

Week 8. How Gender Inequality and Women's Rights fit with Global Citizenship

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CEDAW: opening the discussion on gender discrimination

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly.

Art I

For the purposes of the present Convention, the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

Sexism

It is the belief - based on a series of myths and mystifications - that takes man as a model of what human is.

It is based on the conscious or unconscious belief of the superiority of the male sex.

Masculine is central to the human experience, while the feminine is marginal, narrow or niched.

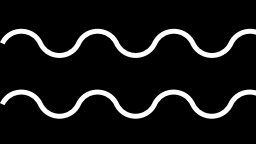
Gender

- It designates the socially constructed gender-related identities, attributes, and roles of individuals and the social and cultural meanings attributed to biological gender-based differences.

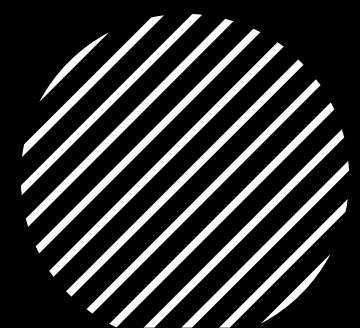
- Said socially constructed identities, attributes and roles vary over time and from one culture to another, as well as between societies, communities and groups, but the **hierarchical relations** between women and men in the unequal distribution of power and rights that favour men and harm women, **are maintained over time.**

Gender

It is a term widely distorted by those who oppose women's human rights but also by groups that use it in the wrong way, as well as by States to erase the difference that feminist theory has made between the sexual difference in physical appearance, in biological terms, and the values, roles and attitudes that each culture and era attributes to that difference.



Feminism



It is a heterogeneous set of theories and political, social, cultural, spiritual and economic movements that aim to achieve substantive equality between women and men through questioning the domination of men over women, the centrality of men and gender role assignment.



The feminist movement has created a broad set of social theories that make up the theory of gender.

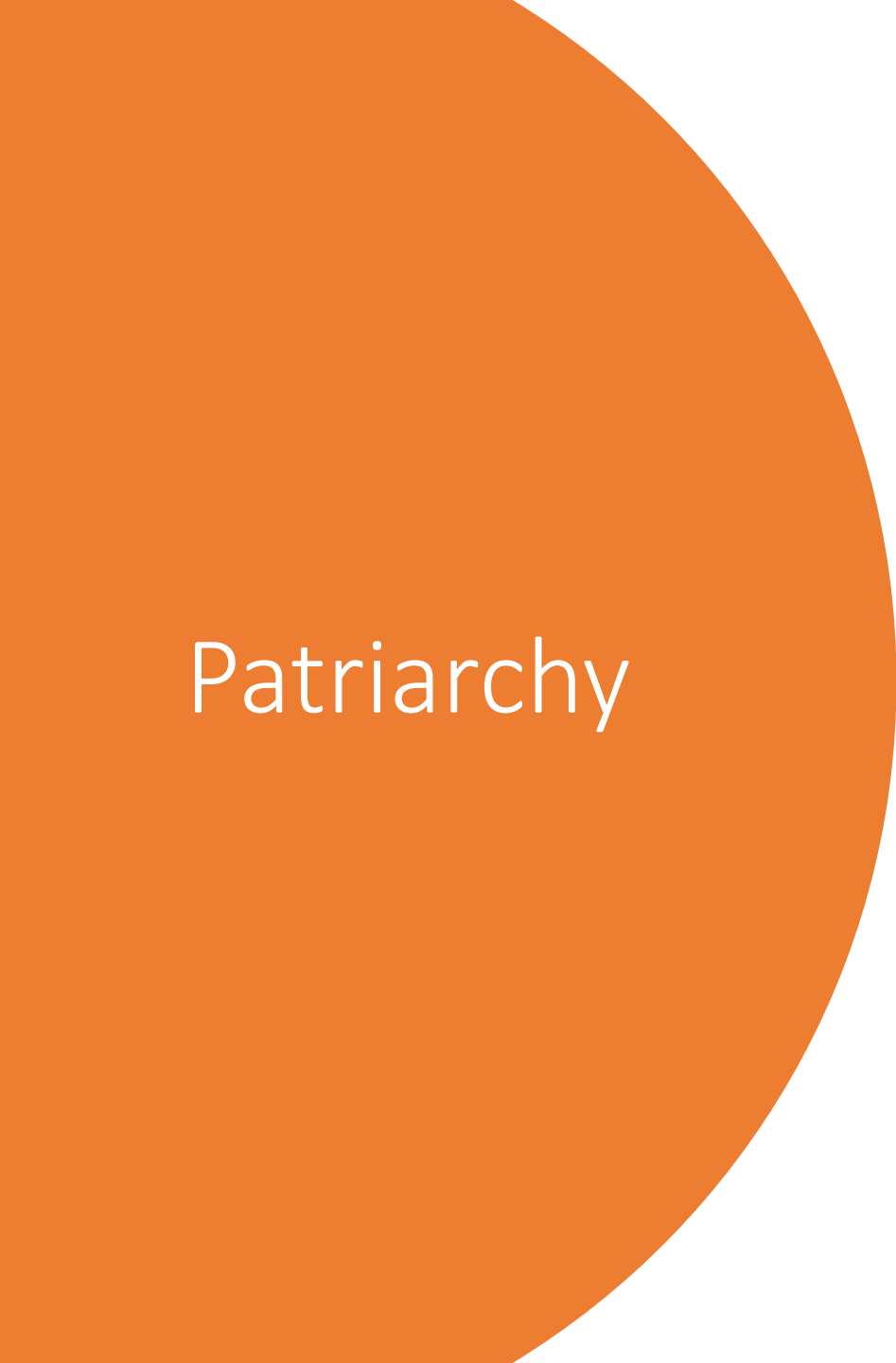


Thanks to the influence of the feminist movement, there are crucial achievements such as the female vote, equality before the law or the incorporation of women's rights as human rights, among many others.



Why is it that attributing characteristics, attitudes and dichotomous roles to each of the sexes is a problem of discrimination against women?

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- Attributing characteristics, attitudes and dichotomous roles to each of the sexes is a problem of discrimination against women because theirs have less or no value in each culture.



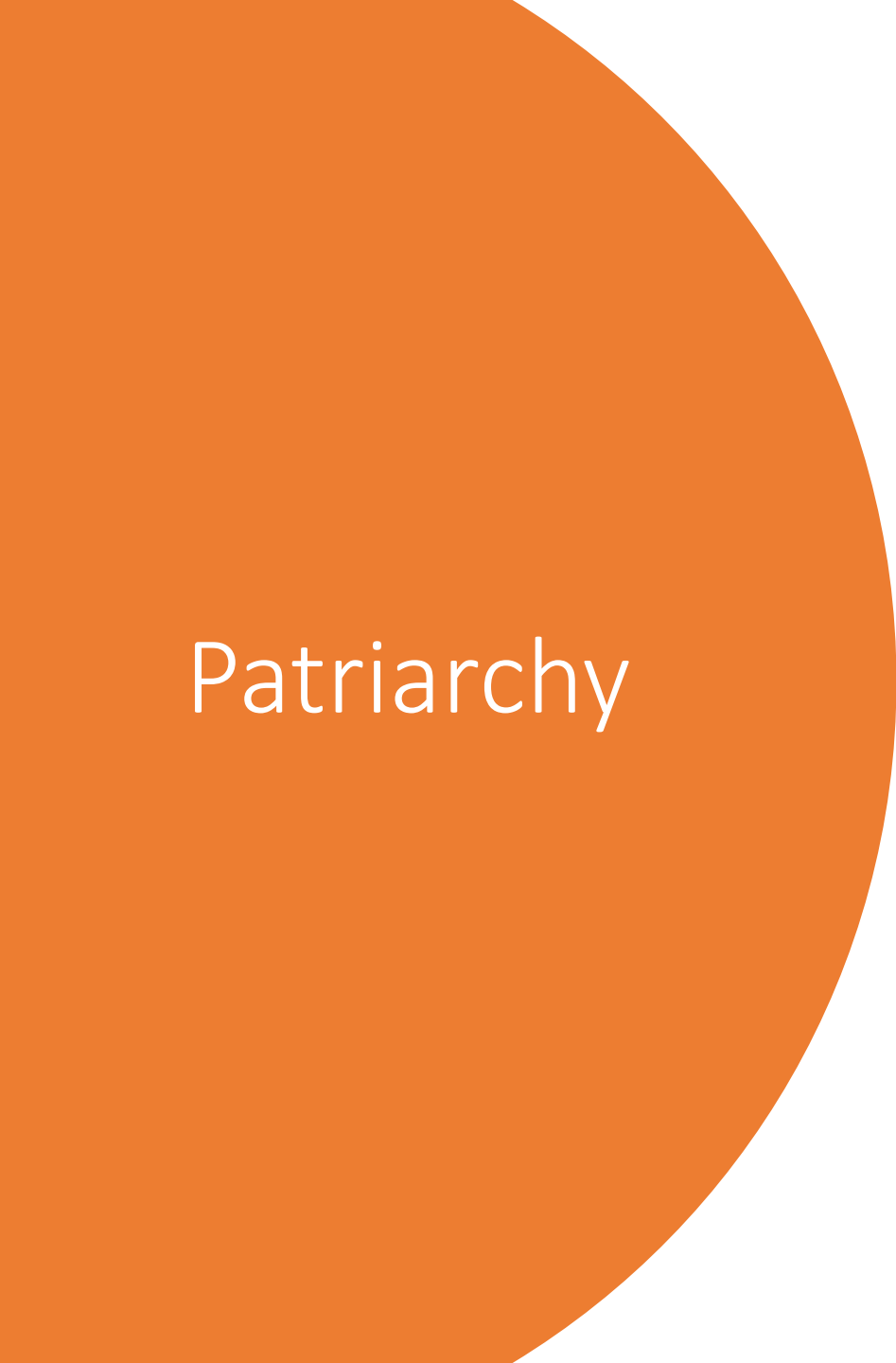
Patriarchy

It is a hierarchical system of social, political and economic relations.

It is based on a biological sexual difference and its gender meaning.

It establishes, reproduces and maintains man as a parameter of humanity.

Normalise privileges for men:
institutionalises male dominance over women.



Patriarchy

It has existed for more than six thousand years.

It is globalised.

It manifests itself in different ways in different cultures and subcultures.

It is strengthened by other systems of oppression based on ethnicity/race, class, religion, disability, etc.



Feminist literature

It identifies at least seven mandates for men: being a provider, fatherhood, heterosexuality, rationality, physical strength, chivalry, and risk-taking.

For women, there is the duty of motherhood, stereotyped beauty, the institution of marriage, housework, confinement to the private sphere, being selfless, being sweet, and being for others.

Patriarchal Socialisation



It Assigns a repertoire of duties to men that interferes with satisfying their needs and even endangers their lives and sometimes others'.

"Don't give in to pain";

"Never ask for help";

"Do not abstain from alcohol or sex";

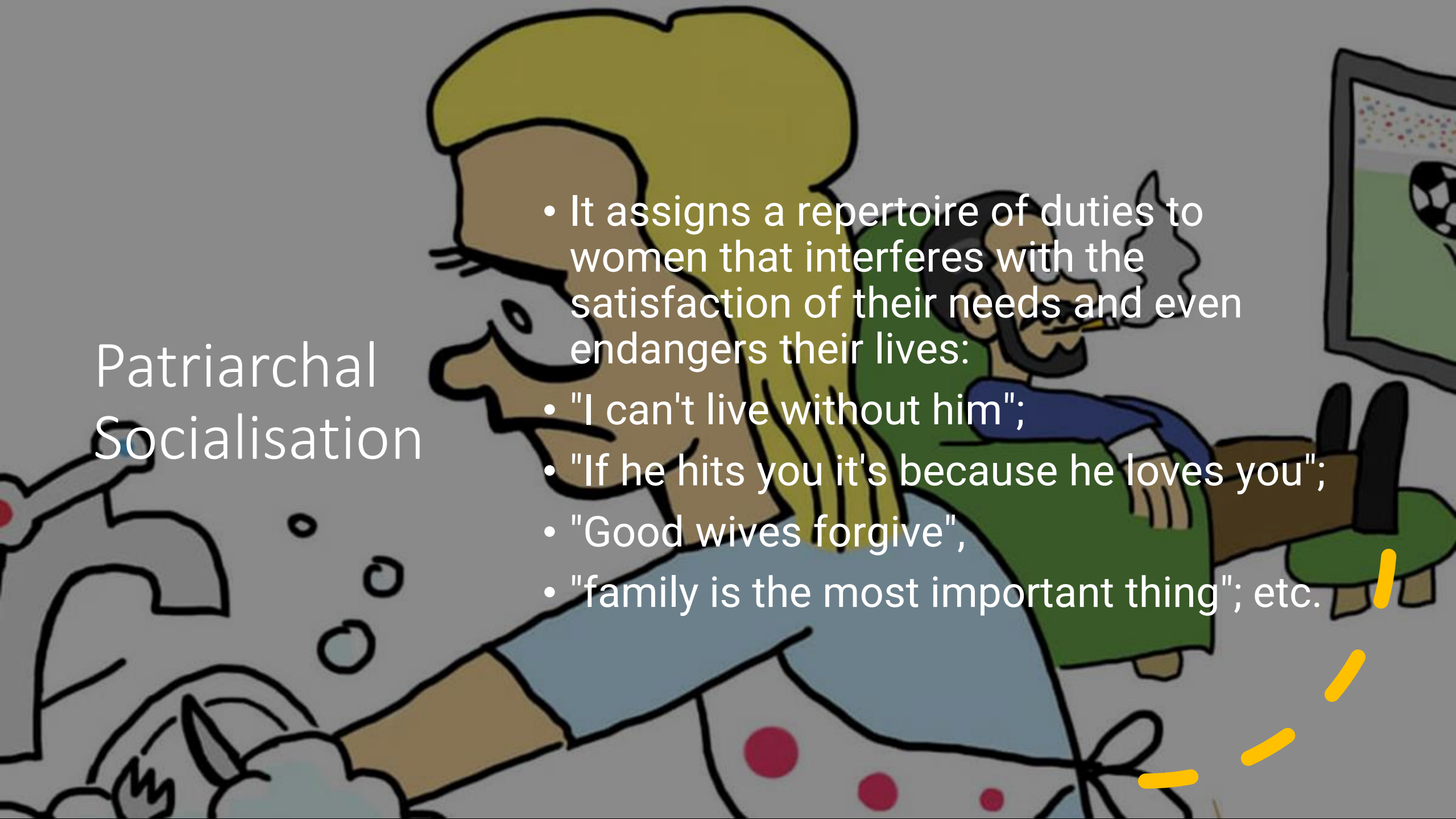
"Do not be afraid";

"You must not cry";

"Learn to defend yourself."

Patriarchal Socialisation

- It assigns a repertoire of duties to women that interferes with the satisfaction of their needs and even endangers their lives:
- "I can't live without him";
- "If he hits you it's because he loves you";
- "Good wives forgive",
- "family is the most important thing"; etc.



Stereotypes

It is a very simplified mental image of some category of people, shared by a large group and often accompanied by prejudices.



Traditional Gender Stereotypes.

Feminine.

*Not aggressive.
Dependent.
Easily influenced.
Submissive.
Passive.
Home-oriented.
Easily hurt emotionally.
Indecisive.
Talkative.
Gentle.
Sensitive to other's feelings.
Very desirous of security.
Cries a lot.
Emotional.
Verbal.
Kind.
Tactful.
Nurturing.*

Masculine.

*Aggressive.
Independent.
Not easily influenced.
Dominant.
Active.
Worldly.
Not easily hurt emotionally.
Decisive.
Not at all talkative.
Tough.
Less sensitive to other's feelings.
Not very desirous of security.
Rarely cries.
Logical.
Analytical.
Cruel.
Blunt.
Not nurturing.*

It is the prevailing general idea or preconception about the attributes and characteristics that women and men are expected to possess and play.

It is a very simplified mental image of women and men, shared by a large group and frequently accompanied by prejudices.



Gender Perspective

A look that includes the experiences and needs of women and men making visible the power relations between the sexes



Gender Perspective

It allows men to describe and register their realities from their sexual being, and not as representatives of all humanity.

The Default Male

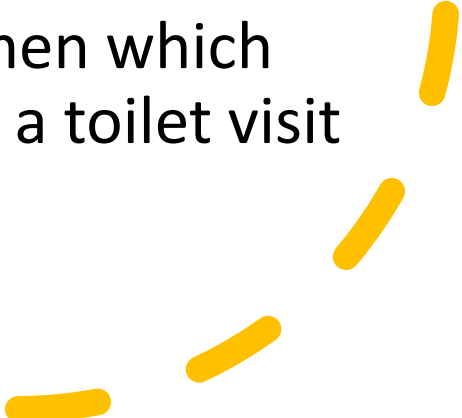
Invisible Women. (Caroline Criado Perez, 2020)

- it may seem fair and equitable to accord male and female public toilets the same amount of floor. 50/50 division of floor space has even been formalised in plumbing codes.
- However, if a male toilet has both cubicles and urinals, the number of people who can use them at once is far higher per square foot of floor space in the male bathroom than in the female bathroom.
- Suddenly equal floor space isn't so equal!



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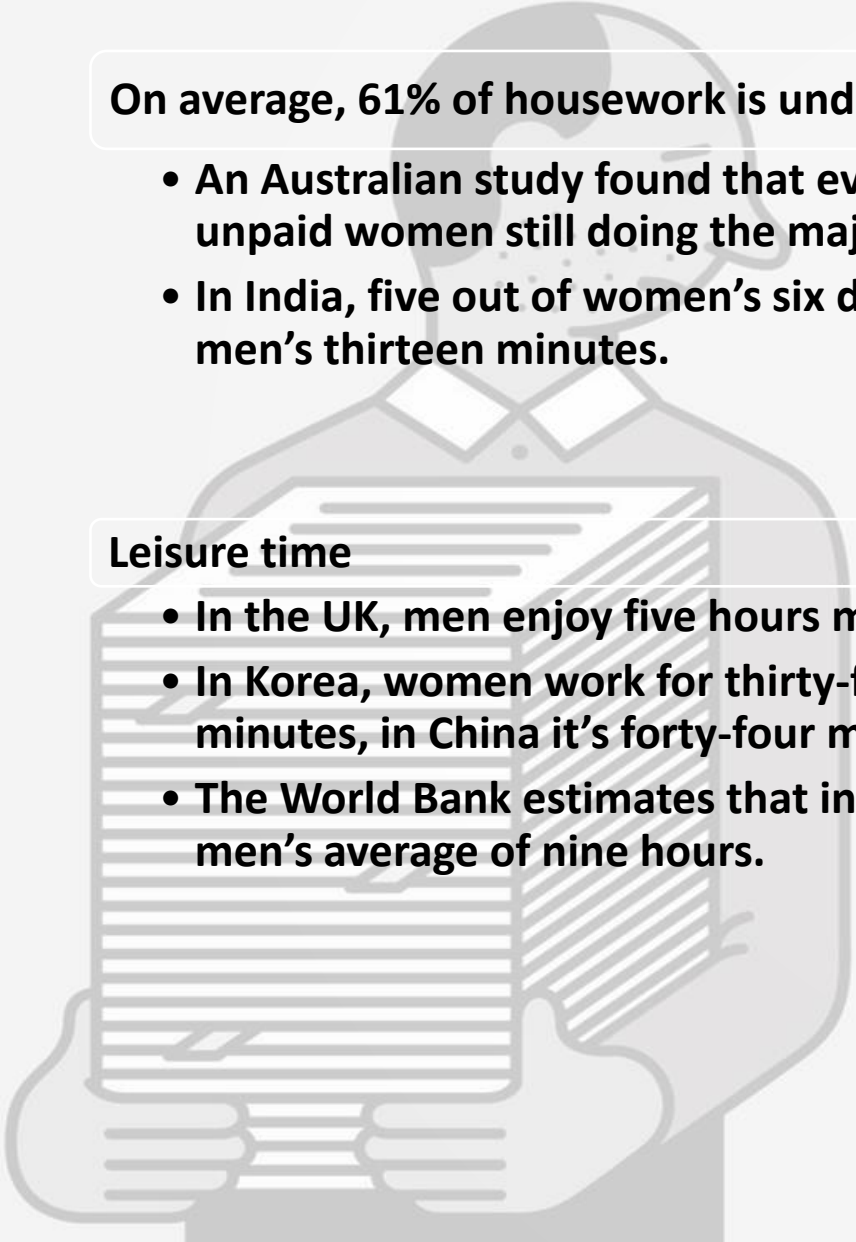
Women take
up to 2.3
times as long
as men to
use the toilet

- Women are the majority of the elderly and disabled.
 - Women are also more likely to be accompanied by children, disabled and older people.
 - There's the 20–25% of women of childbearing age who may be on their period at any one time.
 - Pregnancy significantly reduces bladder capacity.
 - Women are eight times more likely to suffer from urinary-tract infections than men which increases the frequency with which a toilet visit is needed.
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Workload

- Globally, 75% of unpaid work is done by women, who spend between three and six hours per day on it compared to men's average of thirty minutes to two hours.
- Even in the country with the highest male unpaid working time (Denmark), men still spend less time on unpaid work than women in the country with the lowest female unpaid working time (Norway).

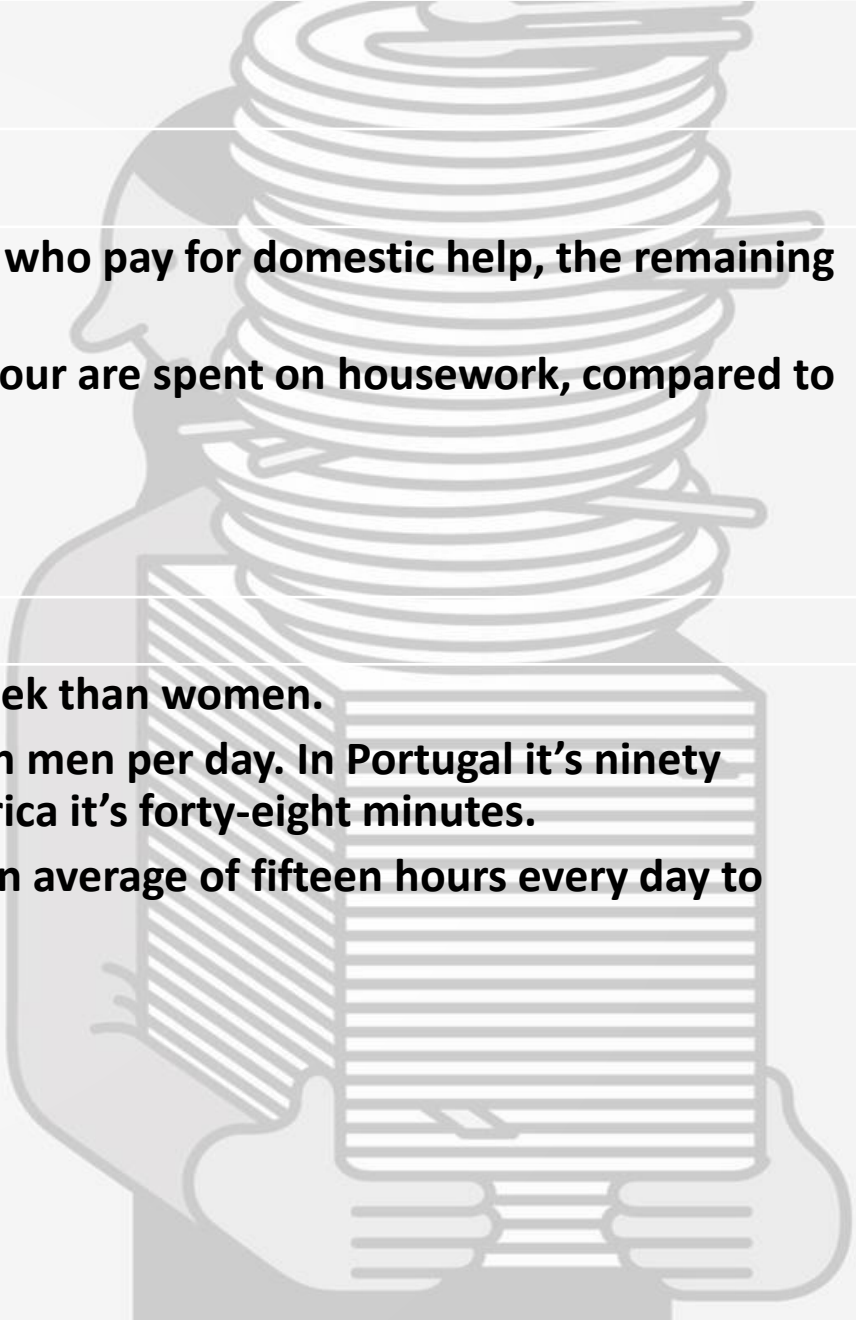




On average, 61% of housework is undertaken by women

- An Australian study found that even in wealthier couples who pay for domestic help, the remaining unpaid women still doing the majority of what's left.
- In India, five out of women's six daily hours of unpaid labour are spent on housework, compared to men's thirteen minutes.

Leisure time

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- In the UK, men enjoy five hours more leisure time per week than women.
 - In Korea, women work for thirty-four minutes longer than men per day. In Portugal it's ninety minutes, in China it's forty-four minutes, and in South Africa it's forty-eight minutes.
 - The World Bank estimates that in Uganda women work an average of fifteen hours every day to men's average of nine hours.

Care activities

It's rare for men to take on the more personal, messy, emotionally draining aspects of elder care work.

In the UK up to 70% of all unpaid dementia carers are women, and female carers are more likely to help with bathing, dressing, using the toilet and managing incontinence.

Women are more than twice as likely as men to be providing intensive on-duty care for someone twenty-four hours a day, and to have been caring for someone with dementia for more than five years.

Is it a question of education?

A 2010 US study on the imbalance between the amount of unpaid work done by male and female scientists found that female scientists do 54% of the cooking, cleaning and laundry in their households, adding more than ten hours to their nearly sixty-hour work week, while men's contribution (28%) adds only half that time.

The women did the 54% of parenting labour in their households, while male scientists did 36%.

Unpaid work is not considered work

- The Economist isn't alone in forgetting about women's unpaid workload in their discussions of 'work'.
- When business magazines like Inc publish think-pieces telling us that 'science' tells us 'you' shouldn't work more than forty hours a week, or when the Guardian informs us that 'your job could be killing you' if you work for more than thirty-nine hours per week, they aren't talking to women, because for women there is no 'if'.
- Since 1930 the International Labour Organization (ILO) has stipulated that no one should exceed forty-eight hours a week at work, by which they meant paid work. Beyond this number of hours workers start incurring health costs.
- Women do work well over this amount. Regularly. And it is killing them.

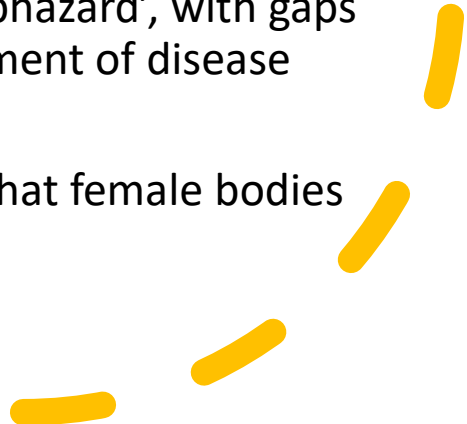


Maternity Leave

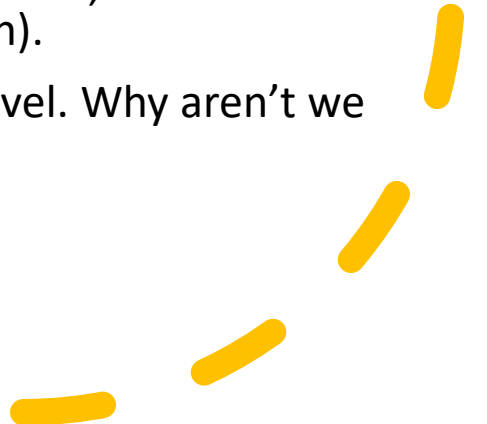
All industrialised countries guarantee workers paid maternity leave, except the US. Eligible for unpaid leave: you have worked with at least 50 other employees for the past twelve months (access to 60% of the workforce). There is nothing to prevent the remaining 40% of US women being fired.

12 countries in the OECD offer full replacement wages, but none of these countries offers more than twenty weeks, with the average being fifteen weeks: Portugal offers only 6 weeks of leave. Australia offers 18 weeks of maternity leave – but at 42% of earnings. Ireland offers 26 weeks – but at only 34% of earnings.

Are female and male bodies identical?

- The ancient Greeks said that the female body as a 'mutilated male' body (Aristotle).
 - Representation of the male body as the human body persists.
 - A 2008 analysis of a range of textbooks for medicine revealed that across 16,329 images, male bodies were used three times as often as female bodies to illustrate 'neutral body parts'.
 - A 2005 Dutch study found that sex- and gender-related issues were 'not systematically addressed in curriculum development'.
 - A 2006 review, the US online database for med-school courses, found that only 9 out of the 95 schools that entered data into the system offered a course that could be described as a 'women's health course'.
 - 2016. US med schools remained 'minimal' and 'haphazard', with gaps particularly identified in the approach to the treatment of disease and use of drugs.
 - The research is focused on body males, assuming that female bodies are smaller male bodies.
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Sex differences can be substantial

- Researchers have found sex differences in every tissue and organ system in the human body.
 - Difference in 'prevalence, course and severity' of the majority of common human diseases.
 - There are sex differences in the fundamental mechanical workings of the heart.
 - In lung capacity.
 - Men and women who smoke the same number of cigarettes, women are 20–70% more likely to develop lung cancer.
 - Autoimmune diseases affect about 8% of the population, but women are three times more likely to develop one, making up about 80% of those affected.
 - In the presentation and outcome of Parkinson's disease, stroke and brain ischaemia (insufficient blood flow to the brain).
 - Male and female bodies differ down to a cellular level. Why aren't we teaching this?
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Why aren't we teaching this?

- The inclusion of sex-specific information in textbooks is dependent on the availability of sex-specific data, but because women have largely been excluded from medical research this data is severely lacking.
- Most early research into cardiovascular disease was conducted on men, and women continue to be under-represented, making up only 25% of participants across thirty-one landmark trials for congestive heart failure between 1987 and 2012.
- **HIV:** Women represent 55% of HIV-positive adults in the developing world.
 - In parts of Africa, Caribbean women aged 54 are up to six times more likely to be HIV-positive than young men of the same age.
 - Women experience different clinical symptoms and complications due to HIV
 - However, 2016 review indicated that the inclusion of women in US HIV research found that women made up only **19.2% of participants in antiretroviral studies, 38.1% in vaccination studies and 11.1% in studies to find a cure.**

The failure to include women in anatomy textbooks, the failure to include women in medical trials is a **historical problem** that has its roots in seeing the male body as the default human body.



Women's Rights are Human Rights

- There are substantial gender data gaps in government thinking. These data gaps are in part a result of failing to collect data, but they are also in part a result of the male dominance of governments around the world.
- Several US studies from the 1980s to the 2000s have found that women are more likely to make women's issues a priority and more likely to sponsor women's issues bills.
- In the UK, a recent analysis of the impact female MPs have had in Westminster since 1945 found that women are more likely to speak about women's issues, as well as family policy, education and care.
- An analysis of the impact of female representation across nineteen OECD countries between 1960 and 2005 also found that female politicians are more likely to address issues that affect women.

'Hillary Clinton is too Ambitious to be the First Female President' (Onion headline)

Hillary Clinton's extraordinary, irrational, overwhelming ambition' (Anne Applebaum)

'God knows, is there anybody more ambitious than Hillary Clinton? (David Geffen)

'unbridled ambition' (Colin Powell)

'don't destroy the Democratic Party to satisfy the secretary's ambitions') Bernie Sanders' campaign manager,

'eaten alive by her ambitions' (Julian Assange)

Key Questions

Is gender inequality a matter of global justice?

*Have you seen/experienced gender inequality in your context?
Examples.*

Does the emancipation of women mean the same thing universally?