

**Introduction to Cultural Studies**  
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**Lecture – 43**  
**Bell Hooks - Understanding Patriarchy - IV**

So, hello and welcome to this NPTEL course entitled introduction to cultural studies, we are looking at Bell hooks essay understand a patriarchy, we already have had 3 lectures on it, I have just complete with this and hopefully, winded up and next lectures to come. Now, the point where we stopped in the last lecture is where Hooks is talking quite clearly about a more collaborative approach between man and women in terms of understanding patriarchy and in terms of dismantling patriarchy.

And in this particular session, that we will begin with today, she talks about how the dismantling requires lack of denials, we cannot live in denial of patriarchy, we cannot think of patriarchy something which do not exist, which does not exist whereas, actually it does all the time, we consume it all the time, so denial becomes the very key strategy to consolidate patriarchy, we deny the existence of patriarchy.

And Hook says that denial must be subverted first before we begins subvert patriarchy as a principle, so that becomes a very important lesson, a very important tenet, if you will for patriarchy and I hope this obviously very keen to look at patriarchy as a strategy that she wants to dismantle, she wants to take and understand and that critique must be collaborative you know in this approach as she great clearly points out okay.

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Clearly we cannot dismantle a system as long as we engage in collective denial about its impact on our lives. Patriarchy requires male dominance by any means necessary, hence it supports, promotes, and condones sexist violence. We hear the most about sexist violence in public discourses about rape and abuse by domestic partners. But the most common forms of patriarchal violence are those that take place in the home between patriarchal parents and children. The point of such violence is usually to reinforce a dominator model, in which the authority figure is deemed ruler over those without power and given the right to maintain that rule through practices of subjugation,

So, this is what she says over here, it should be on the screen, the paragraph beginning with clearly we cannot dismantle a system as long as we engage in collective denial about its impact on our lives, so this is what I meant when I say that as long as a denial exists, as long as there was a collective denial of the impact of patriarchy in our lives and we cannot really dismantle the system, dismantle at as a strategy or as an institution.

Patriarchy requires male dominance by any means necessary hence it supports, promotes and condones sexist violence, so you know it is perfectly legitimate as sexist violence, we saw any lecture, the earlier lecture how the big daddy; the big father of the family you know, assaulted you know physically abuse a female child, a little female child for not conforming to the patriarchal principles that was a completely legitimize lawful assault, no one intervened, people supported it more rationally.

Later on, the mother went and told the girl that you know she deserved it, it is all for a good because this is meant to teach her a lesson, this is meant to teach her to become a better, better human being a better girl, a better woman in subsequent times, so it completely condones sexist violence, it legitimizes sexist violence, it requires male domination, it promotes a sanctions violence of the worst order.

We hear about; we hear the most about sexist violence in public discourses and about rape and abused by domestic partners but the most common forms of patriarchal violence are those that take place in the home where between patriarchal parents and children, so this is again a Hooks trying to understand the formative phrase of patriarchy, where parents were indoctrinated by

their own patriarchal principles attempt to indoctrinate the children in similar principles by telling them what to do what not to do.

And that account to Hooks is the greatest form of patriarchal violence, it is a psychologist violence, it is the violence which is in the form of indoctrination which is obviously meant which is designed to create conforming subjects in children etc. so that becomes very, very unsettling, very disturbing, very nefarious, very subterranean sinister kind of a violent succumb to Hooks.

It is the most common form of patriarchal violence, so she says we talk about men over here about rape and abuse and more kinds of sexiest violence and public discourses but what happens in the formative phase in a domestic setting and a family of the setting is what is the words from patriarchal violence, okay. The point of such violence is usually to reinforce a dominator model.

So, in order to map all the dominators or who is to be a dominator who is a generic person over here, so that dominator model needs to be consolidated, truth is after violence, the psychological violence which is often just indoctrination but it is still a form of violence, in which the authority figure is deemed ruler over those without power and given the right to maintain that rule through practices of subjugation, subordination and summation, so 3 SS become very important in patriarchal; subjugation, subordination and submission.

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subordination, and submission.

Keeping males and females from telling the truth about what happens to them in families is one way patriarchal culture is maintained. A great majority of individuals enforce an unspoken rule in the culture as a whole that demands we keep the secrets of patriarchy, thereby protecting the rule of the father. This rule of silence is upheld when the culture refuses everyone easy access even to the word "patriarchy." Most children do not learn what to call this system of institutionalized gender roles, so rarely do we name it in everyday speech. This silence promotes denial. And how can we organize to

So, you need to subjugate, you need to subordinate and then of course that will generate submissions surrender from the subject who become a complicit and a compliant subject, complete; in a complete conformity to the patriarchal principles, so patriarchy requires subjugation, requires subordination because there is a hierarchy in patriarchy, there has to be a big daddy, there has to be a grand patriarch whose words a law whose behaviour whose actions are the template for patriarchal behaviour for the perfect patriarchal behaviour.

And you must submit your free will, you must surrender your freewill an agency to do that kind of a template in order to become a more conforming subject okay, so keeping males and females from telling the truth about what happens to them in families is one way patriarchal culture is maintained, so silence becomes the other, S over here, so you know here silent, the men and woman you just do not allow them, you create a situation, you create a condition where men and women cannot tell about what happens to them, what happened to them when they are growing up.

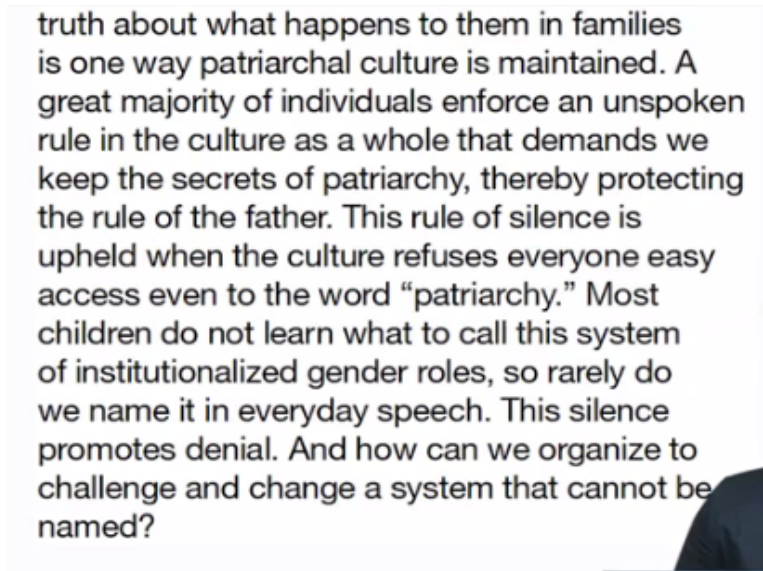
When they were indoctrinated into you know being good boys and good girls in complete conformity to patriarchal principles, you cannot talk about it, you cannot talk about the psychological terrorism, you cannot talk about a psychological indoctrination, the psychological violence and that is; that silence becomes another strategy of patriarchy you completely silenced the subjects.

The subject cannot speak over here, a great majority of individuals enforced an unspoken rule in the culture as a whole that demands we keep the secrets of patriarchy, thereby protecting the rule of the father. So, the rule of the father must not be spoken about because again, speaking about it, talking about it, will give it, might give it potentially a constructed quality, might reveal its constructed quality where it is not talking about it being completely silent about it will just conform and consolidate as given quality, it is grand quality as a grand narrative.

So, the rule of the father becomes grand narrative by default and that grand narrative must be maintained to silence right, it must not be talked about because it was talked about then you know it becomes open for questioning, it becomes open for you know an analysis which might reveal which might point out its constructed quality and that becomes a problem potentially and patriarchal systems, okay.

This rule of silence is upheld when the culture refuses everyone easy access to the word; even to the word patriarchy, most children do not learn what to call this system of institutionalized gender roles, so rarely do we name it in everyday speech.

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truth about what happens to them in families is one way patriarchal culture is maintained. A great majority of individuals enforce an unspoken rule in the culture as a whole that demands we keep the secrets of patriarchy, thereby protecting the rule of the father. This rule of silence is upheld when the culture refuses everyone easy access even to the word "patriarchy." Most children do not learn what to call this system of institutionalized gender roles, so rarely do we name it in everyday speech. This silence promotes denial. And how can we organize to challenge and change a system that cannot be named?

This silence promotes denial and how can we organize to challenge and change a system that cannot be named, so this is a very important analysis that Hooks is offering it is almost an preset mechanism, where she says that the word patriarchy is so rarely used in these kinds of systems, where you know cultures of domination, cultures of subordination, complete institutionalization on gender roles take place.

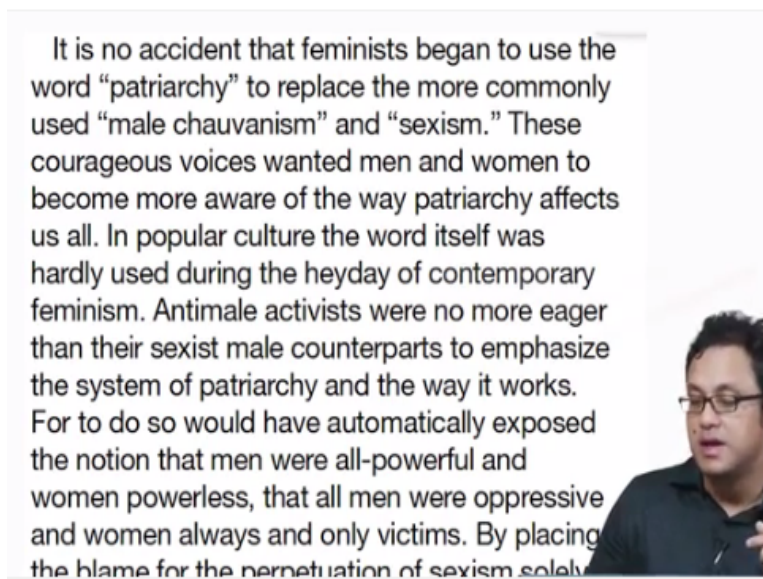
So, when this institutionalization takes place, we do not use the word patriarchy your own because using a word patriarchy, will give it a name, will give it a classification, will give it a point of address then we can address to that address and then start examining it as a construct now, its own name, people do not know it is patriarchy, the word patriarchy is not used and that becomes part of silence which then informs the denial subsequently.

So, you can see there is a structural chain and operational area, so there is silence, there is denial, there is subordination, there is hierarchisation, there is psychologization, there is institutionalization but you know all there are part of the same plan of patriarchy, the patriarchal plan if you will and you know it has organized very neatly, very cohesively in order to silence any potential rebellion, any potential you know voices which might go against with, okay.

So, this silence promotes denial, so denial becomes a very key strategy, denial becomes as you mentioned a little while ago a denial becomes very instrumental way, a effective way, a very effective instrument, if we were to protect patriarchy to protect patriarchal principles to protect patriarchal affiliations and patriarchal proclivities, so those proclivities require denial I mean if you just keep saying and the patriarchy is bad, we must question patriarchy.

Then it becomes difficult for patriarchy into you know promoters proclivities but if we are silent about it, the silence informs a denial and that denial consolidators patriarchy as grand narrative okay and the whole point is even more micro even more specific as Hook says even the word patriarchy is not used, so we do not even mention the word patriarchy, does not mention the word patriarchy when children suffer institutionalized violence, psychologist violence, the entire psychologization takes place through acts of violence which create and conform certain gender roles.

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But the word patriarchy is never used in those situations okay, so it is no accident that feminists began to use the word patriarchy to replace the more commonly used male chauvanism and sexism, these courageous voices wanted men and women to become more aware of the way patriarchy affects us all, so the word patriarchy become you know it got some currency with feminism.

Because feminists realized that a word patriarchy is key to all the problems, patriarchy is a key to all the problems, so instead of using male chauvanism and sexism which then locate a problem to males alone, a women alone, patriarchy becomes the more complex were the more

complex term which is; which reveals that this is something which affects men as well as women.

It is not as about male chauvinism or about women suffering, it is about combination of everything and patriarchy becomes the combination, patriarchy becomes this is a very collusive activity which affects the which you know as you know agents who are men as well as women. So, in popular culture the word itself was hardly used during the heyday of contemporary feminism, so you know it was hardly used, it was hardly in currency during the heyday of feminism.

Anti-male activists were no more eager than their sexist male counterparts to emphasize the system of patriarchy in the way it works. For to do so would have automatically exposed the notion that men were all powerful and women powerless that all men were oppressive and women always and only victims, so anti-male activists and one all feminist and this is a very important distinction that hooks makes, very important distinction to us to remember anti-male activists and feminism different categories of people altogether.

Anti-male activist often end up becoming you know just as par as male chauvinist, sexist male counterparts and they were equally are not used what patriarchy and because I would reveal the error, the policy in looking at the entire problem as you know men having all power and women are completely powerless, men were being completely oppressor and women being always victims.

And this kind of binary would be discovered to be an error, it will be discovered to be you know policy in judgment, so anti-male activist as well as some sexist male counterparts they were equally you know equally reluctant to use the word patriarchy you know they were more happy to use other words like male chauvinism, woman suffering etc. which kept the locations at bay which kept the mappings intact, the binary intact.

And there was a problem that was an impediment account to hooks in our understanding of patriarchy because patriarchy requires as she mentions some more collaborative approach in this collaboration becomes very important, I will not exist will not take place unless you know we do away with this binary of male being oppresses and women being victims, only men being all powerful, women being all powerless.



So that kind of binary needs to be done away with if we are to have a more collaborative approach to understanding patriarchy and the problems of patriarchy, okay.

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hardly used during the heyday of contemporary feminism. Antimale activists were no more eager than their sexist male counterparts to emphasize the system of patriarchy and the way it works. For to do so would have automatically exposed the notion that men were all-powerful and women powerless, that all men were oppressive and women always and only victims. By placing the blame for the perpetuation of sexism solely on men, these women could maintain their own allegiance to patriarchy, their own lust for power. They masked their longing to be dominators by taking on the mantle of victimhood.

So, by placing the blame for the perpetuation of sexism solely on men, these woman could maintain their own allegiance to patriarchy, their own lust for power, then masked their longing to be dominators by taking on the mantle of victimhood and this is a brilliant, brilliant analysis as Hooks offers us and she says this mantle of victimhood that becomes a grand narrative on right to woman consider themselves to be sole victims and they talk about men has been oppresses only.

And that kind of binary did a lot of disservice to critique a patriarchy because I just replicated the lust for power, then it is replicated the hierarchy that woman believed and that kind of woman that these anti male activists were not feminist account to Bell hooks, they developed a service about problems to this entire understanding of patriarchy and how do they masked their longing to be dominators by taking the mantle of victimhood right.

So, the mantle of victimhood by masculating victims, they wanted to be the dominators, they wanted to be you know did they express the lust for power, so better it is all ends up being the same power game and it is hard to change something, the hardly alters anything in the long run fundamentally speaking so you know it just replicates entire structure or patriarchy without changing the basic and fundamental coordinates.

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Like many visionary radical feminists I challenged the misguided notion, put forward by women who were simply fed up with male exploitation and oppression, that men were “the enemy.” As early as 1984 I included a chapter with the title “Men: Comrades in Struggle” in my book *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* urging advocates of feminist politics to challenge any rhetoric which placed the sole blame for perpetuating patriarchy and male domination onto men:



Like many visionary radical feminists I challenged the misguided notion, put forward by woman who were simply fed up with male exploitation and oppression that men were the enemies. So, again if you are talking about men has been the enemy then you just restricting yourself to binary, you caught up in a binary and the same problem as you saw when you read women empowers or the question, if we just look at power being only located in the colonizer.

And colonizer being purists that just you know is a very insufficient and in elegant analysis of the power problem in a colonial condition so likewise, if we just brand the men as the enemy and woman as the victims then that becomes very blunt binary which does not allow us to engage with patriarchy and the problems to patriarchy at a complex level, okay.

As early as 1984, I included a chapter with the title, Men; Comrades in Struggle” in my book feminist theory from Margin to Center urging advocates of feminist politics to challenge the rhetoric any rhetoric which plays a sole blame for perpetuating patriarchy and male domination onto men. So, as you can see the right word, Comrade over here you know, men comrades in struggle it looks for a more collaborative approach in feminism which takes him to a common man which takes into common which includes men's more inclusive in quality.

And does not exclude men as the enemies, so it is an very exclusionary quality of looking at men as the enemy as the oppressor that is something that hooks wants a move away from very clearly and very coherently okay. And this is what she has said in that particular chapter which was entitled, Men; Comrades in Struggle and this is the quotation that she offers in this essay.

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Separatist ideology encourages women to ignore the negative impact of sexism on male personhood. It stresses polarization between the sexes. According to Joy Justice, separatists believe that there are “two basic perspectives” on the issue of naming the victims of sexism: “There is the perspective that men oppress women. And there is the perspective that people are people, and we are all hurt by rigid

Separatist ideology encourages woman to ignore the negative impact of sexism on male personhood, it stresses polarization between the sexes, according to Joy Justice, separatist believe that there are two basic perspectives on the issue of naming the victims of sexism, there is the perspective that men oppress women and there is a perspective that people are people and we are all hurt by rigid sex roles.

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sex roles.”...Both perspectives accurately describe our predicament. Men do oppress women. People are hurt by rigid sexist role patterns, These two realities coexist. Male oppression of women cannot be excused by the recognition that there are ways men are hurt by rigid sexist roles. Feminist activists should acknowledge that hurt, and work to change it—it exists. It does not erase or lessen male responsibility for supporting and perpetuating their power under

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the recognition that there are ways men are hurt by rigid sexist roles. Feminist activists should acknowledge that hurt, and work to change it—it exists. It does not erase or lessen male responsibility for supporting and perpetuating their power under patriarchy to exploit and oppress women in a manner far more grievous than the serious psychological stress and emotional pain caused by male conformity to rigid sexist role patterns.



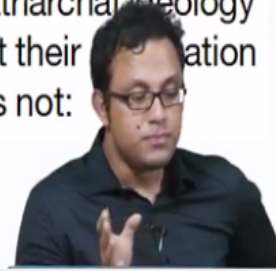
And oppress woman in a manner far more grievous than a serious psychological stress and emotional pain caused by male conformity to rigid sexist role patterns, so this particular obsession is a very important, so example of how male responsibilities and male oppression they are not mutually contradictory, so men can be aware of the responsibility as well as the oppression as patriarchal agents you know and that becomes more holistic.

A more complex approach of looking at patriarchy to see how men can be oppresses as well as been hurt by patriarchy as well as being you know reluctant agents the patriarchy as well as being damaged by patriarchy in their own ways. And I know this damage you know and this exploitation can go hand in hand and that does more complex understanding the patriarchy rather than looking at patriarchy as you know male being oppresses, women being victims.

So victimhood and oppression they are more distributed phenomenon they are more you know so complex phenomena especially, when it comes to understanding of patriarchy as hooks points out in this section.

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Throughout this essay I stressed that feminist advocates collude in the pain of men wounded by patriarchy when they falsely represent men as always and only powerful, as always and only gaining privileges from their blind obedience to patriarchy. I emphasized that patriarchal ideology brainwashes men to believe that their domination of women is beneficial when it is not:



So, throughout this essay, I stressed that feminist advocates collude in the pain of man wounded by patriarchy when they falsely represent men as always and only powerful as always and only gaining privileges from the blind obedience to patriarchy. So, if we look at men as always an always only powerful always an only privilege from the, you know principles patriarchy and then the obviously does a lot disservice.

They include in a patriarchal principles rather than deconstructing it, I emphasize the patriarchal ideology brainwashes men to believe that the domination of women is beneficial when it is not so, again the brainwashing happens to men and naturally more to man than to women because they are taught to believe their superiors they are taught to believe they are actually helping women by oppressing them by cutting down their privileges by cutting down the agency, they protecting women.

And you know therein lies the brainwashing when I say an indoctrination of patriarchy as a principle and this is a quotation that hooks is offering.

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Often feminist activists affirm this logic when we should be constantly naming these acts as expressions of perverted power relations, general lack of control of one's actions, emotional powerlessness, extreme irrationality, and in many cases, outright insanity. Passive male absorption of sexist ideology enables men to falsely interpret this disturbed behavior positively. As long as men are brainwashed to equate violent domination and abuse of women with privilege, they will have no understanding of the damage done to themselves or to others, and no motivation to change.



Often feminist activists affirm this logic when we should be constantly naming these acts of expressions of perverted power, relations, general lack of control of one's actions, emotional powerlessness, extreme irrationality and in many cases, outright insanity. Passive male absorption of sexist ideology enables men to falsely interpret this disturbed behaviour positively.

As long as men are brainwashed to equate violent domination and abuse of women with privilege, they will have no understanding of the damage done to themselves or to others and no motivation to change. So, it is very important how Hooks states over here to make men understand the extent that they are damaged the extent to which they are abused the extent to which they are wounded by patriarchy.

It is only if you understand it, it can be offer any possibility of change and that change can only come from understanding a patriarchy how patriarchy has consumes them into behaving like active agents, irrational agents, masquerading as rationality, masquerading as duty, masquerading as protection, so you know in a structural level we can find some similarity between this and whoever is shooting an elephant.

Because in that essay too, the white man realizes that what he is doing is to construct what he is doing a hollow act and that actually makes them superior, this acknowledgement of inferiority, this acknowledgement is knowledge of inferiority, this understanding of inferiority paradoxically makes them superior paradoxically makes them actually more elevated you know and essentially more elevated as an individual.

So, likewise hooks is saying over here that the first step is to you know make men realize that is brainwashing is that is how which you know explains to them which teaches them which convinces them that this is you know for protection of women, just for the benefit of women and this is the right thing to do, this indoctrination is a false indoctrination and once they have the knowledge of the falsity of this indoctrination that will be the first step in dismantling patriarchy from the male perspective it is equally important as the female perspective.

And therein lies a more collaborative strategy of dismantle patriarchy that Hooks sets out to just define and describe to draw this essay, so I stop here at this point, I will continue this lecture with this text in the following lectures, thank you for your attention.