

**Feminism: Concepts and Theories**  
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**Key Concepts: Time**

Welcome back to week 4 of Feminism: Concepts and Theories. If you have made it thus far, you know that we are working with a basket of very-very interesting concepts. I also admit that some of you may find it hard, to begin with, to understand how to think conceptually. So, I will encourage you to go back and listen to these presentations again and again, until the point that they become a little clearer. Also, for the rest of the course we will continue working with these concepts.

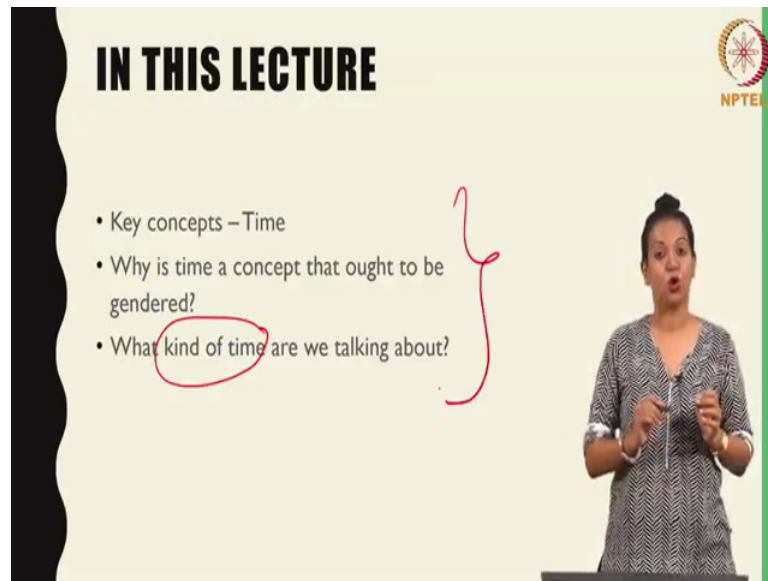
So, as you go along ahead in this course, you will begin to see how to deploy these concepts and sometimes things will become clearer then. The other thing that I will encourage you to do is also to find your own resources parallelly as you listen to these lectures. Now feminist theory, the text that I am using are all one particular way of understanding feminism. It does not mean that you cannot also employ these learnings to do your own searches. I would strongly encourage you to use resources like, one, the dictionary two, Wikipedia, which can be surprisingly resourceful in addressing your queries in multiple ways. So, use these sets of lectures as guidelines as ways in which they are structuring your understanding of feminist theory. But also remember that these are not required to be limited, you can go beyond what I am offering you to be able to get a holistic understanding of feminism concepts and theories.

Today, week 4, the good news is that this is the last week in which we are dealing with concepts as singular things. You know, we have built up our repertoire so far, and we stopped last week with **Care**.

This week, we are going to do **Time, Experience, and Space** and with that we come to the end of about a month of lectures, where we will have explored conceptual thinking in feminist theory. The week after that we go on to **First, Second, and Third Waves of Feminism** and then to larger bodies of work within which to employ concepts. Now, the advantage of things like feminist body, Indian feminism, so on, and so forth for the rest of this course, is that we begin to understand concepts in real life situations.

And while that can be complex, it has the advantage of relatability, you will know what we are talking about. At the same time, if you have clarity in concepts, you will be a better analyst and you will have a better critical understanding of these everyday situations. So, weeks 1 to 4, may be difficult, but they will lay the foundation for the rest of the course. So please do try and spend some time with each of these presentations.

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Today without further ado, let me launch into a concept, which is **Time**. **Time** is really interesting and here we continue to progress along the trajectory that is been set with our investigation of care. Because Time on the face of it is such an, “objective” concept. Surely, we are not going to spoil Time with gender again? So, this is the kind of question I get all the time when I say **Time**.

Let me start by saying again, as ever, keep an open mind. Why is it that we are looking at Time and relation to gender? It’ll become obvious as we go through the next 40 minutes or so. And therefore, the second question always is, what kind of Time are we talking about? While Time structures all of our daily lives in a very-very obvious fashion, we all know, almost intuitively, that each of our experiences of time differs often, depending on say in common-sensical knowledge, the kind of person that you are.

How do you experience Time? Are you always in a hurry? Are you always running behind Time? Are you always somewhere before Time? What are the kinds of people that can afford latitude in the ways in which they deal with Time? What are the kinds of people to who Time does not matter? Think about the ubiquitous person who is always late and takes it for

granted that you will wait for them. Everybody therefore, deals with Time in a unique fashion.

In our analysis today, we are suggesting that this kind of dealing with Time has a very specific gender element to it, that if we try and understand it, not just in the ways in which men deal with Time as opposed to women dealing with Time, although there is a particular aspect of it, it is also the other question: What kinds of demands does Time exert upon masculine versus feminine subjects? So, keep these questions in mind and let us launch into the discussion today.

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**LABOUR AND TIME**

Thompson, E.P; 1967. Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism, Past & Present, No. 38 (Dec., 1967), pp. 56-97

- Between 1300 and 1650
- Those who are employed are asked to see a "clear" distinction between their time and their employer's time/ paid time.
- Time is now currency/ it is not passed, but spent.

NPTL

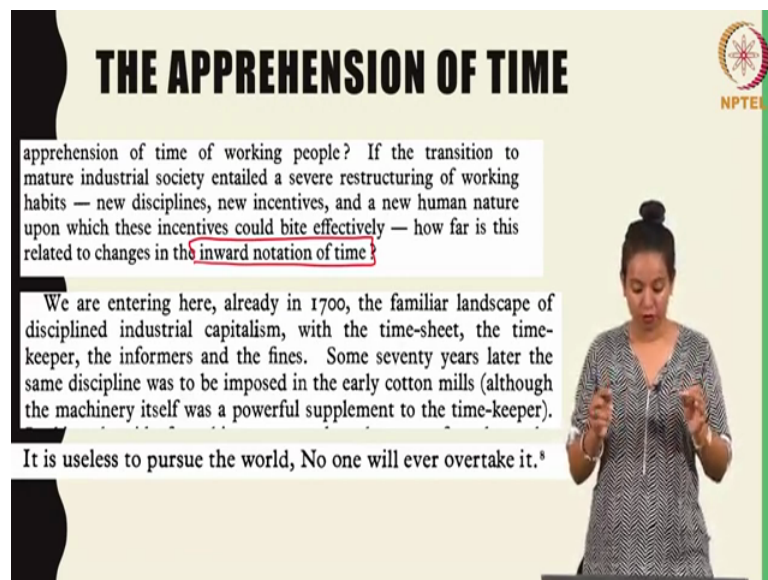
Let us start by talking about, what kind of Time? Here I want to briefly take you through E.P. Thompson's very-very important essay, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," where Thompson propounds a theory of the ways in which the fundamental character of time in modern society changes post Industrial Revolution.

Here, Thompson is concerned with how between 1300 and 1650 those who are employed, and by this he mainly means those who are workers in factories, are asked to see a clear distinction between their Time and their employers Time / Paid Time. This might be painfully obvious to those of us who work and live in the current Time, but Thompson is suggesting that this understanding of Time itself has a relatively recent history and that it has to do with the advent of industrial capitalism, where we separate work from pleasure.

What does such a separation portend for the ways in which Time is now a surveillance mechanism, intended to tell us that, in many ways what Thompson says, "Time is now

currency, it is not passed but spent.” The ubiquitous question, how do you *spend* your Time? And the word ‘spend’ has such unique connotations. It means that you are making a clear relationship between Time and its valuation through money. And in Thompson's understanding, this is recent, this is closely related to the history of industrial capitalism. And thanks to that, we now have a hegemonic, an overarchingly dominant understanding of time within which we lead our lives. Come then to the next step of the analysis, which is, as I tell you a few slides down, what does this mean for men and women or for masculine and feminine subjects? This is an essay I highly recommend that you read just for your own sort of knowledge and not necessarily only for its connotations for feminist theory.

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**THE APPREHENSION OF TIME**

apprehension of time of working people? If the transition to mature industrial society entailed a severe restructuring of working habits — new disciplines, new incentives, and a new human nature upon which these incentives could bite effectively — how far is this related to changes in the inward notation of time?

We are entering here, already in 1700, the familiar landscape of disciplined industrial capitalism, with the time-sheet, the time-keeper, the informers and the fines. Some seventy years later the same discipline was to be imposed in the early cotton mills (although the machinery itself was a powerful supplement to the time-keeper).

It is useless to pursue the world, No one will ever overtake it.<sup>8</sup>

NPTCL

Let me read you a few excerpts from the essay to sort of expand upon what we are talking about: “If, the transition to mature industrial society entailed the severe restructuring of working habits -- new disciplines, new incentives, and a new human nature upon which these incentives could bite effectively -- how far is this related to changes in the inward notation of Time?”

Now, this is brilliant, because we are starting with the understanding that we all have internal clocks. By this it is not a question of how exactly do you know what Time it is? It is not that we have magical beings among us who can tell Time, but the inward notion of Time is that, Time is just not merely an objective entity out in the world, it also has a correspondence with how we feel about Time.

Time extracts urgencies from us. I am looking at my watch right now for example and saying, okay I've finished about 15 minutes of this lecture, I have 30 minutes to go, I hope I have enough material. There are ways in which Time is making me constantly aware and I don't even have to look at the clock, I wait to think about every moment and how I am going to make it productive.

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For Thompson, the transition to mature industrial society entails a restructuring of working habits. And this restructuring means that people go from home to factory, there is a physical separation between the place of life, a place of pleasure, home, and the place of work, the nine to five workday, which is the factory. We spoke about this again in relation to Care work, saying that, why is it that women then became the primary population that offered Care? It was because of this physical separation along with this understanding of how is it that men are located in the factory and women at home, also comes this restructuring of Time itself.

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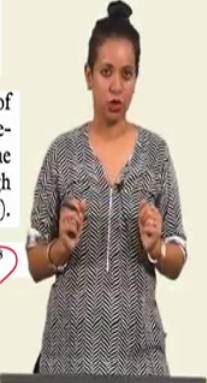


## THE APPREHENSION OF TIME

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New disciplines, new incentives, and incentive is very-very important to consider. Because discipline is not always exerted only upon unwilling bodies, it is also exerted upon bodies that take pleasure from it, that become part of that regime, that begin to think about themselves as successful working subjects in relation to how well they comprehend and apprehend this notion of time.

In other words, if we think that the restructuring of Time is part of the new rules of this game, then those who play the game very well also take pleasure in winning, those who manage their Time, those who are able to balance Time, those who get the most out of every hour and modern society is filled with these kinds of techniques of productivity. If people have heard about what you call the Pomodoro timer, which is that you set your watch for about 20 minutes. In 20 minutes you make sure that you do as much as you can, stay not distracted and then you get a break for 5 minutes, provided you have used your 20 minutes wisely. These are all part of what Thompson calls the inward notion of time. Oh, sorry, my bad, the inward notation of time, not just the notion, but notation, which is the idea that there are ways in which you are noting Time in your own body, your body also marks Time.

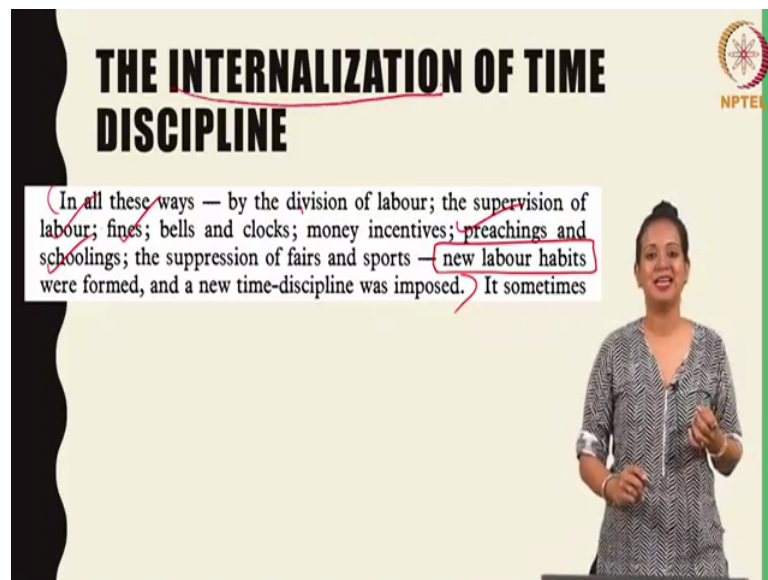
We are entering here already in 1700, the familiar landscape of disciplined industrial capitalism, with the time sheet, the time-keeper, the informers, and the fines. Think back to school and think about the ways in which, who is it that took the greatest pleasure in being monitors? The ones who made sure that they were marking who arrives on time, who is it that is seated by the time the bell goes off and how they get to report to the authority as to those who are not fulfilling this role.



So now, we are all oriented in our responsibilities towards Time as an authoritative, objective entity in the world. Some 70 years later, the same discipline was to be imposed in the early cotton mills, although the machinery itself was a powerful supplement to the time keeper. Meaning the demands of the machine also work as the clock itself. And as a critique, Thompson says, it is useless to pursue the world, no one will ever overtake it.

Here he is referring to the idea of us always chasing time, right? So, to rewind, why is it that we are looking at this apprehension of Time? Because before we get to the understanding of Time, gender, men, women, etc., we first have to explicate, what is the current nature of Time as we know it. So, I hope this is clear so far.

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The image shows a presentation slide with a light green background. At the top, the title "THE INTERNALIZATION OF TIME DISCIPLINE" is written in bold black letters. Below the title is a quote in a white box with a black border: "In all these ways — by the division of labour; the supervision of labour; fines; bells and clocks; money incentives; preachings and schoolings; the suppression of fairs and sports — new labour habits were formed, and a new time-discipline was imposed. It sometimes". A woman in a grey patterned dress is standing on the right side of the slide, gesturing with her hands. In the top right corner, there is a logo for NPTEL (National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning) featuring a stylized gear and the text "NPTEL".

The Internalization of Time Discipline for Thompson is spoken about in such a fashion. In all these ways, by the division of labour, the supervision of labour, fines, bells and clocks, money incentives, preachings and schooling, the suppression of fairs and sports – new labour habits were formed, and a new time-discipline was imposed. Pay attention to “new labour habits” as inextricably connected with Time itself.

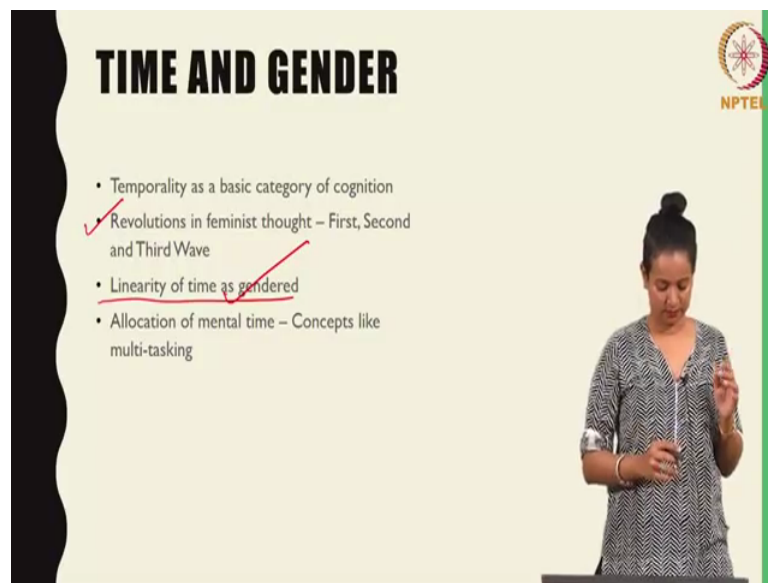
Division of labour, supervision, fines -- and fines are very familiar to all of us who have been part of such regimes, where you can't arrive late, where you are made to stand outside the classroom, so on and so forth, where you lose wages if you do not show up on time, punching in time, time clocks, you have to account for every minute of your time.

Preachings and schooling are particularly interesting because remember that the schools also further this kind of mandate of Time as if it is a truth in the world that all of us should

manage our Time; we need to show up on time, punctuality, think about the resonance of that term over and over again in our early lives, and this is what Thompson it is breaking down for us through the term “the internalization of time discipline.”



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The slide features a title 'TIME AND GENDER' in bold black letters at the top left. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with a red and white design and the text 'NPTEL' below it. The main content consists of a bulleted list on the left side of the slide. The first bullet point is 'Temporality as a basic category of cognition'. The second bullet point is 'Revolutions in feminist thought – First, Second and Third Wave', with a red checkmark to its left and a red line pointing to the text. The third bullet point is 'Linearity of time as gendered', with a red checkmark to its left and a red line pointing to the text. The fourth bullet point is 'Allocation of mental time – Concepts like multi-tasking'. On the right side of the slide, a woman with her hair in a bun, wearing a patterned grey and white dress, is standing and looking down at her hands.

- Temporality as a basic category of cognition
- ✓ • Revolutions in feminist thought – First, Second and Third Wave
- Linearity of time as gendered
- Allocation of mental time – Concepts like multi-tasking

Therefore, let us now come to the heart of today's lecture, Time and Gender. Here we are looking at “Temporality” and temporality means Time or the “notion of time” or “timeness” as a basic category of cognition, through which we move through the world, we recognize time, we recognize ourselves through our movement through time. And how this connects to things like revolutions in feminist thought’s First, Second Wave, Third Wave gender.

So, think about why is it that feminist revolutionary thought processes are in this kind of stacked fashion: first-first, second-second, third-third, as if there are clear end points to each, which is really not the case. And we are arguing that the very notion of Time as linear, one minute follows the other, every hour follows the other, and we are losing Time, we are all hurtling towards the end and therefore it is important that we recognize each moment before it is lost. We understand this very understanding of Time as gendered.

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**TIME AND GENDER**

- Temporality as a basic category of cognition
- ✓ • Revolutions in feminist thought – First, Second and Third Wave
- Linearity of time as gendered
- Allocation of mental time – Concepts like multi-tasking

NPTEL

We are also thinking about the allocation of mental Time itself. How do we think about Time? This might be confusing, so stay with me for a little bit. Think about how is it depending on your gender, your location in life, your mode of work, how do you organize your Time? Do you think of every moment as only having one task? Do you think of every aspect of the day following the other in clear linearity or are there ways in which you imagine Time as constantly filled with multiple things?

Often pulling you in different directions, often contradictory, often conflictual and a lot of research will suggest that this very idea of Time and Linearity is far more suitable for masculinity than femininity. You wake up in the morning, you have your breakfast, you get out of the house, you go to work and then you come back, your day is divided into time slots in a very clear fashion. And the same kind of research also argues that this kind of luxury is not available to women or to feminine subjects. Stay with me for a little bit on this notion.

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The slide features the title "MALE TIME AND FEMALE TIME" in bold black letters at the top. To the right is the NPTEL logo. A presenter, a woman in a patterned dress, stands on the right side of the slide. The main content is a list of points with handwritten red annotations:

- Linear progressive Versus Cyclical productive?
  - The linear model appears objective
  - Linearity distracts from the existence of a multitude of experiences of time
  - Linear time is a gendered model that works best for men (Men's experience of time Versus Women's experience of time)
  - Gendered theories of time (Time away from work = free time)

Therefore, we come to the idea of male time versus female time. The title is very-very particular because we are not saying male time as if only men live this way or female time like women live this way, we are saying male and female to distinguish between two different understandings of Time, one of which is considered more normal and often more powerful than the other, which is derided as scatter-brained, as not organized enough, as constantly confused, and as devaluing Time itself.

The question we are asking, therefore is, is it productive for our understanding to think about the linear progressive model as good as opposed to the cyclical productive manner, particularly attached to females, but having its own kind of logic? How are we thinking about it? And let us take you through a few points in this regard.

At first glance, the linear model always appears objective, because Time works in that fashion. You count the clock, it keeps going, but it is very interesting, the face of the clock is cyclical, however, it slowly moves forward. Therefore, the linear model is also the kind of notation of time we have in our own minds.

The argument in feminist theory is, however, that linearity distracts from the existence of a multitude of experiences of Time. Let me give you an example. As I am standing here speaking to camera, I also have my mind on a bottle of water, which I will drink in a couple of minutes. I am also thinking about what happens an hour from now when I go to the stores and make dinner.

I am also thinking if I have my scooter keys in place, I hope I haven't forgotten them. So at no point of time do I experience this moment as merely about finishing this lecture. I am also occupied by other thoughts relating to other timelines, which may be in the past or future, but which I am living in the same moment. Therefore, feminist theory argues that linearity distracts, it tells us that we all should be aiming for singular time.

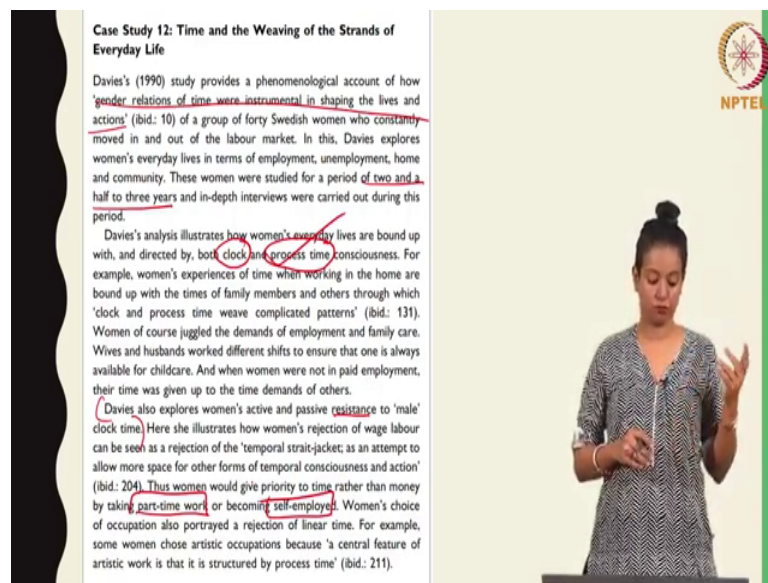
Feminist theory also argues that Linear Time is a gendered model that works best for men, men's experience of time versus women's experience of time. Let me spend a minute here. When we see that it works best for men, we are not suggesting any kind of conspiracy plot, where men have plotted to say that this is a notion of time I like and we are all going to live like this.

Instead, we are saying that all of us are conditioned in particular ways to live out time in a particular fashion, however, men's experience of time has become the norm, women's experience of time is something that is considered to be not ideal. Right? Think about the many homes in which there is a particular clear understanding that the man leaves for work at one time, comes back at one time and there is no argument, here is a time of home, here is the time of work.

Think instead of the ways in which women's times at work are always interrupted by multiple things, demands of children, demands of aging parents, demands of relatives, demands often for ways in which the household needs to be managed at the same time as the time that they are at work and how therefore their time is never a given. There is no idea that something that happens day after day will happen in the same fashion in a linear way. Yeah? And lastly, gender theories of Time, speak about time given to work as the only time that is valuable and you can see it from the name itself.

The time away from work is free time. There is no value to it. It is free, you can do with it what you wish, but it will not be remunerated, it is in essential, also leading to the ways in which men think about time as something that they need to consume all the time in the service of work. They do not take time off, they do not take holidays, they prefer to be labeled workaholics, which is often a mark of honour, than take time away for caring for self-caring for family.

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**Case Study 12: Time and the Weaving of the Strands of Everyday Life**

Davies's (1990) study provides a phenomenological account of how 'gender relations of time were instrumental in shaping the lives and actions' (ibid: 10) of a group of forty Swedish women who constantly moved in and out of the labour market. In this, Davies explores women's everyday lives in terms of employment, unemployment, home and community. These women were studied for a period of two and a half to three years and in-depth interviews were carried out during this period.

Davies's analysis illustrates how women's everyday lives are bound up with, and directed by, both clock and process time consciousness. For example, women's experiences of time when working in the home are bound up with the times of family members and others through which 'clock and process time weave complicated patterns' (ibid: 131). Women of course juggled the demands of employment and family care. Wives and husbands worked different shifts to ensure that one is always available for childcare. And when women were not in paid employment, their time was given up to the time demands of others.

Davies also explores women's active and passive resistance to 'male' clock time. Here she illustrates how women's rejection of wage labour can be seen as a rejection of the 'temporal strait-jacket; as an attempt to allow more space for other forms of temporal consciousness and action' (ibid: 204). Thus women would give priority to time rather than money by taking part-time work or becoming self-employed. Women's choice of occupation also portrayed a rejection of linear time. For example, some women chose artistic occupations because 'a central feature of artistic work is that it is structured by process time' (ibid: 211).

Let me take you through a quick case study to illustrate how this is important in relation to women and work. This is Case Study 12 from the text, and let us go through it together. The case study's title is "Time and the Weaving of the Strands of Everyday Life."

"Davies 1990 study, provides a phenomenological account of how gender relations of time were 'instrumental in shaping the lives and actions of a group of forty Swedish women who constantly moved in and out of the labour market.'" Now, this is also doubly interesting for me because Sweden or the Scandinavian countries are often touted as great models of gender equality and egalitarianism. So over here, it is important to pay attention to how time continues to be apprehended in similar fashion, even in seemingly egalitarian situations. And therefore, it also brings us to question equal to what as we did in the first lecture on equality as a concept.

In this, "Davies explores women's everyday lives in terms of employment, unemployment, home, and community. These women were studied for a period of two-and-a-half to 3 years, and in-depth interviews were carried out during this period." Now, this is also what we would call a longitudinal study, which means you are tracking them across large time periods, to try and understand what are the ways in which their life, in order to understand in what ways their lives may have moved, or not, in a linear progressive fashion.

"Davies analysis illustrates how women's everyday lives are bound up with and directed by, both clock- and process-time consciousness." This might be a little confusing, so let us stop there for a bit, which is clock-time, linear time as we understand it, one minute follows the

other and process-time consciousness. Process time is a little bit more fluid and dynamic. It takes into account contingencies, happenstance, accidents, life events, all of these that in other words make up the material of everyday life. And Davies concludes that women's lives have to do also with process-time consciousness.

“For example, women's experiences of time when working in the home, are bound up with the times of family members and others through which clock and process time weave complicated patterns.” This will be perfectly obvious for anyone who has children or is been around women who have children, which is their constantly in and out of dealing with time in a linear one after the other fashion.

“There is always something else going on in the same moment. Women of course juggled the demands of employment and family care. Wives and husbands work different shifts to ensure that one is always available for childcare.” Here you do see that wives and husbands are working together to do this, but which means that the notion of time is still gendered, because husbands times for childcare are always that which are leftover from work.

“And when women were not in paid employment, their time was given up to the time demands of others.” In other words, the free time that is part of a linear time model is never free for women; there is no time to take off, there is no time for relaxation; that time has to be given into the demands of others, which is not accounted for within employment or paid employment at all. If you remember, in the Care lecture we spoke about wages-for-work feminism, this is a similar kind of understanding.

“Davies also explores women's active and passive resistance to male clock time. This is interesting. Here, she illustrates how women's rejection of wage labour can be seen as a rejection of the temporal strait-jacket as an attempt to allow more space for other forms of temporal consciousness and action.” This is greatly interesting, especially to the kind of feminist theory or Marxist feminism that argue that women's independence can only be achieved through an engagement with waged labour.

“Here, Davies is arguing that when women refuse to work, or say that that is not the world that they want to be a part of, they are resisting male clock time.” The assumptions here might be complex because often the women who can reject wage labour, or can reject this kind of time have other forms of privilege, in terms of regular income from other members of

the family, or a welfare state, and so on and so forth. Nevertheless, it still makes sense to pay attention to it as one possible mode of resistance.

“Thus women would give priority to time rather than money by taking part time work or becoming self employed.” There are certain forms of privilege that are required in order to be self-employed or to be an entrepreneur. But let us keep that aside for the moment. “Women's choice of occupation also portrayed a rejection of linear time. For example, some women chose artistic occupations, because a central feature of artistic work is that it is structured by process time.”

Really important, think about it not just as women's choices, but also the ways in which artists are an important constituency in disturbing our ideas of time as an objective entity, if process time is important, continuity is important, then choosing art as a profession also means that you are choosing different understandings of time.

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The slide is titled "FORMATIONS OF SELFHOOD" in bold black letters. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with a star-like pattern and the text "NPTEL" below it. The slide content is as follows:

- Selfhood formed at certain key points

VERSUS

- Selfhood/ Identity as a dynamic process constituted through time
- Narrative as the mode through which we configure a stable sense of self

A woman in a patterned dress is standing on the right side of the slide, gesturing with her hands as if presenting.

The second important key function over here in terms of time, not just in linear versus cyclical understandings, is the question of selfhood itself, which conforms in most cases, in common understanding to a linear model. You are born, you are then a child, you attain adulthood until you achieve mortality and therefore you end with the understanding of the aging body.

Here, we think about humanity itself as constantly moving through key processes, each of which ends when the other starts. So there are clear notions of who is a child, who is an adult, and we mark them through distinctions in time, at so many years of age, at so many plus

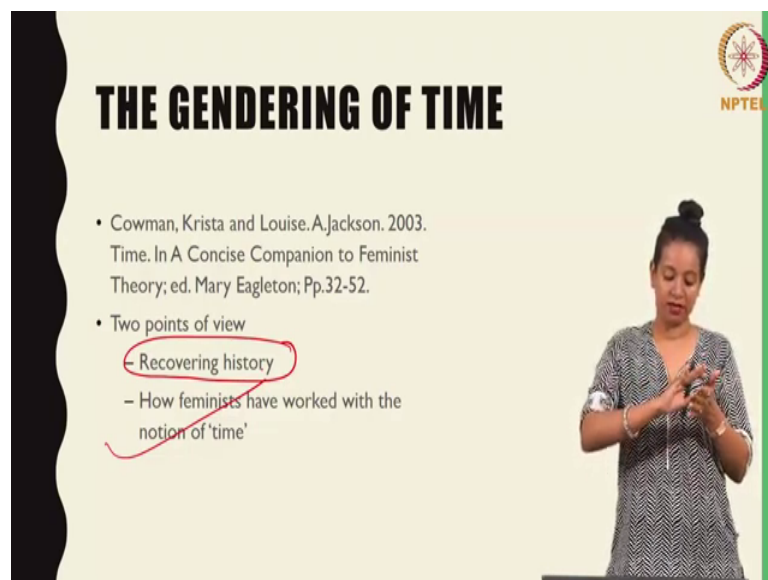


years of age you become a senior citizen. And this is how one considers selfhood in this linear fashion.

Instead, feminist theories suggesting that we think about self with an identity itself as a dynamic process, constituted through time. And in such a dynamic process, it is not time or the accumulation of years, but narrative through which we configure a stable sense of self. In many ways, social theorists call this the stories that we tell ourselves about ourselves, or rather anthropologists call it, this understanding of self as being produced in the world through storytelling, through narrative. So one can be differently located along this time spectrum depending on the story you want to tell. Somebody who is young at heart, somebody who behaves like a child and often these kinds of descriptions are pejorative, they are meant to tell people that they are behaving inappropriately because you are not conforming to a selfhood form at key points, they are saying your selfhood is a little malfunctioning.

However, feminist theory continues to argue that if we engage with narrative and therefore process time, we might be able to interrupt this linear model that any way does not conform to the ways in which we actually live in the world. So to take you through a few key points we are talking about linear versus cyclical time, we are talking about formations of self.

(Refer Slide Time: 31:06)



The slide features a title "THE GENDERING OF TIME" in bold black letters. Below the title is a list of references and a sub-point. The first reference is "Cowman, Krista and Louise.A.Jackson. 2003. Time. In A Concise Companion to Feminist Theory; ed. Mary Eagleton; Pp.32-52." The second reference is "Two points of view" with a sub-point "Recovering history" circled in red, and another sub-point "How feminists have worked with the notion of 'time'" crossed out with a red line. In the top right corner, there is a logo for NPTEL. In the bottom right corner, a woman is visible, looking at her phone.

**THE GENDERING OF TIME**

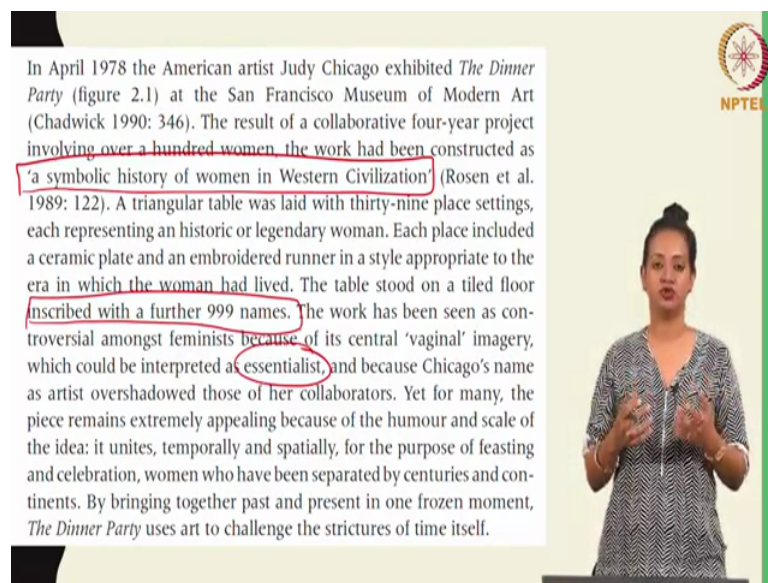
- Cowman, Krista and Louise.A.Jackson. 2003. Time. In A Concise Companion to Feminist Theory; ed. Mary Eagleton; Pp.32-52.
- Two points of view
  - Recovering history
  - How feminists have worked with the notion of 'time'

For the last bit of this lecture I want to refer to another key text, speaking about Time, in relation to the gendering of time and in relation to history. This is an essay by Krista, Cowman and Louise Jackson from 2003. In a concise companion to feminist theory. Here, I

want to focus a little bit of attention on a slightly different thing than what we have discussed so far.

Which is the question of history itself, and how feminists have worked with the notion of time. Here we are moving to a slightly different understanding of time, vis-a-vis historical record, or history as a feminist project and what that might look like, this is - pay attention to this as a different way of deploying the concept of time itself.

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In April 1978 the American artist Judy Chicago exhibited *The Dinner Party* (figure 2.1) at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (Chadwick 1990: 346). The result of a collaborative four-year project involving over a hundred women, the work had been constructed as 'a symbolic history of women in Western Civilization' (Rosen et al. 1989: 122). A triangular table was laid with thirty-nine place settings, each representing an historic or legendary woman. Each place included a ceramic plate and an embroidered runner in a style appropriate to the era in which the woman had lived. The table stood on a tiled floor inscribed with a further 999 names. The work has been seen as controversial amongst feminists because of its central 'vaginal' imagery, which could be interpreted as essentialist, and because Chicago's name as artist overshadowed those of her collaborators. Yet for many, the piece remains extremely appealing because of the humour and scale of the idea: it unites, temporally and spatially, for the purpose of feasting and celebration, women who have been separated by centuries and continents. By bringing together past and present in one frozen moment, *The Dinner Party* uses art to challenge the strictures of time itself.

Let me start by describing an artwork that the authors speak about in relation to women and time and history. "In April 1978, the American artists Judy Chicago exhibited *The Dinner Party* at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The result of a collaborative four-year project involving over a hundred women, the work had been constructed as 'a symbolic history of women in Western Civilization.' A triangular table was laid with thirty-nine place settings, each representing a historic or legendary woman. Each place included a ceramic plate and an embroidered runner in a style appropriate to the era in which the woman had lived. The table stood on a tile floor inscribed with a further 999 names. The work has been seen as controversial among feminists because of its central vaginal imagery that of a triangle, which could be interpreted as essentialist..." You remember our discussion of essentialist when some kind of quality is suggested as essential to the nature of a woman? "...and because Chicago's name as artist, overshadowed those of her collaborators," there was a power relationship that became apparent in the piece. "Yet for many, the piece remains extremely appealing because of the humor and scale of the idea: it unites, temporally and spatially, for the purpose of feasting and celebration, women who have been separated by

centuries and continents. By bringing together past and present in one frozen moment, the dinner party uses art to challenge the strictures of time itself.”

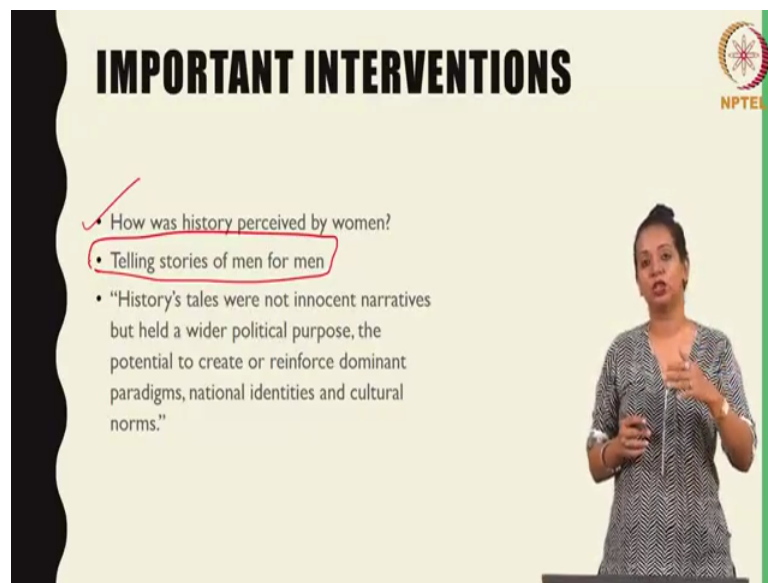
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This is what *The Dinner Party* looks like. The reason I bring this part of the text to your attention is because I think there is something extremely interesting in the ways in which art disturbs our apprehension of common-sensical concepts like Time. By spatially or materially bringing together the idea of all of these women, we talk about them as present in a continuous process of women's voices, of ways in which women have made contributions to the world and have not been recognized as much as men.

It is a project of recovery, but it is also a project of recovery in the present moment that dialogues with voices from different kinds of years, each signified by a place at the table. *The Dinner Party* in my understanding is also important to understand the recovery of women's voices in the historical record, which often has been rightfully critiqued of being mainly a history about men, as if men were the only ones who did anything worth doing at any point of time.

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The slide features a title 'IMPORTANT INTERVENTIONS' in bold black text at the top left. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with a red and white design and the text 'NPTEL' below it. The main content consists of three bullet points: '• How was history perceived by women?' (with a red checkmark), '• Telling stories of men for men' (circled in red), and '• "History's tales were not innocent narratives but held a wider political purpose, the potential to create or reinforce dominant paradigms, national identities and cultural norms."' (with a red line pointing to the first bullet point). On the right side of the slide, a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a grey patterned top, is speaking into a microphone.

Therefore, the interventions that feminist theory suggests in relation to history are as follows: We ask the very important question, how was history perceived by women? What is it that women think or understand about their past? Is it part of a public record? Are they seen as important figures whose lives were worth living?

How do we stop telling stories of men for men, often by men? And instead suggests that history's tales were not innocent narratives, but held a wider political purpose, the potential to create or reinforce dominant paradigms, national identities, and cultural norms. At the risk of repeating myself, this is not to say that such lack of innocence was an intentional plot, but to really speak about the function of something like History, which like Time is always spoken about in an objective mode, as if, as long as we know the facts, we know exactly what happened.

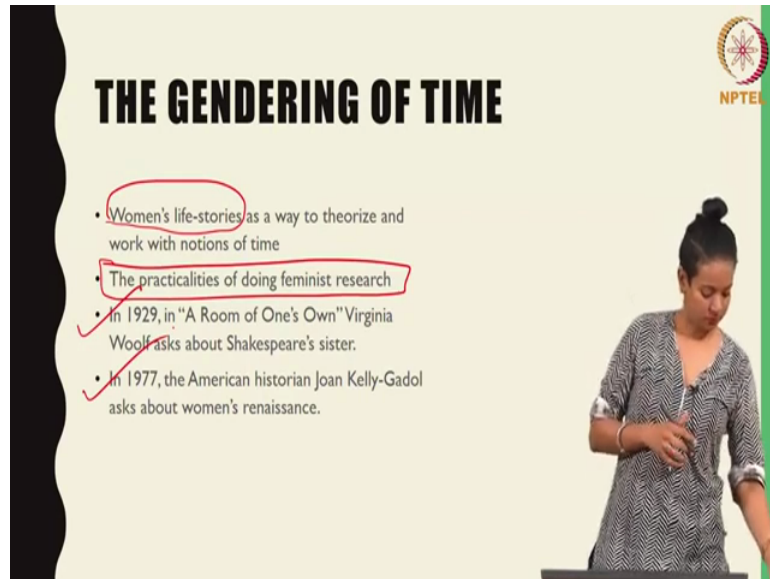
Instead, in this understanding of the gendering of time, we say that every moment of time is occupied by multiple voices, history only illuminates some. And it is not accidental, that the achievements of those that are highlighted happened to be men. Therefore, history or historical writing is also guilty of furthering a particular kind of gendered status quo that is far more masculine than feminine.

It accords to men the role of moving the world forward of participating in progression, in a way, in a way that takes men to be prime movers and takes women to be supporters or the chorus. Think about the ways in which we apprehend popular culture, you have the hero and

the heroine dancing and there is a whole set of nameless, faceless people dancing in the background. Right?

And we never even pay them heed, we think about them as just having to be there, but they are really not present in our apprehension of that moment. Feminist history, feminist theory argues that those voices also need to be recovered.

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The slide features the title "THE GENDERING OF TIME" in bold black letters at the top left. To the right of the title is the NPTEL logo. Below the title is a list of four bullet points, each preceded by a red checkmark. The first two bullet points are circled in red. On the right side of the slide, a woman with her hair in a bun, wearing a patterned grey and white top, is standing and looking down at a laptop screen.

- Women's life-stories as a way to theorize and work with notions of time
- The practicalities of doing feminist research
- In 1929, in "A Room of One's Own" Virginia Woolf asks about Shakespeare's sister.
- In 1977, the American historian Joan Kelly-Gadol asks about women's renaissance.

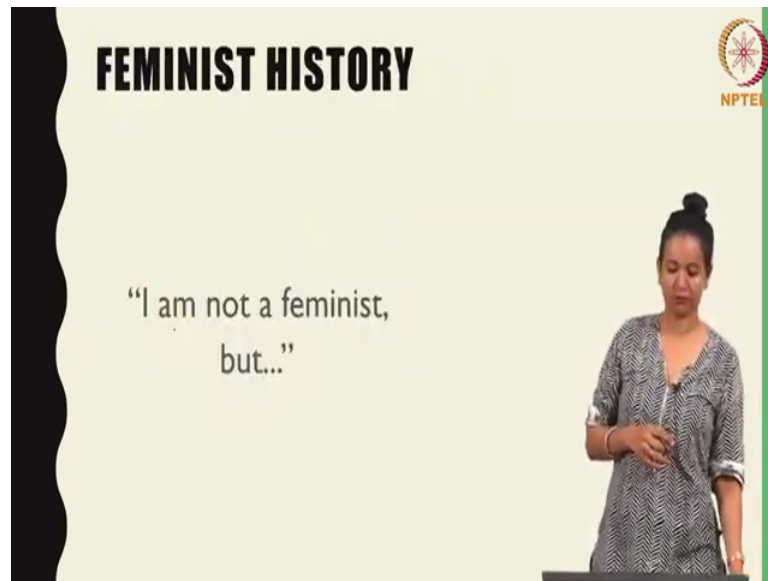
Therefore, in this understanding of the Gendering of Time, theory suggests that women's life stories can be a way to theorize and work with notions of time. How is it that women experience their own lives? What are the stories that they can tell you? How do they record milestones in their lives? How is it that they recollect the ways in which the life moved forward, or did not, or got stuck in time?

And in relation to this, historians and others do ask about the practicalities of doing feminist research. One of the arguments against this form of recovery project is always, of course, we cannot record every voice that was there but we can ask questions about which voices are always available for recording. Why is it that women's voices appear so little? Surely this is something we need to investigate and push the boundaries of.

We have important and interesting feminist writers such as Virginia Woolf, *In a Room of One's Own* who asks about Shakespeare's sister. She said she lived at the same time, she was part of the same culture/milieu. Why do we know nothing about her even as she was the sister of one of the most famous writers of all time?

The American historian, Joan Kelly-Gadol, asked about women's participation in the renaissance. Why is it that we do not hear about the ways in which women's thought processes were also part of the ferment of the spirit of the renaissance? Similarly, there are others who are writing very, very beautifully about recovering women's voices and about the absent women that don't show up at all.

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Think also about, how is it that feminist history can work if we inhabit a milieu, where you hear this very often, “I am not a feminist, but...” and this demands a new understanding of feminism itself, because it is very difficult to deny the fact that many of the things that I enjoy, my forms of life, my choices, the things available to me, are built on the backs of feminists struggle. It is because many women rebelled and asked questions about so called common-sensical things, that we are now seeing a change in status quo.

And feminist history demands that we paid due heed to these names, not just because it is a matter of courtesy, but because if you forget, we will forget how to ask those questions and the feminist movement itself will suffer. Therefore, feminist history is not just an important project for intellectual curiosity, it is also an important political project that demands that we start paying attention to gendering of notions like time in relation to history.



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The slide features a title 'TIME, PERCEPTION, SUBJECT POSITION, AND IDENTITY' in bold black text, with 'PERCEPTION' and 'SUBJECT' crossed out with red lines. Below the title is a list of five bullet points, each preceded by a red checkmark. The second bullet point, 'A renewed interest in the infant and its development to adulthood', and the fifth bullet point, 'Yet, do all women have a common past?', are circled in red. The third bullet point, 'Renewed scrutiny on motherhood and child-rearing', is enclosed in a red rectangular box. To the right of the text is a photograph of a woman in a grey patterned dress speaking. The NPTEL logo is in the top right corner.

- The demands of an objective history post-Enlightenment
- A renewed interest in the infant and its development to adulthood
- Renewed scrutiny on motherhood and child-rearing
- Feminism comes to the fore tagging onto history and historical experience
- Yet, do all women have a common past?

One of the things that we do need to pay attention to is, when is it that women appear in history, and as what? I am responding to the possible critique that “are we saying that women have no possibility of being present in the historical record at all? Surely, we speak about them.” Here, one has to pay attention, one has to remember that women find a place in appropriate fashion, they enter at particular points of time. Therefore, even as they were demands for an objective history post enlightenment, which seemed to want to pay attention only to facts and records, which were more often than not masculine and about men, there was also a renewed interest in the infant and its development to adulthood.

We are speaking post enlightenment also of a renewed interest in mankind, when I say mankind very specifically. Because post enlightenment we are now entering an era where there is no longer the bounds of religion or divinity, no longer structures the ways in which people think about themselves, now we are interested in mankind. And therefore, interest in the infant and its development to adulthood are part of the ways in which man wants to rediscover himself and be able to expand and extend his capacities.

In such a milieu, there is a renewed scrutiny on motherhood and child rearing. So women enter the record as child-rearers, as mothers, as important to history because they give birth to men. So one kind of timeline is all about women's reproductive capacities, which extends to this day. To this day, we speak about women's biological clock, that all else being constant at some point of time women's bodies will start ticking because they have to give birth to a child and this is important and must be paid heed to.



In such a milieu, feminism comes to the fore tagging onto history and historical experience, which we will go over in relation to second wave feminism and the fight for reproductive rights. And by the time we come to Third Wave, we are asking the question, do all women have a common past? Does everybody experienced time in the same fashion, merely as women who come into the world and then become mothers? And the answer is obviously no. Therefore, we are talking about perception of time in relation to subject position and identity, with specific reference to post enlightenment reason. What is the space made available for women in history, perhaps only as child-bearers? And what does this do to their own experience of time? How does this form their subject, position and identity?

This is something that we are still seeing the repercussions of in the current day too in differential fashion, in many, many different ways. So there is no clear narrative that I want to suggest between post enlightenment and current understandings of motherhood. But broadly, motherhood, or the capacity to bear children, is very much part of the timeline narrative of women's lives.

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**NEW HISTORICISM**

- "If history like fiction is text, so too are science and theology. All texts, therefore, must be considered in relation to each other as effects of power relationships at the time in which they were produced."
- "The ideological work of gender".
- Fiction and collective memory as antidotes to subjectivities imprisoned within text

NPTEL

The kind of literature in history and cultural studies that addresses the need to recover women's voices to answer the question, where the women have a common past is often spoken about as New Historicism and here we suggest that, "If history like fiction is text, so too are science and theology. All texts, therefore, must be considered in relation to each other as effects of power relationships at the time in which they were produced."

This will become a little clearer when we start speaking about primary texts in First Wave, Second Wave, Third Wave Feminism. But just remember for now, that we excavate the ways in which gender operates historically by looking at the texts that were produced during that time, and the ways in which women are located within those texts. Here, we are interested in exposing the ideological work of gender, that gender works as ideology through these kinds of texts that were popular during that time.

To give you an example, think about fictional narratives like *Jane Eyre*; there's a wonderful antidote text to it called *White Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys, where the author asks what happened to Bertha. And for those who are not familiar with *Jane Eyre*, it is about a proper, it is about an impoverished English governess who finds employment in a household where there is a dark secret of a first wife who was imprisoned in the house because she went mad.

And in *White Sargasso Sea* we are asked, what is the nature of this woman who went mad? Who is a figure was considered to be not proper, as opposed to an English woman? There are tales of race, there are tales of gender, there are tales of class that come hidden within a text like *Jane Eyre*. Therefore, much like *White Sargasso Sea*, fiction and collective memory are suggested as remedies to subjectivities imprisoned within the text.

I recognize that this might be a bit difficult thought, so hang in there for a second. What do we mean by "subjectivities imprisoned within text?" It means that texts are manipulative in nature. They suggest particular things as if they were common-sensical fact and these kinds of suggestions can be analyzed, restructured, deconstructed, if we start applying a gender lens to both fiction and history, as if they were text with ideology smuggled in.

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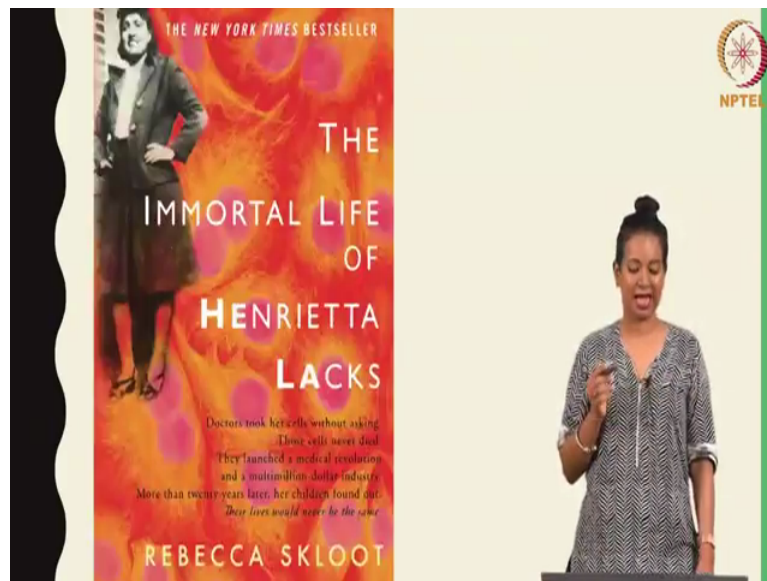
The slide features a title 'EXPERIENCE AND MEMORY' in bold black letters at the top left. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with a star-like pattern and the text 'NPTEL' below it. A list of five bullet points is on the left side, with red handwritten annotations: a checkmark over the first point, underlines under the second point, a box around the third point, a box around the fourth point, and a checkmark over the fifth point. On the right side of the slide, a woman with dark hair in a bun, wearing a patterned grey dress, is standing and speaking with her hands clasped.

- Life-stories and personal narratives
- The relationship between the "I" who writes, and the "I" who reads
- The aging woman
- The association of women with cyclic time
- Scientific linearity in the understanding of women's bodies and their functions

In this it would also be useful to take into account the function of experience and memory in relation to the telling of life narratives across time. It may seem like we have strayed a little bit from our discussion on Time, but it's closely related. If we start paying attention to life histories and personal narratives, as important accounts of how people actually live Time and the relationship between the people who write, and the people who read and how they are located or related across time, we will start thinking about the association of Time in the lives of women.

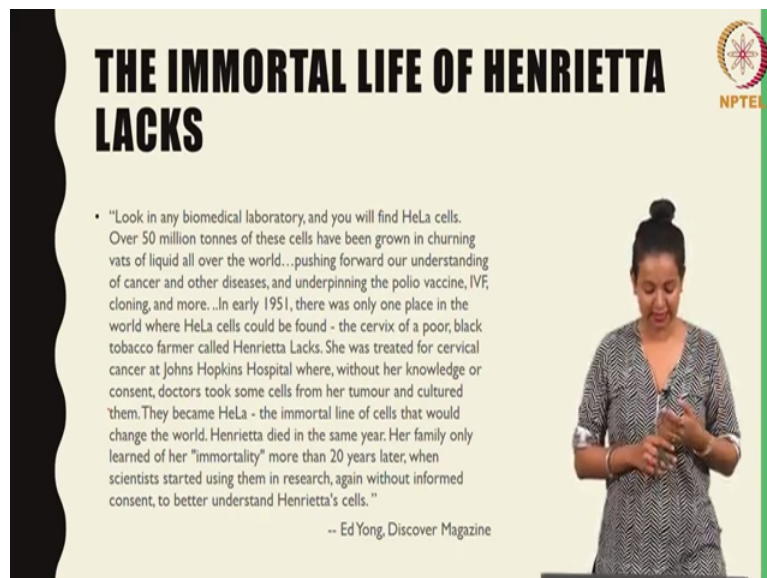
What is the status for example, of the aging woman? In relation to linear time, does she have value? Does she have use? Who is she in our understanding of progress? What is the standard association of women with cyclic time all about? Why do we always think about them in this kind of fashion where they always come back to something? And what do we do with scientific linearity in the understanding of women's bodies and their functions. And this is common to all women, we know that we experienced cyclicity every month, once a month in relation to menstruation. And therefore we experience our bodies in an almost constant cyclical fashion, but scientifically, the body only moves from childhood to youth to adulthood to aging, as if there is no question of other formations of time that are experienced in between.

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I want to end with a brief discussion of this really lovely book called, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, which gives us a completely different apprehension of women's bodies, linearity and time in this excavation of the history of a very-very important figure to medical knowledge.

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Here is a little excerpt from Discover Magazine and the review of the book to tell you what it is about. "Look in any biomedical laboratory and you will find HeLa cells. Over 50 million tonnes of these cells have been grown in churning vats of liquid all over the world... pushing forward our understanding of cancer and other diseases, and underpinning the polio vaccine, IVF, cloning and more... In early 1951, there was only one place in the world where HeLa

cells could be found -- the cervix of a poor, black, tobacco farmer called Henrietta Lacks. She was treated for cervical cancer at Johns Hopkins Hospital were, without her knowledge or consent, doctors took some cells from her tumour and cultured them. They became HeLa, the immortal line of cells that would change the world. Henrietta died in the same year. Her family only learned of her “immortality” more than 20 years later, when scientists started using them in research, again without informed consent, to better understand Henrietta’s cells.”

Here is a marvellous account of both cyclicity, and being both in time out of time. Also important to remember here is that this dying woman was not considered individual enough for her name to be even properly announced to the world, as somebody that gave these cells that allowed for medical understanding. Here we only valorise a notion of time, where bodies come and bodies go, but scientific knowledge progresses along a spectrum that we must pay attention to.

This is a highly masculinist notion of time, which does not take into account, the voices that help it along the way. Here also is a marvellous account of cyclicity where so many years later, thanks to this kind of writing, and thanks to this kind of recovery, we now know the story of Henrietta Lacks, and we have a figure to be able to deepen our understanding of medical knowledge and medical progress.

I will stop there for now and round up our discussion on Time itself. Today we spoke about time in relation to linearity and cyclicity, in relation to selfhood and narrativization, and lastly, in relation to feminist history. For the next lecture, we will move on to another concept which continues from today's lecture that of Experience. Until then!