changes in public–private relations to benefit women.

This is conceptually quite opposite to the definition of *development* held by other development theorists: "Economic development consists of the introduction of new combinations of production factors which increase labour productivity" (Hunt 1989, p. 49). This definition locates development in the sphere of production and focuses only on changes in economic relations. To such theorists, economic development consists in introducing new combinations of factors of production to increase labour productivity. It is easy to recognize the bias against women in this definition. By emphasizing production factors, it focuses on formal economic activities, such as waged labour and large-scale production. In all these areas, women are underrepresented and their contributions are devalued. More significantly, this definition ignores the critical connection between the reproductive work women do and how this underpins the formal, productive economy. It is a good example of how women are marginalized at the core of development theory.

Whereas political economists and structuralists stress the impact of the international economic system as a constraint to economic growth in the South, the neoclassical school identifies the dominant constraint as internal, rather than external, factors. Walter Rostow and Arthur Lewis captured the range of arguments of neoclassical development theory (see "Framework A: modernization theory," in Chapter 3). They argued that constraints on development lie partly in indigenous institutions and attitudes and partly in the low rate of savings characteristic of poor countries. Built into the basic assumptions of this theorizing is the rejection of indigenous attitudes and institutions. Women in the South are largely responsible for maintaining cultural traditions. As theorizing by black, postmodernist, and indigenous, or Third World, feminists shows, women in the South

also use indigenous institutions and practices as part of their survival strategies. By assuming that these indigenous attitudes and institutions represent barriers to development, neoclassical theorists place women's ways of knowing outside their concept of development.

Socialist-feminist theories have contributed to the extensive examination of the ways women's labour is exploited in factories and export-processing zones. They have also documented how women receive lower wages for comparable work. They revealed the feminization of certain occupations that occurred as women entered the labour force in increasing numbers. As the men moved out of certain occupations, these became "ghettoized" as women's work, with an accompanying decrease in status and wages. In the South, the occupation of teaching at primary or secondary schools is a good example.

Liberal-feminist analysis makes distinct the public–private dichotomy at the heart of modernization theorizing and policy development. It is easy to ignore women's contribution in the public domain because it is assumed that women work, and should work, within households.

Feminist development critiques insist that a gender perspective be built into all development issues. It is another way of posing the question raised by Gita Sen. Using a gender perspective we ask, What kinds of development policies can best promote the interests of women in the South? Implicit in that reframing of the question is the recognition that women straddle the crossroads of reproduction and production. They are the link between human and economic development, the primary workers in both the private and the public spheres.

Gender analysis must reorganize the private sphere if women are to be freed from having to carry all the responsibilities of sustaining households and family structures. Although many women and men still see these as women's responsibilities, this perspective is increasingly challenged. This continues to be an era of the most difficult and intractable aspects of gender relationships and change. Gender ideologies that sustain the exploitation of women in the private sphere of the household contribute to producing development policies that integrate women into economic production in specific, exploitative, or marginal ways. Women suffer most when policymakers fail to comprehend this pattern of exploitation. But children, men, households, and families also suffer because women in the South have to carry such multiple burdens and responsibilities.

Feminist theories and critiques of development are instrumental in revealing that the countries of the South are not culturally, politically, or economically homogeneous. Nor are gender relations experienced in the same manner by all

Third World women. Black feminist Audre Lorde has warned of the danger of implying that all women suffer the same oppression because they are women. As explained in Chapter 3, black feminists have argued that this ignores the varieties and degrees of women's subordination. It also ignores how these experiences change with a woman's race, class, and cultural setting. There is more variation among countries in the South than among industrialized societies of the North.

The tendency to homogenize the concept of the Third World woman and assume the universal applicability of these approaches to development creates specific problems for women in the South. Programs and policies that are designed to integrate women into development and those that are critical of the relations between women and development are a reaction to the modernization paradigm. Theorizing by black, socialist, postmodernist, and indigenous, or Third World, feminists isolates and exposes the intellectual and ideological climate that prevailed when the modernization paradigm emerged. The dominance of the United States in the postwar era included intellectual hegemony, which was played out in scholarship, research, and policy-making related to the South. Just as the United States devised the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for the economic and military support and security of Western Europe, it began to devote attention to producing similar plans and institutions for the South. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this set of assumptions about the world became core elements of the modernization paradigm.

It is not accidental that the United States was the first industrialized country to establish a policy initiative to reorganize women's roles in the development process. The Percy Amendment to the *Foreign Assistance Act* of 1973 required that US foreign assistance focus on programs, projects, and activities that tended to integrate women into the national economies of foreign countries. This helped integrate the WID policy approach into policy-making. It also meant that early WID policy implicitly inherited the problems of giving priority to capitalist production and Western values and institutions.

Feminists analyzing the WID approach showed that WID specialists relied on neoclassical economic-growth models to achieve the goals of development. They assumed that development planning ignored women and argued that the allocation of financial and natural resources should be extended to benefit women. However, they failed to investigate whether the concept of economic efficiency may be premised on excluding the specific gendered constraints women face as producers. Nor did they consider how responsibilities that are generally regarded as being women's are viewed as creating conditions of economic inefficiency.

The WID policies of international development institutions

The World Bank

The WID approach has heavily influenced the policies of the World Bank, one of the major Bretton Woods financial institutions discussed in Chapter 2. In a 1990 publication, *Women in Development: A Progress Report on the World Bank Initiative*, the institution set out its policy for women:

> In general, the Bank is focusing on increasing women's economic productivity, investing in human capital and improving women's access to productive resources and the labor market. ... Because social and cultural forces influence women's economic productivity, deliberate and thoughtful effort is required to involve women more effectively in the development process.
>
> — World Bank (1990)

The World Bank then called for government policy that realized women's economic potential while being sensitive to the role of culture. It recommended that governments consult with women's groups and NGOs in setting priorities and designing programs. It identified four priority areas for helping women to realize their economic potential: education, health and family planning, agricultural extension, and credit. The publication noted that women in the South spend several hours each day in reproductive work. It therefore recommended measures to free more of women's time for other activities.

These recommendations called for alternative fuels and local woodlots, more efficient stoves, and child care. This policy did not include changing gender ideologies that construct all reproductive work as women's work. These measures were merely intended to help women complete reproductive work more efficiently so that they could increase their participation in labour-force activities. The World Bank concluded its policy review with a list of six areas of emphasis, under the heading "Future directions":

- Expansion of policy work and research, with priority on developing guidelines for cost-effective interventions in specific fields, reflective of the best available operational experience;

- An agenda for research to support policy formulation, including efforts to collect data disaggregated by gender and to strengthen the analytical foundation for efforts to improve women's opportunities;

- More explicit attention to women's issues in the policy dialogue with governments;

- Implementation of the WID assessments and action plans, with more attention to assessing government actions to address women's issues and actual results;

- Inclusion of specific efforts in the World Bank's operations to test, monitor, and evaluate promising programs for women, especially in high-priority areas; and

- Increased training of staff on the role of women in development.

Exercise 2

Theory and policy

1. Look back at Chapter 3. Applying WID and GAD analysis, especially the eight tools of GAD analysis, discuss the policy and future directions of the World Bank.
2. Is there an overlap? Are the World Bank's policies strictly WID, strictly GAD?
3. Select a policy statement on women and development from your country (see, for example, those released by women's bureaus or the National Platform Country Statements prepared for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995). Again, apply the WID or GAD framework.

   (a) Which framework does this policy statement satisfy?

   (b) What is the role for men assumed in this policy?

   (c) What would you add to this policy to satisfy the needs of women in your country?

   (d) What are the core assumptions of World Bank policy? Refer to Chapters 2 and 3.

International Labour Office

The International Labour Office (ILO) has stated its commitment to equal opportunity and treatment of women and men in all its activities, as part of its mandate. It translated this commitment into policy in its *ILO Plan of Action on Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Men and Women in Employment*:

> In order to contribute to the improvement of the status of women and the achievement of overall development goals, the ILO technical co-operation programme will continue to be an important practical means of promoting equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women in employment. Particular attention will be paid not only to strengthening and further developing specific projects for women, but also to promoting the full integration of women in projects of a general nature, in accordance with recent recommendations made in the Governing Body when it discussed ILO operational activities concerning women. Consideration would be given to such requirements as guidelines on identification, design, planning and implementation of projects for use by ILO staff, governments and employers' and workers' organizations; staff training programmes; and expansion of the network of officials dealing with technical cooperation at headquarters and in the field.
>
> ILO (1994, p. 147)

In *The Window of Opportunity: Strategies for Enhancing Women's Participation in Technical Cooperation Projects*, the ILO (1991) provided ideas and guidelines for enhancing women's visibility and active role in planning and monitoring development projects and programs. This publication examined some of the factors to consider when planning, monitoring, and evaluating various types of projects. It presented advantages and possible disadvantages of launching so-called women-specific projects, as opposed to general projects that, in principle, are open to women and men on an equal basis. Finally, it recommended a change of attitudes and assumptions about women's participation in the labour force. Like the World Bank, the ILO has emphasized the concern for equality and full integration of women into development. There is no suggestion, however, that women are already too fully integrated into development in policies and experiences gendered or premised on their subordination and exploitation.

United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNIFEM has been a major advocate for women within the United Nations system and throughout the South. UNIFEM provides direct support for women's projects

and promotes women in the decision-making processes of mainstream development programs. UNIFEM's mission is to support Southern women's efforts to achieve equality and their own economic- and social-development objectives, and it believes that by doing so, it improves the quality of life for all.

The activities UNIFEM supports fall into four key areas: agriculture and food security, trade and industry, human resource development, and emerging issues. In all aspects of its programing, UNIFEM's intention is to link grass-roots activities to national planning and policy decision-making.

"Women, environment, and development," the new addition to WAD discourse, hints at the kinds of development policy on women UNIFEM endorses. In *Agenda 21: An Easy Reference to the Specific Recommendations of Women*, UNIFEM (1993) stated that when interpreting the recommendations in the text of Agenda 21, the reader should note that all collective terminology was intended to apply equally to women and men, including references to communities, urban and rural dwellers, indigenous people, trade unions, professionals in business and industry, and NGOs. Indeed, in both rural and urban settings, women as heads of households, government officers, farmers, entrepreneurs, and professionals (including scientists and technicians) were thought to form a critical and substantial part of all major groups.

Like the ILO and the World Bank, UNIFEM has been firmly committed to the liberal-feminist WID approach, emphasizing the integration of women into development. UNIFEM has, however, some unique characteristics. It was set up specifically to fund innovative and catalytic projects, and from its beginnings it has had a mandate to support the work of women's nongovernmental activities, in addition to the activities of government institutions and departments.

Summary

These international institutions and agencies are committed to assisting women in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific, and their programs and funding have helped women. However, they have operated squarely within the development-as-modernization paradigm and have been unwilling to pursue a critique of the contradictions in this model and their implications for women. Women-centred NGOs and other development organizations, in contrast, have operated on the fundamental principle that existing models of development are detrimental to women, and they have therefore explored and implemented alternative development strategies.

Exercise 3

Case studies

National development policies and international development institutions share the same approaches to women in development. They also use liberal-feminist assumptions as the basis for their attempts to "integrate" women into development. National policies frequently reproduce gender ideologies. The following quotes are taken from two five-year development plans for the Barbados (1973–77 and 1979–83):

> *Quotation 1* — One other supply factor worthy of mention is that unemployment is highest among young females. Indeed many of those persons who would have been content to remain unpaid household workers until marriage are now active job seekers. Thus rising participation among females in the younger age groups is a major contributor to the continued unemployment of human resources in the economy.
>
> — GOB (1983a, p. 388)

> *Quotation 2* — Development planning is a tool for ensuring maximum efficiency in the implementation of a development strategy or policy. It is an organized, conscious and continual attempt to select the best available alternatives to achieve specific goals. It involves an attempt to allocate scarce human, financial and natural resources in a rational manner and with optimum production results.
>
> — GOB (1983b, p. ix)

These quotations expose several issues in development policy and its implications for women in the South. They introduce key features for delineating the interconnections between feminist and development theories and between development policies and their outcomes.

In quotation 1, the government of a developing Caribbean country presents some of its views on women's desire to work. This policy statement considers women's search for employment as problematic because it is seen as placing constraints on the state's resources. Women as active job seekers are discussed here as contributing to the country's unemployment problem. The statements disclose various assumptions about women's labour-force participation in the South. They also indicate how female labour-force participation may be incorporated into development policy. The plan suggests that

- Barbadian women do not seek work before marriage;
- Marriages occur in large enough percentages to make a difference to women's employment or economic well-being; and
- Married women do not work.

(continued)

Exercise 3 *(concluded)*

The statistics do not support any of these gendered, ideological positions on the influence of marriage on women's desire to work. In 1970, 54% of the women who headed households in Barbados had never been married, 2% were divorced or separated, 19% had been widowed, and 19% were married (Massiah 1982). The illegitimacy ratio — calculated as total illegitimate births as a percentage of total live births — climbed steadily from 62% in 1961 to 74% in 1974. The percentage increase appears marginal, but of primary importance is the fact that nearly 75% of all children born in 1974 were born out of wedlock. The marriage ratio — calculated as total marriages per 1 000 population as a percentage of total population — declined from 4.2% to 3.8% for the same period (GOB n.d.). Between 1945 and 1974, the marriage ratio never exceeded 8% (GOB n.d.). There is hardly any statistical or historical evidence to suggest that marriage has ever represented a feasible option allowing the majority of women to postpone employment.

1. Why have development planners depicted women's desire for paid productive work as problematic?
2. How is that view likely to influence employment policies?
3. What is the particular development paradigm informing the planners' view of women's work?
4. What are its underlying assumptions?
5. How is a development process perceived if it considers women's desire for work burdensome to development planning?

Quotation 2 underscores the significance most governments in the South attach to *rationality* and *optimum production results*: if they plan *rationally*, then goals are achieved and development is attained. What is rational planning? What do governments exclude so that rational planning is achieved? *Optimum production results* are code words for efficiency. Together, rationality and efficiency are cardinal elements of a particular paradigm of development. These concepts are associated with the neoclassical–modernization paradigm.

1. What is development (review previous chapters)?
2. How does the definition change according to the major paradigm used?
3. Write your own definition of development, informed by any of the feminist theories introduced in Chapter 3.
4. What assumptions have you given priority to?
5. Given your definition, how would policymakers have to change their development approach to health in your country?

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CHAPTER 5
ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

Maxine McClean

Women's NGOs

Internationally, the women's movement has given birth to a number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and groups that continue to challenge many of the implied and stated assumptions of the traditional feminist movement. These NGOs and groups offer indigenous approaches to solving women's problems in their particular environments. The focus of many NGOs is action, developing programs and institutions to improve the daily lives of women in their communities.

As we have seen, the general belief among women's NGOs and other development institutions is that the concepts of modernization and development have often led the primary international agencies to effectively ignore the plight of women in the societies they target and, in many instances, make the women worse off. The failure of their programs has forced indigenous NGOs and other entities to develop their own solutions.

Initiatives to improve women's economic situations demonstrate the need for indigenous solutions to women's problems. Nancy Barry, President of Women's World Banking, remarked, "What has become very clear is that what women need is access, not subsidies. They need opportunities, not paternalism" (Howells 1993, p. 22).

Research and action

Research should inform both theorizing and policy-making, to make these credible. The women's movement and the various national and international institutions involved in development have recognized the importance of research and

data, as illustrated in the foreword to the United Nations document *The World's Women 1970–1990*:

> For many years, women's advocates have challenged stereotypes depicting women as passive, dependent and inferior to men. But efforts to reinforce their challenges with hard evidence have been undercut by serious limitations in available statistics and analysis, including a male bias in the definition and collection of many statistics and indicators. ... Putting this kind of numerical and analytical spotlight on the needs, the efforts and the contributions of women is one of the best ways to speed the process of moving from agenda to policy to practice to a world of peace, equality and sustained development.
>
> — United Nations (1991)

The creation of Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) and DAWN's stated objectives are evidence that NGOs emphasize research. Discussed below are some currently active women's NGOs. Research is a critical activity of each of them. The exercises in each section use the following abbreviations for development approaches: WID, women in development; WAD, women and development; and GAD, gender and development (see Chapter 3).

Women's World Banking

Women's World Banking (WWB) is a nonprofit financial institution created in 1979 to give poor female entrepreneurs access to financing, market information, and training. It grew out of the 1975 United Nations World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City, to address the need for global structures to fund women in microenterprises. WWB currently operates in more than 50 countries and has provided assistance to more than 1 million clients internationally. WWB's goal is to help poor women create wealth.

Four basic principles inform WWB's policy formulation and operations:

- "Local–global" should replace "North–South" as the prevailing paradigm, to reflect the belief in local initiative and local institutions;
- Women have the power to transform the Earth through their local institutions (Nancy Barry, cited in Howells 1993);
- Women are dynamic economic agents, not passive beneficiaries of social services; and

- "Lateral learning," a training methodology through which women share their business knowledge with each other and thus learn from their peers, is important.

Exercise 1

Women's World Banking program

Identify the extent to which WWB's program can be categorized as falling under the WID, WAD, or GAD framework.

Self-employed Women's Association

The Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) is a union of 40 000 of India's poorest women. It is an example of a new development model relevant to low-income earners. The membership covers the range of self-employed women typically working in the informal sector and effectively marginalized by mainstream development strategies:

> SEWA successfully integrates a complex myriad of lives, occupations and issues into one union. Under SEWA, women have forged a new model of what a trade union can be — a Third world model, which defies conventional conceptions about who unions organize and what they do for their members. Most unions in the world organize workers in one kind of industry, who share one fixed workplace, and concern themselves with problems which revolve only around the work issues of their members. Some unions do take up issues related to women workers, or include a women's wing in the larger body of the union, but there are very few unions in the world which are devoted entirely to a female membership, as SEWA is. SEWA organizes women who work in their homes, in the streets of cities, in the fields and villages of rural India, with no fixed employer, carving their small niches in the economy, day by day, with only their wits to guide them against incredible odds of vulnerability, invisibility, and poverty.These then are the common denominators around which SEWA has gathered 30,000 members into its fold since its

> inception in 1972: they are women, they are "self-employed," and they are poor. From these common bases, diverse individuality in trades, religious and ethnic backgrounds, and living environments are brought together. Where these women are individually extremely vulnerable to the forces of their day-to-day poverty which are compounded by financial exploitation, physical abuse, and general social harassment, they have found that collectively they are able to struggle against these forces and odds to effect change in their lives and work. SEWA's choice of the term "self-employed" to define this large sector of workers was consciously made to give positive status to people who are often described negatively as informal, unorganised, marginal, or peripheral.
>
> — Rose (1992, pp. 16–17)

Exercise 2

Self-employed Women's Association

To what extent might the criticisms of the WAD perspective (discussed in Chapter 3) apply to SEWA?

The WAD approach has been criticized for failing to challenge male-dominated power structures and for failing, as a result, to transform existing social structures. SEWA appears to fall into this category. However, further examination of SEWA's approach to organizing women demonstrates that the institution recognizes the importance of confronting existing power structures:

> There is not just one goal which is fought for. Women understand that change is a process of struggles. Their experience has equipped them for this — they have struggled all their lives. ...
>
> Whether small or large in nature, the changes this convergence has generated continue to influence increasingly broader spheres. The day-to-day, grassroots changes centre around trying to improve women's working situations. The tactics vary with each individual trade, but usually begin with confronting the direct exploiter and presenting him with

demands for change. For women engaged in piece-rate work, this means asking the contractor for higher wages. For vendors, it means confronting the police officers who beat the women and extract bribes from them on charges of "encroachment." For women providing services, it means ensuring fair wages and steady work.

From the beginning of SEWA's work, however, it has been apparent that this direct confrontation could never accomplish all the long-term, structural and social changes needed to seriously change women's lives. Women who earn just enough each day to keep their families going are vulnerable. Missing one day's work can mean a crisis in the family. ...

Yet SEWA has found that the only way to bring change is to "organise, organise, and organise some more." In numbers they have found voice and strength. When they stand in sufficient numbers, their voices do shake the balance and change things in their favour — from the tactics of their neighbourhood trader or local landowner, up to the national and international policies. Once they have policy backing, the ground is firmer from which to organise more women and push their demands into broader spheres.

— Rose (1992, pp. 22–23)

Exercise 3

Development organizations

Track the development of organizations in your country whose activities coincide with the WID, WAD, and GAD approaches.

Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action

The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) was launched in April 1985 as a vehicle to encourage a gender perspective in action research and establish a network of women's organizations in the Caribbean. Its primary objectives include developing the feminist movement in the Caribbean, developing an approach to analyzing relations between men and women, and promoting the integration of research and action. In the words of the organization,

> We are a network of individual researchers and activists and women's organisations who define feminist politics as a matter of both consciousness and action. We are committed to understanding the relationship between the oppression in the society, and are working actively for change.
>
> — CAFRA (1993)

Membership spans the Dutch-, English-, French-, and Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean and includes Caribbean women living outside the region. Decision-making occurs at four levels:

- The general meeting (association members);
- Regional Committee (elected national representatives and members);
- Continuation Committee (a subcommittee of the Regional Committee); and
- The Secretariat (program and administrative staff headed by the Coordinator).

CAFRA has identified several priority research–action areas:

- Population-control policies in the Caribbean;
- History of women's labour and struggle in the region;
- Women's culture and expression as an instrument for building power;
- Sexual violence;
- Women and trade;
- Social and economic conditions of women; and
- Caribbean family structures (history, present trends, and future directions).

Exercise 4

CAFRA and development theory

Examine CAFRA's mission and activities (above) and identify the theoretical framework(s), as discussed in Chapter 3, that inform these. In discussing this assignment, highlight the following:

1. The mission indicates a commitment to feminist politics.
2. The activities undertaken are not merely about "helping" women. This NGO's activities are grounded in a feminist consciousness.

The nature and focus of research

Implications for action

The types of research undertaken and the methodology used are functions of the context of research and the ideological orientation of the researcher. Two broad ideological perspectives can be used to illustrate this point: family- and woman-centred approaches. A family-centred approach, according to Buvinic (1984), sees motherhood as a woman's most important role in society and thus the most effective role for her in economic development. Women's reproductive and home production roles are, therefore, the focus of research and, consequently, the target of interventions to assist women. In any study, the unit analyzed is the family, rather than the woman.

In contrast, a woman-centred, or feminist, approach recognizes women's productive and reproductive roles:

> Its unit analysis is the woman and, while she can be conceptualized in the context of the family, she is seen in her economic roles in the household and the marketplace. The main arguments of the woman-centred approach are that inequality between women and men has increased with economic development and that interventions that are designed to achieve equality will lead to economic efficiency and growth.
>
> — Tinker and Bramsen (1976) (cited in Buvinic 1984, p. 7)

With this approach, two variants guide research and action:

- The "equity" variant focuses on inequality between men and women in all spheres, public and private. Qualitative research techniques, including participatory methods, are typically used, along with more standard analytical tools. Sociological, anthropological, and economic theoretical frameworks are used.

- The "poverty" variant focuses on women's roles as economic actors in low-income groups and links the issue of women's economic equality to poverty in the Third World. Research seeks to quantify the nature and extent of women's poverty. Action centres around eliminating this poverty through, for example, income-generating projects.

Institutional responses to the limitations of traditional approaches

Recognizing the limitations of the traditional approaches has sometimes also come, and should come, from the various development institutions and national agencies charged with developing programs to address the subordination, marginalization, and oppression of women. Lycklama à Nijeholt (1992) posited that there have been some shifts in development thinking, as illustrated by the following policy documents and other related publications:

- The United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report, 1990* (UNDP 1990);

- The World Bank's *World Development Report, 1990* (World Bank 1990);

- The United Nations' *The World's Women 1970–1990: Trends and Statistics* (United Nations 1991); and

- The Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation's *A World Difference: A New Framework For Development Cooperation in the 1990s* (NMDC n.d.).

Lycklama à Nijeholt (1992) analyzed these policy documents. Each presents views on development as it affects women; however, the perceptions of women differ.

Exercise 5

"Engendering" reports

Read the documents listed above (one per small group of students) and answer the following questions:

1. How does the report perceive women?
2. Is power within gender relations a problem?
3. Which development approach is best exemplified by this document (welfare approach, equity approach, antipoverty approach, efficiency approach)?

The United Nations, through its various agencies, has also exhibited obvious shifts in its focus and its development thinking as it continues to address women's issues. Pietilä and Vickers (1990) documented these shifts and contributing factors:

- *1950s to 1960s* — Women's issues were seen mainly within the context of human rights.

- *1970s* — The key role of women was better recognized, particularly in relation to efforts to relieve or solve problems in the fields of population and food. In the United Nations' earlier decades, women had been seen as objects: the organization made recommendations and enacted conventions for their protection and rights. In the 1970s, the formula was to "integrate women into development." Women were characteristically seen as resources, and their contributions were sought to enhance

the development process and make it more efficient. For this purpose, the United Nations sought to improve the status, nutrition, health, and education of women. It was often claimed that a failure to fully integrate women into development efforts would be a "waste of human resources." Women's dignity and rights were not yet seen as a cause in themselves. The perennial nature of women's contribution to the well-being of their country's population was still unrecognized.

- *1980s* — The United Nations' Third Development Decade gave rise to a "trend towards seeing women as equals, as agents and beneficiaries in all sectors and at all levels of the development process. ... and the year 1985 became a turning point in the history of women's issues in the UN system" (Pietila and Vickers 1990, p. viii).

These shifts in thinking within the United Nations system can perhaps be best illustrated by the creation of agencies within the system that formally address women's issues (Braidotti et al. 1994). Some organizations in the United Nations system have played a role in the debate on sustainable development, as well as in bringing the perspective of women into the analysis of the crisis and making proposals for sustainable solutions. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women is one of these agencies. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations is also credited with long involvement in women's issues and, more recently, the issue of women and the environment.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), established in 1972 and with headquarters in Nairobi, has been instrumental in putting the issue of women and the environment on the international agenda. Braidotti et al. (1994) identified a number of activities undertaken by UNEP:

- In 1984, UNEP undertook an extensive program for the enhancement of women's participation in environmental management;

- UNEP established the Senior Women's Advisory Group on Sustainable Development; and

- UNEP maintains a women's network, listing participants, location, and areas of special interest as they relate to conservation and management of the environment.

Exercise 6

Human settlements

Read Caroline Moser's article, "Women, Human Settlements, and Housing: A Conceptual Framework for Analysis and Policy-making" (Moser 1987) in the book *Women, Human Settlements, and Housing* (Moser and Peake 1987). Then critically assess Linda Peake's case study, "Government Housing Policy and Its Implications for Women in Guyana" (Peake 1987), in the same book.

Exercise 7

Women and work

In a group discussion session, focus on highlighting the pitfalls of projects based on the stereotypes about women's "proper" work, using Jasleen Dhamija's article, "Women and Handicrafts: Myth and Reality" as a base (Dhamija 1989).

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CHAPTER 6

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND ITS ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

Anne S. Walker

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the women's movement and its role in development. It describes the development activities of women at the international, regional, national, and local levels, outlining why the overall development scenario should include women's activism and organizing skills.

The women's movement

> The global formation of the women's movement is unlike the human rights and ecological movements. There are not single large organizations with a global membership base clearly associated with the goals of the movement in the public arena. The women's movement resembles, much more, the constantly growing and shifting cobweb characteristics of new politics in the global age. In many ways, the amorphous character of the movement may reflect an earlier stage in organizing, a more effective utilization of the institutions of the United Nations, or a unique characteristic of the type of organizing that is unique to women's issues. Whether more formal linkages would be useful is an open question.
>
> — Dorsey (1994)

The women's movement does indeed resemble a constantly growing and shifting cobweb, one made up of thousands of large and small local, national, regional, and international women's groups and organizations, connected and unconnected to each other and involved in traditional and nontraditional activities. What all of these women's groups and organizations have in common is that for the most part they have been left out of the history of development as currently written.

The reasons for this are many. Perhaps the biggest one is that the women themselves, especially women's groups in the South, have recorded very little

about their activism and their efforts to organize for their rights within their communities.

International women's organizations and networks

Women historians have made recent efforts to record the history of women's international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and much of these efforts have focused on the work of affiliated groups in the South.

As part of its centennial celebrations in 1994–95, the World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) undertook to record the history of 100 years of women's organizing and activism on women's issues and concerns. I selected this organization as an example because it holds a unique position in the history of the women's movement. Very early in this organization's history, women set up autonomous national YWCA groups in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and later in the Pacific. Then, with assistance and support from a world office, these groups planned and built permanent headquarters for their programs. This has given women a kind of bastion or stronghold, which they themselves control, in more than 80 countries. Each national YWCA is engaged in activities — with, for, and by women — in training, health, nonformal education, human rights, public affairs, energy and the environment, and other community and social work.

The YWCA trains women for jobs in the community and positions of leadership in all facets of the organization. This creates a core of women leaders who often go on to become leaders in other parts of community life. Each national YWCA has complete control over management, programs, and future directions. The world office provides a set of guiding principles and, when requested, support for fund-raising and leadership-training opportunities.

Having a central building and a staff of trained leaders gives the YWCA a head start in influencing the development of a community and providing a place for other forms of activism and organizing. Women are given the opportunity to be managers, trainers, decision-makers, and planners in an atmosphere that is women centred, nonthreatening, and safe. And remarkable achievements have come out of this safe atmosphere:

- The beginnings of political movements for more democratic societies;
- The introduction of appropriate technologies for women in rural and semiurban areas;

- New and innovative training methods for women with little or no educational background;
- Participatory forms of group organizing; and
- A host of other activities that have moved women into the forefront of development, both within their countries and around the world.

For example, many women on national delegations to the United Nations gained their leadership training and experience as committee or board members of the YWCA in their respective countries.

Not much work has yet been done to record the history of international women's networks. Networks are a more recent phenomenon. More flexible than an organization and much more reliant on each individual or group to keep the web of contacts alive, a network arises to fill a need and then often disappears when the need is gone. A true network has no headquarters, main offices, or staff. However, variations on this theme are more common, usually with a group taking on the responsibility of keeping the contacts alive, using some full- or part-time staff.

During and since the United Nations International Women's Year (1975) and the subsequent Decade for Women (1976–85), international women's networks emerged to fill a need that women's groups had for better contact with others and for access to information and resources. Best known among these networks are Isis International (Manila and Santiago), Isis Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange, the Women's Features Service (India), and the International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC). Neither the Isis groups nor IWTC have affiliated members such as belong to the World YWCA and other more established international NGOs (for example, the World Association of Girl Guides and Scouts, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, and the Associated Country Women of the World [ACWW]). The Women's Features Service came out of the Inter Press Service and functions as a news wire service, providing news stories by and about women for the world's media.

The Isis groups and IWTC have "constituencies" of women's groups in every world region, most of which are not formally affiliated with any other group and have previously functioned in relative isolation. The main channel of communication is a journal or newsletter used to inform member groups of issues and

available resources on women- or gender-and-development activities and plans and preparations for upcoming events and conferences, etc.

In the case of IWTC, the mailing list also includes government women's bureaus and ministries, United Nations departments and specialized agencies, donors, and other support groups for women- or gender-and-development activities worldwide. Both IWTC and the two Isis groups undertake training and technical-assistance activities on request, and both collaborate with national and regional groups to develop manuals, guidebooks, bibliographies, and other women- or gender-and-development resource materials. In recent years, their emphasis has been on training women to use computers for desktop publishing, for electronic networking, and for developing resource centres and databases for women involved in development activities.

Regional women's organizations and networks

As in the case of the international women's organizations and networks, very little has been written about the history of their regional counterparts. Perhaps an exception is the Women and Development Unit (WAND) of the University of the West Indies in Barbados. Several booklets and articles have been written about WAND's history, and newspaper features on various aspects of WAND's development and work are disseminated regularly.

WAND grew out of a regional conference held in Jamaica in 1977, where women's groups from across the English-speaking Caribbean gathered to draw up a plan of action for women in their region. One of the needs expressed at this conference was for a central agency to provide resources, technical assistance, and training for the women's groups and projects. This would keep isolated women's groups a little more in touch with the women's movement.

WAND has forged a path that intersects with the development of women's bureaus in the Caribbean, the regionalization of resources, and the burgeoning of women's human rights as a major focus among women activists and groups in the Caribbean. WAND epitomizes the work and dedication of regional women's organizations by providing women- or gender-and-development information from a central resource centre and database, helping to develop project proposals and search for funds for projects, and leading the way in lobbying regional governments for legislation that moves ahead on women's human-rights issues and concerns.

Regional women's networks, especially those concerned with the flow of information within regions, have grown in importance during and since the United Nations Decade for Women. Women's regional media networks can now be found

in every world region (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and North America). They usually operate within the framework of alternative media, sending their information directly to women's groups. But increasingly these networks are crossing over into the world of mass media and mainstream media channels.

Fempress (a women's alternative media network for Latin America) began in 1981 as a clipping service. Working out of offices at the Institute for Studies of Transnationals in Latin America, two women began collecting clippings about women's activities in Latin American countries and pasting them together in a magazine format for distribution to every country in the region. Having expanded into a regular monthly magazine of original articles and clippings, Fempress is now acknowledged as one of the leading networks, linking women activists across Latin America and putting forward the cause of women's human rights and women's equality of opportunity in every country in the region.

Fempress operates on a simple but extremely effective logic — it has a correspondent in each country, who notes what is happening in that country, clips relevant articles, and writes an article on a major issue concerning women each month. These are published at the Fempress headquarters in Santiago, Chile, in its monthly magazine. Fempress also prepares and distributes radio broadcasts of interviews and talks by various women in each country of the region. Fempress puts out a quarterly compilation of clippings and writings on specific subjects; this quarterly is known as *Mujer Especial* (Women's Space).

National women's organizations and networks

The National Councils of Women (NCWs) have been foremost among national women's organizations and networks. NCWs comprise national women's organizations (such as Maendeleo ya Wanawake of Kenya, a network of women's groups in Kenya that are affiliated with ACWW; national YWCAs, which are affiliated with the World YWCA; and national women's groups that have member groups within the country but are not affiliated with any international organization).

NCWs are usually set up to unite the efforts of national women's groups to lobby government or to improve facilities and programs for women in their country. Over the years, NCWs have had mixed reviews. Combining the efforts of national women's groups that have sometimes had long histories in a country before the inception of an NCW is not easy. But most of the member groups of an NCW come together when there is a common cause, such as the need to develop a national plan of action for women or to promote legislation on issues related to women's human rights.

Maendeleo ya Wanawake is the major national women's organization of Kenya. Maendeleo has member groups in every town and village, an impressive headquarters in Nairobi, and a full-time staff of administrators and trainers. It undertakes projects in a wide variety of areas and has been responsible for village water-pump projects, schemes for craft production and marketing, workshops for leadership training, and a multitude of other rural and urban development activities — with, for, and by the women of Kenya. Increasingly, Maendeleo ya Wanawake has become involved in political and government activities, in addition to its programs for training and project implementation, and this has provoked much discussion of the roles and responsibilities of women in Kenya. Maendeleo is a member group of the Kenyan NCW.

The Friends of Women (FOW) project was set up in Thailand by women concerned about the rising numbers of young girls and women lured from villages to work as prostitutes in Bangkok. The women of FOW set themselves up in a couple of rooms in the centre of Bangkok and began to make contacts with groups and individuals across the country and region and eventually with groups in other countries around the world. Their efforts and continuing concern for the welfare of young women in Bangkok have now become a national network of people fighting against violations of women's human rights and specifically against luring girls from poor families into a life of sexual slavery.

FOW is not just a lobbying group, however. It provides counseling to young girls and their families, both in the village and in town; workshops for young leaders and helpers; resource materials, including flash cards and posters for group sessions; and a newsletter, which is published in both Thai and English. It is a network, rather than an organization, because it does not require membership, and its activities focus on needs as they arise, rather than on any set program. Anyone interested can take part in FOW activities.

Local women's organizations and networks

Because women's groups function in so many different ways and the definitions of an organization and a network become blurred, it is better to discuss examples of women's local activities than to discuss specific women's groups.

In Santiago, Chile, during the long years of dictatorship (1972–89), women's groups organized for the right to democratic elections and women's equality in decision-making positions in government. Beginning with a few established women's groups, protest marches were organized for each 8 March (International Women's Day). Momentum grew each year, with many thousands of

women from every walk of life marching through the streets of Santiago or gathering in the sports stadium, demanding democratic rule and equality of opportunity for women. Individual women courageously approached soldiers and police in the streets and shouted "Give us back our country!"

When democratic rule returned to Chile, credit was given in large part to the relentless activism of women's groups, and the new government appointed women to positions of power and authority.

In Ahmedebad, India, women's work in the informal sector received little recognition and, therefore, little was done to make these women's livelihoods more economically sustainable. Within the trade-union movement, Ela Bhatt tried to push forward the cause of these women but had little success. She decided to form a breakaway union for self-employed women, those who work at home or within women's groups — rather than in factories or other businesses — and have a hard time making ends meet. The Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) was the result. It now has many thousands of members and maintains a type of revolving bank: all the members donate a small amount each month, and money is available when they need it to purchase equipment or set up a small business. Women around the world often cite, and try to emulate, SEWA's example.

From a small village at the foot of Mount Meru, Kenya, generations of women traveled each day down a large hill to collect water and carry it back up the hill for use in the village. Some days, a woman would make several trips to the river below, carrying heavy pots full of water on her head as she strained up the slippery path to the village. One day, at a meeting of the village women's group, the women decided that enough was enough. They did not want their daughters to suffer as they were, with bent backs and endless pain in their old age. Offering their savings from work in nearby tea plantations, they asked the men to buy water pipes when they went to town — one at a time over a period of years.

An expert from the Food and Agriculture Organization was approached to assist in setting up a simple pump at the foot of a waterfall in the river. Slowly, the women laid the pipes. Up the hill the pipes went, branching off at each woman's hut. Then large plugs were made of corklike materials and inserted into the pipes, and finally the pump was started. Now every woman in that village has her own water supply, which has not only improved the health and well-being of the village but also ensures that future generations of girls and women will not have to damage their backs and live in pain from carrying heavy pots on their heads up the mountain each day.

In Suva, Fiji, the newly established YWCA decided to open multiracial kindergartens. At that time, all education in the country was segregated by language, with Fijian children attending Fijian-language schools, Indian children attending Hindi-language schools, and children of expatriates (from Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom) attending English-language schools. The facilities and standard of education were vastly different in each type of school, with the English-language schools having the most advanced facilities and teaching. Although much could be said for maintaining the cultures and traditions of each linguistic group, in reality, children in the non-English schools were receiving a poorer education, diminishing their future career prospects.

In keeping with its long-time principle of ensuring equal opportunity, the YWCA began multiracial kindergartens, open to everyone. The effect was dramatic. Educationalists came from all over the country to observe the experiment. There was considerable doubt about the wisdom and propriety of the project. The time came when several Fijian and Indian parents wanted their children to attend the better equipped and better staffed "European" primary school. The YWCA asked the Education Department whether this was possible. A top-level meeting was called. Clearly, this had been a racial and not a linguistic matter before, but now the authorities were faced with making a precedent-setting decision. Amid much consternation, the decision came down that any child could attend the European school if they passed an English-language test. All of the children passed and were accepted. All schools in Fiji are now multiracial. It is the official policy of the country. English, Fijian, and Hindi are Fiji's official languages, and all official documents and materials are printed in each one of these languages.

Women's activism and its role in development

As discussed earlier, anthropologists have often identified the stages of modernization and "progress" as hunter–gatherer or foraging, horticultural, agricultural or agrarian, and so on (see list on p. 41). Feminist anthropologists have argued for giving greater weight to the organization of social and production relations, patterns of social stratification, family structure (monogamous or other), patterns of property ownership, and forms of work and production. To this list should be added patterns of women's organizing and activism.

Perhaps "organization of social and production relations," as suggested by feminist anthropologists, would encompass some of the activities outlined here.

But the activities and efforts of women worldwide are much more likely to be totally left out of the development matrix. By adding "patterns of women's organizing and activism," we could write a whole new chapter in development theory.

It should be obvious by now that the activism and continuing efforts of women's groups have been responsible for a great deal of what has happened in the history of the world, and more specifically in the area of development and "modernization." Each women's organization and network discussed, whether international, regional, national, or local, illustrates the extent to which women have been actively involved in the major changes taking place in their country and in the world. And yet, it is impossible to conclude this chapter without giving the following examples of how the activism and organizing skills of women have changed the course of history.

Women activists at the international level — the early years

Seventeen women were among the delegates at the founding meetings of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1946. Initial discussions revolved around setting up a commission on human rights. The women met and decided that the rights of women were not being given the priority they deserved. So a Subcommission on the Status of Women was agreed on. Still, the women were dissatisfied. At an introductory meeting of the subcommission, they decided a full Commission on the Status of Women was required.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) had its first meeting in January 1947. The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) had its first meeting in February 1947. Insufficiently funded and having no secretariat or centre of its own, the UNCSW nevertheless placed women's rights firmly on the agenda of the United Nations.

Women activists at the international level: the 1990s

In the two years before the historic United Nations World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, women held worldwide hearings on violations of women's human rights and collected more than 500 000 signatures on a petition demanding that women's human-rights issues (particularly violence against women) be placed on the conference agenda of the UNCHR and not merely discussed by a small group during sessions of the UNCSW. UNCSW was hampered

by a lack of resources and the lack of an official protocol to deal with violations of women's human rights. In addition, women requested the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and asked for a tribunal on crimes against women.

The final documents to come out of the World Conference on Human Rights are a testament to the organizing and activism of women worldwide. The Vienna declaration put violations of women's human rights on the world's agenda, and the Plan of Action called for a Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

Women activists at the regional level

Deciding that progress on women's-rights issues was too slow in Latin America and the Caribbean and mindful of the fact that a large number of countries in the region were military dictatorships with little or no regard for the equal right of women to be decision-makers in their own countries, a small group of activists organized a feminist *Encuentro* (encounter) in Colombia in 1981. About 200 women participated over a 4-day period. Reveling in the freedom of the occasion, the women made plans of action for the region and decided to hold an *Encuentro* every two years in a different Latin American country.

By 1983, word had spread. Feminists from across the region made plans to travel to Lima, Peru. Seven thousand eventually turned up, to the consternation of organizers, who were unprepared to receive this many delegates. But creativity and goodwill prevailed, and the women crafted major plans and decisions to strengthen the feminist movement in the region. Two years later, emergency plans had to be made to cope with the crowds in Saõ Paulo, Brazil. Almost 10 000 women participated, with more clamouring to get in from the *favelas* (urban slums) and urban areas of Saõ Paulo.

And so the feminist movement in Latin America has continued to grow and develop from those small beginnings in Colombia. Feminist *Encuentros* in Taxco, Mexico (1987), Mar del Plata, Argentina (1990), and El Salvador (1993) consolidated the feminist cause, with more and more women taking part in the political campaigns, assuming positions of responsibility in local and national councils, and becoming informed about women's human rights and equality under the law.

Perhaps it was no coincidence that in 1995 the region was rid of military dictatorships.

Women activists at the national level

In Tanzania, as in most countries worldwide, the issue of violence against women was becoming a national disgrace in the 1980s. A group of women met to discuss and map out plans to face this growing problem.

They decided they needed a multifaceted plan of action. Information had to be placed in front of the country at large to give everyone a clearer picture of the situation and just how it was violating the rights of women and damaging the very fabric of the nation. Men as well as women needed to be educated about the rights of women and to see more clearly that violence was never an answer to a problem within the home, or anywhere else. At the same time, the government had to be lobbied to pass legislation that would give women some protection against the violence they were experiencing. Women also needed safe houses and refuges where they could go, with or without children, to escape beatings.

From this meeting of women in Tanzania, the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA) was formed, with a special mission to face head-on the question of violence against women. TAMWA now has a regular newsletter, a resource centre, a crisis centre, and a refuge for women. Laws have been passed strengthening the rights of women, and women lawyers have joined the effort to put an end to violence against women.

Women activists at the local level

Stories of women activists in their own small villages, towns, and settlements are numerous, and it seems almost impossible to choose one over another.

The Suva Crisis Centre in Fiji is the result of a group of local women activists who saw the need to set up a place for women to go when they have been violated in some way, whether by beating, rape, or any other form of violation.

Local women activists in Croatia, Bosnia–Herzogovina, and Serbia regularly held peace vigils and marched across front lines to face soldiers and take home sons and fathers involved in the battles. Women in Serbia ran rape-crisis centres for women of Bosnia–Herzogovina and organized protest marches against the leaders of their country who perpetuated war.

Local women activists protest against the custom of burning brides and widows in India and protect women who have been threatened or hurt by domestic violence.

Local women activists in refugee camps in Croatia, Guantanamo Bay, India, Liberia, Somalia, Thailand, and many more parts of the world are the ones who lobby for justice, run the soup kitchens, educate the children, and look after the health of the family.

Conclusion

Although most regions of the world have been influenced by the activism of women, almost no mention is made of these efforts when history or progress in any area of development is recorded. But there can be no serious discussion of gender and development without the recognition of the vital part the women's movement has played.

Reference

Dorsey, E. 1994. The transnationalization of women's movements: towards a global culture of women's human rights. Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Conference, New York, NY, USA.

APPENDIX 1
KEY CONCEPTS

Agents
Ordinary people who create historical change through the activities and struggles of their everyday lives. Compare this with "change agent," an especially knowledgeable person or organization that brings change to others.

Androcentric
Male centred, a masculine point of view.

Androcentrism
A term developed by feminist theorists to describe the dominant worldview that, until recently, mostly excluded the experiences of women from its analyses. This term also refers to an approach taken to knowledge and the production of knowledge.

Assumption
A supposition that is taken to be true but might not be based on factual evidence.

Biological determinism
A view on which it is argued that human social behaviour is the result of factors inherent to the biological makeup of human beings. This is often contrasted with explanations of human behaviour based on social or sociopsychological factors.

Class
A social or economic division in society. Theorists sometimes differentiate between economic class (based on access to economic resources or material goods) and social class (based on status, prestige, family background, and other factors). One's class is defined largely by one's relationship to the means of production; the capitalist class owns the means of production.

Comprador class
Elites in the South who collaborate with the dominant capitalist class in the North and ensure the continued subordination of the South to the North.

Deconstruct
To examine the underlying assumptions attached to certain concepts.

Deconstruction
An analysis of the derivations, contexts, and uses of language or discourse, conducted to unpack their implicit power relations and hidden agendas.

Discourse
An historically, socially, and institutionally specific structure of statements, terms, categories, and beliefs.

Economic growth
The assumption that increased economic productivity and exchange constitute the basic requirement for development. It is measured by market output, GNP, per capita income, etc.

Efficiency
Usually focuses on technological and economic efficiency as measured by standard economic output–input (ignoring nonmarket inputs and outputs).

Egalitarianism
Relations based on the more or less equal participation of all adults in the production of basic necessities, as well as in their distribution or exchange and in their consumption.[1]

Epistemology
A theory of knowledge, a strategy for justifying beliefs.

Equal opportunity
Conditions that must be created so that women have the same options as men and the same life chances.

Essentialism
Lumping a variety of categories into one, ignoring differences, and emphasizing similarities, despite little evidence for such a generalization.

Ethnicity
Group associations based on any combination of common characteristics, including culture, language, religion, phenotype, geographic region, and ancestry. It is recognized that historical and social factors shape the formation of ethnic groups and bestow on them a distinct identity.

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[1] Etienne, M.; Leacock, E., ed. 1980. Women and colonization. Praeger Publishers, New York, NY, USA.

Ethnocentric
Believing that one's own race, nation, or culture is superior to all others.

Export-processing zones
Areas set up by countries for TNCs to manufacture products for export, free of normal tariff and tax regulations and often also free of labour and environmental regulations.

Feminist
An individual who is aware of the oppression, exploitation, or subordination of women within society and who consciously acts to change and transform this situation.

Flexibility
The ability of companies to quickly adapt to changes in markets, technology, and competition. Flexibility strategies include tying wages to productivity or profits, eliminating long-term commitments to workers by subcontracting and or offering part-time work, and finding cheaper sources of labour.

Fordism–post-Fordism
"Fordism" describes the post-World War II regime of accumulation based on mass production of standardized products, coupled with growth of mass consumption. High aggregate demand was maintained by institutional arrangements promoting high wages and a Keynesian state. "Post-Fordism" refers to the breakdown of these arrangements since the mid-1970s, as a result of changes in technology and international competition. In post-Fordism, production is more decentralized, specialized, and flexible and requires new institutional arrangements to respond to the pressures of globalization.

Gender barriers
Obstacles to equality that may exist in the laws, norms, and practices of a society and can be identified and removed.

Gender relations
A society's socially constructed relations between women and men.

Global feminism
The celebration of different feminisms, grounded in the specificities of women's multifarious experiences. This will not occur until women from all racial groups believe that feminism recognizes their lived realities and incorporates those realities into feminist theories.

Globalization
The idea that the world economy has reached a new level of integration. Heightened capital mobility with globalization means that companies operate worldwide, creating a "global assembly line", goods, capital, and, to a lesser extent, people move around the globe.

Grand theories, or metanarratives
Grand theories, such as liberal and Marxist frameworks, claim universal validity and thus the capacity to explain global realities, particularly modernity.

Hypothesis
A supposition made as a starting point for further investigation.

Identity
A cluster of ideas and language or discourse that defines the way most people behave and think about a subject and that increasingly forms the bases of major cleavages among people.

Ideology
Any body of discourse that has the effect of masking and sustaining power relations and inequality.

Labeling
Reducing the complex experiences of an individual or group to one dimension, thereby controlling them more effectively and making it more difficult for them to gain credibility for their own struggles.

Metatheories, or metanarratives
See grand theories, or metanarratives.

Metropole
The capitalist countries that dominate the world economy, mostly found in Europe and North America in the 1960s and 1970s. *See also* periphery.

Mode of production
The organization of wealth creation in a society, including the technical "means of production" and the "relations of production," which determine who controls production and owns the wealth produced.

Model
A graphic representation of the links between various phenomena and concepts on which a theory is based.

Multiple jeopardies
Racism, sexism, and classism simultaneously experienced by women from marginalized groups, especially visible minorities. This simultaneous experience not only compounds these oppressions but reconstitutes them in specific ways.

Obstacles to growth
Barriers that distort the "natural" process of economic growth. If this growth does not occur, then the obstacles or barriers must be identified and removed.

Patriarchal ideology
A set of ideas defining women's roles as different from, and subordinate to, those of men.

Patriarchy
A system of male domination that is widespread but historically specific and can vary over time and context. Originally, this term was used to describe societies characterized by "the rule of the father," that is, the power of the husband or father over his wives, children, and property. The term has now come to refer to the overall systemic character of oppressive and exploitative relations affecting women.

Periphery
The Third World countries, characterized by underdeveloped economies and dependent relations with the metropole. *See also* metropole.

Personal is political, the
The view that male domination and women's resistance to male domination occur in both of the so-called public and private spheres. The concept is often associated with radical feminism.

Positivism
A philosophical doctrine contending that sense perception is the only admissible basis of human knowledge and precise thought. This doctrine became the basis of a hierarchy of knowledge emphasizing the sciences over theological or metaphysical inquiry.

Power
Personal, economical, political, or social ascendancy and control exercised by one individual or group over another. Often this is most clearly seen in relationships between people. Liberal and Marxist thinkers associate power with control over resources and institutions. Postmodernists see power not as something held only by the ruling class but as something diffused throughout society, exercised in many diverse ways by many diverse people, and closely tied to control over knowledge and discourse through attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour.

Production
Producing commodities for the capitalist system and producing the commodity "labour power" on a generational basis.

Production relations
A Marxist-derived concept that refers to the organization of work and production among genders, classes, or other social groupings in a specific social and physical environment.

Public and private spheres
A distinction defining the limits of governmental authority with a view to preserving individual liberty. Women have often been associated with the private sphere; men, with the public one.

Race
Differentiation of human beings into various subspecies. This is usually based on outward physical (or phenotypical) features, such as skin colour, facial features, and hair type. Many social scientists today recognize that *race* is defined differently in different societies and at different times and so is largely socially determined. They prefer, therefore, to use the term *ethnicity*. Race is socially constructed and plays a crucial role in women's experiences and opportunities.

Representation
A term commonly used to refer to an aspect of democratic processes that permits individuals or groups to select those who will carry forward their ideas and agendas to higher authorities. The term is used in a different sense in current theoretical writings to question the power relations implied by having one group convey information about another group in authoritative ways that may deny the people being "represented" the opportunity to present their identity on their own terms.

Reproduction
The biological reproduction of children, that is, childbirth and lactation; the physical reproduction of the wage labour force on a daily basis through domestic work; and the social reproduction of the patriarchal capitalist system through maintaining the ideological conditions that reproduce class and gender relations and the political and economic status quo.

Reserve army of labour
Labour that is cheap and available for capitalist expansion; acts to keep downward pressure on wages; and includes unemployed workers and potential wage workers now doing domestic and agricultural work.

Resistance
Action or inaction, talk or silence, often hidden or covert, through which members of oppressed groups indicate to themselves, each other, and, more rarely, outsiders that they reject the conditions of their oppression and the legitimations proffered by dominant groups.

Restructuring
The changes occurring in companies and economies as a result of the rapidly changing world economy and heightened global competition. Both economic forces and policy choices shape restructuring.

Sexual division of labour
The allocation of tasks and responsibilities in society to women and men. In most inegalitarian societies, the tasks allocated to women have a consistently lower value than those assigned to men.

Social capital
Anything, other than capital, that enhances economic performance.

Social construction of gender
The social definition and determination of ideas and practices. People socially define and determine and can therefore change the ideas and practices related to feminine and masculine characteristics, activities, and ways of relating to one another.

Stratification
Structured inequalities between groups in society, based on gender, class, ethnicity, or other distinguishing characteristics. Although systems of stratification have existed in virtually all societies, significant differences in wealth and power emerge within state-based systems.

Take-off
Period when the barriers to development are finally overcome and self-sustaining economic growth can be achieved.

Theory
A system of ideas and principles for explaining a particular phenomenon.

Transnational corporations
Corporations that operate in many countries and plan production, investment, and distribution strategies across the borders of nation-states.

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APPENDIX 2

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACWW	Associated Country Women of the World
AltWID	Alternative Women in Development [United States]
CAFRA	Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women [United Nations]
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
EPZ	export-processing zone
FOW	Friends of Women [Thailand]
GAD	gender and development
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCID	gender concerns in development
GNP	gross national product
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IWTC	International Women's Tribune Centre
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NCW	National Council of Women
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NIC	newly industrializing country

SAP	structural-adjustment program
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association [India]
SIGAD	Summer Institute for Gender and Development [Canada]
TAMWA	Tanzania Media Women's Association
TNC	transnational corporation
UNCHR	United Nations Commission on Human Rights
UNCSW	United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWI	University of the West Indies
WAD	women and development
WAND	Women and Development Unit [UWI]
WID	women in development
WWB	Women's World Banking
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

APPENDIX 3

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