

# [The contributions of feminism and marxism to an understanding of gender socialisa...](https://assignbuster.com/the-contributions-of-feminism-and-marxism-to-an-understanding-of-gender-socialisation-and-social-control-essay-sample/)

In society women are still percieved as unequal to thier counterparts men. This can be shown in a number of ways such as unequal pay, resticted roles and relationships in the work place and with partners and sexual harresment. Although with the equal rights of employment women still experience a situation called the glass ceeling effect. This means basicly that a woman can work her way up in an industry or cmpany but may only be able to reach a certain level where the above positions of the are dominantly occupied by males. Some of the main disadvantages faced by women at work are;

Lower pay than men, lower status jobs, concentration in lower-level jobs and a greater chance of part-time/casual/temporary work than men. For these reaons this can be seen as a form of social control because women do not have full movement in the workplace. There are five main forms of feminism – Liberal Feminism, Marxist Feminism, Radical Feminism, Dual-System Feminism and Black Feminism. These all take certain views to feminism but all look at idenitifying the extent of female inqualty in a society and the various forms it takes.

Patriachy – (the control of society by men and the role of men in opressing women). It can be seen all men are in oposing group to women and benifit from patriachy. (Millet 1971). For most of the 20th century feminists forught for civial rights that was legal equality for all adults regardless of sex. However it was only in the 1960’s that a womans movent with much broader aims emerged. (Jile Mitchell 1971) argues that the womans liberation movment in the Usa was partly triggered by the radical movements of the middle and late 1960’s.

In britain in 1968 the womans liberation movemnt according to David Bouchier (1983), more influenced by the labour movement. n 1968 working class women trade unionists went on strike at he Ford motor plant in Dagenam, this in turn prompted the union movement in a whole to take a more active intrest in womans issues. In 1975 60% of women were econoicaly active, by 1996 the proportion had risen to 71%. In the same period the prportion of men working fell from 90% to 85% for the first time the number of women working in full time and part time jobs exceeded the number of men.

In 1996 67% of women returned to work within 11 months of a birth of a child compared with 45% of women in 1988 (The SUnady times 25th Jan 1998). Joan Ruddock believes Feminism has become irrelivent to the current generation, she acknolages Feminists gave the confidence to be the people they are today she say that now we are getting on with it we do not need a new feminist brigade to tell us how to lead our lives. In the 1950’s gender socialisation in terms of women was that of one which did not contaian equal status which narrowed opputunities for women in eduacation and the workforce.

Women were expected to be the ‘ Homebuilder’ while the man was seen as the bread winner. An extract from the 1950’s Home economics text book (good wives guide) uggests that a womans goal is to try and make sure your home is a place if peace, order and tranquilty where your husband can renew hmself in body and spirit. There is a broad spectrum of feminist theories the main ones are – LiberalFeminism – This is primarily concerned to examine the process of socailisation and the sex role conditioning in order to show that the gender roles of male and female are not biologicaly based.

Criticisms of Liberal Femanism are that :- It does not uncover the wider structural factors leading to female oppression. It also does not see that patriarchy is prevalent in all situations not just certain areas eg media. Marxist Feminism – This theory sees womens oppression with in the nature of capitalist society. Capitaism exploits and oppresses both male and females, and by exposing and then repalcing capitalist society both females and males will be liberated.

Women are seen as important reproductive agents in capatilism, who physicly produce and care for the next generation of labours, and who socialise the next generation into submissive attitudes. Criticisms of marxist feminism – there is an over emphasis on capitalism. the target for women and for analysis should be patriachy in whatever context. Radical Feminism – This assumes that the real cuase of oppression of women is men. Patricharchy exists because men deliberatly or unknowingly benifit from this and wish to continue.

Women are catogrised as an inferior class to and are exploited. Some radical femanists argue that womwn are fall into the category of the underclass becuause on political, social and economic grounds theirexperiences are signicantly worse than men’s. Criticisms of radical feminism – It over emphasises the extent to which woman share common experiences of explotation and downgrades class and race relations. It failsto take account in it analysis of other factors besides patriarchy.

Duel-System thoery – Combines elemnts of radical femanism and marxist femanism, it argues that two systems of exploitation are intertwined and opression exists. The first of these is capitalism which ensures the explotation of all workers but in particular women; the second is that at the same time women are opressed by men within this capitalist structure The interconected roles of women in the labour forces and in the home combine to form a system of opression that maintains women are in thier oppressed position while benifiting men and capatilism.

Criticisms fo the dual system theory – the system underplays the active role of womans oppression by seeing mens actions as thier responce to cpatilism. The Sex Discrimination Act was passed by the Labour government in 1975 as part of a range of measures to enhance and protect the position of women. At the same time, the Equal Opportunities Commission was set up with the duty of enforcing the law.