

Ideas within the readings:

What are family values?

Today is an introduction to the concept of family values and an examination of how feminists/queer theorists have worked to challenge traditional notions of "family values"

- **Revaluating the mother in the family**
- **Expanding the idea of family and what its values are**
- **Shifting the discourse on family values from morality to politics**
- **Rethinking how family values should/can function**

PARDO

How have/should family values be politicized?

Where do our values come from?

What is the vision of family in family values?

What are the connections between capitalism and family values?

1: Mexican American women transform 'traditional' networks and resources based on family and culture into political assets to defend the quality of urban life"

How do they do this?

(How) do these women challenge/redefine traditional family values?

How do they politicize family life?

Transformation of:

- organizing experiences and social networks arising from gender-related responsibilities into political resources (2)
- previously 'invisible', making them not only visible but the center of public attention.
- definition of mother to include social and political community activism and redefined the word to include women who are not biological 'mothers.'
- of class and ethnic identity
- unspoken sentiments of individuals into a collective community voice

What kind of power/agency do these women have? How are they able to organize/mobilize and challenge/resist the threats to their community?

What are the limits/possibilities of politicizing traditional roles? How effective were the women of MELA in transforming their situations?

When does the family become a political issue? When does family values turn into a political agenda?

What is a mother?

Pardo: When you are fighting for a better life for children and 'doing' for them, isn't that what mothers do? So, we're all mothers. You don't have to have children to be a 'mother.'

Feminist Family Values Forum:

Genevieve Vaughn

- mother-based economic system...caring not greed
- uniting across boundaries patriarchy creates
- not just personal choices but large scale political change
- not individual actions/choices but collective consequences and transformations
- capitalism and competition/hierarchy
- politicizing the family: take these values outside of our home into political arena

María de los Angeles Jiménez

- experiences of unknown women
- emphasis on mothers/mother's day
- ambivalence of motherhood: 2 opposing image= a. Virgin of Guadalupe: pure mother and b. Llorona: mother who kills her children as act of vengeance
- transform values without forgetting/leaving/ignoring communities and families
- la familia
- women assert their moral authority as mothers and raise their voices for the political systems they want and against oppression
- "Yes, we women have been born with politics (in other words, integral to our being). When we are born, immediately we shout, we demand things, don't we? For this reason, we women have been born with politics" (32).
- Women are committed to building communities that will sustain a quality of life and maintain the dignity of all people within that community (35).
- Women's burden (37)

Gloria Steinem

- There have always been many different types of families...family should not be understood in the singular
- What is a normal family?
- Patriarchal, nuclear family is a function of industrialization and capitalism (47)
- Male-headed, patriarchal nuclear household
- They call any guarantee of rights from women or children "anti-family" because such rights interfere with the patriarchal authority of the male head of household (47)
- Redefining power...power is not about making others do things but about controlling our own lives/destiny/choices
- Direct line between the kinds of families we have and the kind of society we create...families as training grounds for democracy (49)

Do we agree with this? What are the implications of this statement? How/why are families important?

Where do we learn our values?

- Overthrow/humanize patriarchy (52)
- Agency and what we do matters

Angela Davis

- Youth/children as important for future...not just mothers

- New values, feminist values = anti-racist and anti-capitalist values
- Affirmative action
- How can we prevent the criminalization and demonization of people who are called non-citizens (57)?
- Incarceration
- No simple lines to be drawn...who counts as family, who counts as enemy?
- Racism is more strongly entangled with misogyny than ever before
- Local struggles in a global context
- Transnational capital
- Anti-crime, anti-drug ideologies flourish (61)
- Capitalism with maximum profit driving everything

LEHR. "Social Problems and Family Ideology"

Should there be an "ideal" form of family?

Why are families failing? How are feminists blamed for this failure? How are women blamed for it?

It appears as if multiple social ills, including male effeminacy, male aggressiveness, and male homosexuality, can be explained by the same cause: maternal over-involvement and paternal absence (109).

The glorification of two-parent families is not a neutral, innocent discourse; it has been a central discourse in blaming African Americans for not making greater economic strides in the US and as a result for the failure of black communities to raise appropriately masculine men (111).

Welfare mothers as failed women (112)

Women civilize/socialize husbands and children

What are women's roles in the family? In upholding family values?

What are men's roles in the family? In upholding family values?

In our current economic crisis, and the increase in employment, what will be the impact on family values? Will there be a shoring up of strict gender roles within/outside of the family OR will there be a transformation/expansion/rethinking of families? If so, how?

"if men are no longer able to feel masculine through their families, can society civilize them? Is it possible for men to act "civilized" without women being controlled within the institution of the family? Can men be civilized in ways that are less violent (118)?"

Male norm: wage-earner

Family wage:

- Bolstered men's power over women and children
- Facilitated the efforts of capital to segment the labor force along gender lines

Lehr focuses on working class men...what is the current impact on white-collar male workers?