Identity and Inequalities

Ming Hui, Victoria, Aidan

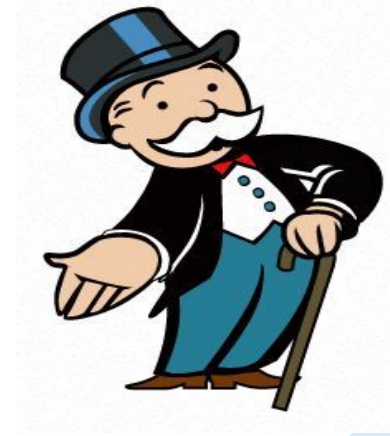# OVERVIEW

RACE

GENDER

CLASS

Race

Ethnicity

Race	Ethnicity
- Biological basis → genetics, physical traits	- Cultural basis → language, religion, etc.

- Social constructs
- Boundaries between categories are arbitrary, vary across space and time
- Gives rise to inequality → between majority and minority → systemic discrimination
- Amalgamation, assimilation, segregation
- Unequal treatment/attitudes towards different races → prejudice, discrimination, racism
- Stereotypes

Gender

- Mostly cultural
- An identity marker
- Related to the roles prescribed to and performed by people of different genders

Sex

- Biological basis → Chromosomes, primary and secondary sex characteristics

- Socially constructed categories
- Both have identities society deems as acceptable/deviant (transgender, intersex people)
- Closely related → gender and sex binary
- Stereotypes and roles, masculinity vs femininity → determines how one is supposed to act, socialisation
- Patriarchy → a social system where men are privileged over women, sexism, discrimination

Social Class

- A scale/rank of people based on social worth, socio-economic standing
- Determines one's opportunities in life (education, connections, time)
- Upper, middle, lower class → with upward and downward mobility
- Often based on occupation → blue-collar, white-collar, etc.
- Gives rise to social inequality → unequal distribution of resources, systemic disadvantages, unequal power, QOL, poverty
- Meritocracy??
- Different views → necessary or over-exploitative
- Cultural omnivorousness → distinctly separating the high class from the rest
- Class consciousness → labour unions, political action by the working class

Q1. In contrast to marriage patterns in the West where people are marrying later, many Asians are not marrying at all. Singapore, in particular, has one of the highest rates of non-marriage in Asia. Focusing on one of the factors below, what could be the key reason influencing this phenomenon?

Gender

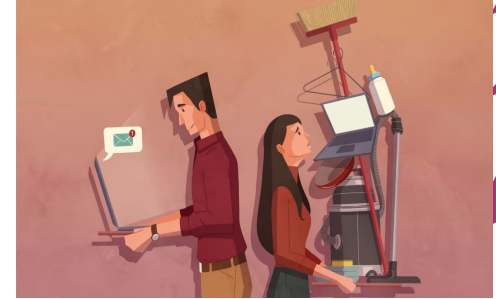Mage taken from: https://www.unesco.org/en/gender-equality

The Feminist response

Challenge past stereotypes about women:
- Domestic role
- Marriage as the only route to a comfortable life

Possible because:
- Greater work opportunities open to women
    → financial independence
- Different gender socialization in schools today
    → equality emphasised

Taken from https://www.todayonline.com/big-read/big-read-gender-equality-spore-remains-elusive-amid-entrenched-attitudes-about-womens-roles

Taken from https://mountainlake.org/inspire-a-generation-of-innovators-on-women-girls-in-science-day/

Women: Career over marriage

Highly educated → career-oriented

High costs of living & starting a family:

- Family life perceived as a burden
- Second shift (double responsibilities of full-time work and housework)
- Maternity leave and gender discrimination
- Sex segregation, Glass-ceiling

Taken from
https://www.forbes.com/sites/maggiegermano/2019/03/27/women-are-working-more-than-ever-but-they-still-take-on-most-household-responsibilities/?sh=2432ecfa52e9

Different circumstances today

Difficulty in finding a suitable partner:

- 'Marriage squeeze' as a result of more highly educated women
- Men usually 'marry down' or marry someone with lower education than them, while women are expected to 'marry up' or marry someone who is better educated than them.

Changing attitudes toward marriage with exposure to less traditional and more liberal values:

- Marriage isn't necessary to live together or raise children
- Freedom of choice, Individual over family
- LGBTIQA+, non-conventional relationships

"But I am an adult woman. I want a career and a good circle of friends. I just don't want to be tied into a family life too soon."

Q2. Use relevant concepts or issues from Buford May's article on race and dress codes, Charles's gender in science, or Cadwell's class and gourmet hamburger which you find useful in understanding the decline of marriage in Asia. Why do you find these concepts useful and insightful?

Declining Marriage- focuses on the advantages of the repressed group amidst societal dysfuntion

Dress codes

the repressed group is the black people whose culture have been stolen and used against them, ironically, the women can be seen to being in a similar position of power as the discriminators,

- That they 'stole' freedom from the economic prosperity that our family unit has bought and acts against it
- But that is only on the premise of a non-arranged marriage where both parties in the arrangement have to consent, as opposed to a physical location like a night club

Gender in science

instead of being about the advantages of a party, it is about the interaction of choice and financial freedom, as opposed to choices out of necessity, like women going straight into stem in more economically troubled countries

- Enforcement of gender roles is a privilege that asian countries who want their women to cook clean raise a kid n a salary no longer have. This could be a case study for solving declining marriages in asia – the affected parties forgo these gendered expectations (changed with the century- but always centered on women top priority in life to bear children) and serve what is actually for the 'greater good'
- Which would be to as the article suggests, start directing economic support to women who make the choice to be mothers

Gourmet hamburger

Brings up the issue of how cultural awareness can only further drive social disparity, movement of envo friendly choice, created a new echelon of food and status bearing, privileges barriers to entry

- Similarly, we can look at female empowerment movements, while they seek to bring women to an even playing field with males, it has gone against society's greater good which is procreation and the continuation of human life.
- But also similarly, the corruption of a good thing is not the fault of the vegans or the women, but the corrupted system that refuses to make way for the less-privileged and hence is still responsible – def not envo friendly for the rich to continue frivolous over-consumption while people are starving and have to resort to non-envo friendly food sources

References

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THANK YOU