

## **Explore the contention that geography and gender are inextricably connected**

Geography shows the structures and systems in society that influence the fluid relationship with genders that interlinks culture. This essay explores the narrative that they are inextricably connected through the past and modern forms of power. With focuses on the colonial implication of the sexualisation of women and imaginative spaces through memory. Exploring the development of gender through waves of feminism and the politicisation of the agency of these narratives. The influences of gender binaries in society for capital in media through health and in its deconstruction for marketisation. Furthermore examines the need for the intersectionality of gender crossing dimensions of race, class and sexuality.

Power through history governs the connection between gender and geography. Empires built in the Global North policed gender representation creating an unequal treatment of women. The female age of consent was only raised to 16 in 1885 in Britain and in Australia and India post-1880s (Bates, 2015). It is clear the colonial hold these countries had in determining the differences in cultural patterns. The regulation of female bodies was at the disposal of men and focused on those operating in upholding the British empire, such as the military, as a form of control. Even post-colonisation, cultural factors shifted geographies of regulation from a material aspect to a more subjective narrative. The overt sexualisation of women in the Imperial Federation map (Biltcliffe,2005) showed the women's bodies gazing toward Britannia exposed in comparison to the men depicted. The illustration of the 'erotic Orient' in the east identified the excess and sexual perversity (Kabbani,1986), connecting gender with imaginative and historical geographies. Through geographical mapping, it is clear that there is a regulation in how gender is illustrated, dominated and racialised in cultural elements. The correlation with darker bodies being the foundation of imaginative sexualisation of the world east draws to the complexity of geographic spaces and climate. Seeing warmer climates and passion as synonymous has racialised the concepts of sexuality and further perpetuated these standards for women. In development, cities became the epitome of worldliness and immorality while in contrast rural areas were associated with innocence and simple virtue (Phillips,2002). The imaginative spaces and construction of gender roles, the sexualisation of the east, and the discourse between urban and rural illustrate the spatiality of gender and the desirability complex in geographical positioning. Despite raising the age of consent, the governance of women being less than men has transcended through time and although not as explicit today these ideals are rooted in the structures of society through fetishization and the lack of different cultural understanding through

the countering the collective memory (Legg, 2005). The geographies of regulation in the past are present through reversals of laws such as Roe v Wade (Gerstein and Ward, 2022). Structural forces removing agency from women and the marginalised in society linked to the remaking of the empire as seen through Brexit policies. The balance of power lies in the social construction of gender and sexuality (Foucault, 1990), in the past and presently. The moral geographies of society are continuously adaptive to economic and political contexts (Williams, 1985), however, it is still governed by the ideals and abuse of power in cultures which inextricably connect geography and gender.

The progression of gender is presented through marketisation and policies. Complex colonial power impacted both gendered and racialised women of places leading to the waves of modern feminism for agency over their livelihoods (Johnson, 2009). Gendered politics deconstructing norms for women was pivotal for societal development, however, gender is more than a biological binary of sex. Its definition is progressive and dynamic. Illustrated through Trans-Geographies, these norms threaten their identity in the construction of public spaces such as toilets (Doan, 2010). The link between geography and gender intersects over different social categories. We cannot see feminism and LGBTQIA+ rights further if we do not understand the difference in class, gender and race in society (Momson & Townsend, 1987). The racial difference rights of wealthy white men countering coloured bodies through history in accessibility and quality of life illustrate the need for intersectionality in understanding gender. Temporally the role of gender identifies inequality due to global processes of dominance and power (Collins & Bilge, 2016), at different regional and national scales (Browne et al., 2010). Reclaiming agency through the deconstruction of gender as a binary has led to the utilisation of this for capital and performative allyship from corporations monetising identity through merchandise such as the pride flag design. In the biopolitics of health, the materialisation of gendered bodies in media and markets portrayal of masculinity being muscular as opposed to femininity being restricted to maternal has policed a certain gendered image and performance (Browne, 2004). Market economies articulate a power-geometry of inter-scalar social relations (Massey, 1994) of hierarchy through the capitalisation of gender. Despite equitable frameworks distinctions, gender overlapped with other forms of identity (Peake, 1993). Capitalism is rooted in profit and gender is being used today as the gauge of power over people's narratives. The geographies of difference through categories illustrate the seamless interlink to gender through the application of political regulation and economic profitability.

To conclude, geography and gender are inextricably linked through the use of power from empire to modern policies. This contention is illustrated through the regulation of identities and social categories furthering the capitalistic marketisation. Historically gender was based on the sexuality of the East and further imaginative spaces in the world pushing against the structures of urban and rural in post-colonial development. To understand gender in Geography it needs to address the dominant role power played in the illustration and governance of gender. Gender is not a binary, it is fluid to multiple understandings of masculinity and femininity across cultures. Agency is being reclaimed in reshaping gender and representing the dimensions of intersectionality, however, being overtaken by the drive for capital. The connection of gender to geography is clear through the spatial elements of culture, race, health and the environment and are linked across time and differing spaces.

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