

A STUDENT'S INTRODUCTION TO
**GEOGRAPHICAL
THOUGHT**

6

Social Constructionism and Feminism: It's All Down to Us



Figure 6.1 The Lyd Valley, Devon, UK (Photograph by Tony Atkin)

Take a look at the photograph in Figure 6.1. You can probably pick out the stream meandering across the valley floor (centre foreground), although it is visible only as a line of shadows and vegetation changes. If you were asked to delineate the valley

sides and the floodplain, you would probably be able to. You might also identify several small debris cones on the left side of the valley, covered by vegetation, but suggesting there has been some downslope movement of materials at some time. The question is: do these landforms really exist, or are they just our invention, a way of ordering and making sense of the landscape around us? This may seem like an odd question: of course they exist, we can see them! But the processes of water and sediment transfer operate across multiple landforms, the physical landscape functioning more as a continuum of surfaces, materials and forces than as a patchwork of discrete forms. The question of whether landforms really constitute ‘natural kinds’ (groups of real, distinguishable entities) has long been debated in geomorphology (Rhoads and Thorn, 1999; Bishop and Shroder, 2004; Berthling, 2011).

What is your ethnic group? This question is often used in social surveys, as well as in equality monitoring associated with recruitment to jobs or entry into universities. In the UK, government surveys such as the census use standard lists of ethnic groups, one of which is reproduced in Table 6.1. The question is: do these groups represent real similarities and differences between people, or are they just our invention, a set of expectations about people that then shape our behaviour to make those differences ‘real’?

Table 6.1 The ethnic groups that feature in the UK Government’s ‘recommended country specific ethnic group question for use in England’

White

1. English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
2. Irish
3. Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4. Any other White background, please describe

Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups

5. White and Black Caribbean
6. White and Black African
7. White and Asian
8. Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background, please describe

Asian / Asian British

9. Indian
10. Pakistani
11. Bangladeshi
12. Chinese
13. Any other Asian background, please describe

Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

14. African
15. Caribbean
16. Any other Black / African / Caribbean background, please describe

Other ethnic group

17. Arab
 18. Any other ethnic group, please describe
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Social constructionism provides a particular kind of response to questions like these, holding that our knowledge, concepts and sometimes even phenomena themselves are artefacts (constructs) of our language and actions. Since the 'cultural turn' of the 1980s, much human geography has been broadly social constructionist: I would include here feminist, **postmodern** and **poststructuralist** geographies, although other authors provide conflicting accounts of the relations between these. This chapter offers a basic introduction to social constructionism, considers geography (and academic disciplines more broadly) as socially constructed, and then focuses on feminist geographies. Postmodern and poststructuralist geographies are addressed in Chapter 7.

6.1 Introducing social constructionism

Social constructionism is popular in many fields, including geography, sociology, anthropology, history and psychology. Given the number of researchers and diversity of interests across these, there is plenty of scope for variation. A particular point of confusion arises around the related terms 'constructionism' and 'constructivism'. The latter is used in psychology and education to refer to a particular theory of how individuals learn. Geographers seem to use the two terms more or less interchangeably though, the emphasis being on social processes that shape our knowledge or understanding of the world. For the sake of clarity, I will stick to 'social constructionism'.

Probably the most wide-ranging account of social constructionism (wide ranging in disciplinary coverage) is Ian Hacking's (1999) book, *The Social Construction of What?* Hacking points out that the objects to which social constructionism has been applied are many and varied, from 'authorship' to 'Zulu nationalism', with emotions, gender, mental illness, nature, quarks, sexuality and youth homelessness in between (Hacking, 1999; Mallon, 2013). He thus suggests that it is helpful to look at the purpose of social constructionist arguments, rather than trying to define social construction. Put simply, such arguments tend to adopt a format of, firstly, pointing out how 'X' (the object of study) is taken for granted, and seems inevitable; then, secondly, demonstrating that 'X' is not inevitable, determined by the nature of things, but is an artefact of social life. 'X' could be different. The common purpose of such arguments is consciousness-raising, challenging the status quo.

6.1.1 How are things socially constructed?

The term 'social construction' was popularised in the social sciences by Berger and Luckmann (1966). Arguing that studies of the sociology of knowledge had focused too much on theoretical, 'academic' knowledge, they turned their attention to the kind of common-sense knowledge that we all rely on, beginning with

a phenomenological analysis of everyday life. **Phenomenology** is described in Chapter 5, but at its core is a notion that our only knowledge of the material world is through perception, or mental acts. Every mental act involves intentionality, being directed towards some object or concept. Intentional objects might be objects of belief (propositions), objects of thought (ideas), objects of love or hate or fear (such as individuals, pets or spiders). These intentional objects have no existence independently of the mental state that 'refers' to them. This is not to say that the spider you are frightened of does not exist, but you cannot separate the feared spider (intentional object) from the 'real' spider. The feared spider is your only consciousness of the spider. Phenomenology seeks to understand these mental acts that provide our consciousness of the world (Scruton, 1995).

Berger and Luckman sought to reconcile two dominant understandings of society. On the one hand, Weber thought that all human actions express subjective meaning. To understand society we must therefore understand individuals' choices and actions (agency). On the other, Durkheim considered society to have 'objective facticity'. The facts of society exist independently of individuals and provide the everyday reality in which we live, thereby shaping our actions. The café, the library, the night club, breakfast, computers, footballs, mobile phones, banks, rent and student loans all exist to each of us, providing a shared, ordered reality (Durkheim), and yet all of these things are the products of human thoughts and actions (Weber). This raises questions about how our thoughts and actions can produce an objective reality external to us as individuals. Berger and Luckman identified a number of processes by which this happens.

When we do something regularly, we tend to develop a habitual way of doing it. Think of the way you brush your teeth, the order in which you put clothes on in the morning, or make a cup of tea. It is quite likely that you have some habitual way of doing these everyday tasks. Without these kinds of routines we would have to think our way through a myriad of decisions in everything we do throughout the day. Habitualisation saves us that effort.

Habits can also become collective. I used to take the bus to work. For over two years I got on the same bus each day, joining other people who used that bus route at that time of day for their daily commute. I soon realised that each passenger sat in the same place each day, although there was no verbalised 'rule' or instruction for us to do so. It may have started with one person. Perhaps the first person on the bus each day always sat in the same place, and others then reciprocated the habit. When types of actors (in this case, bus passengers) share types of habitualised actions (such as sitting in the same seat each day), the habit becomes institutionalised.

In becoming institutionalised a habit also becomes objectivated. The habit of passengers sitting in the same seat every day was clearly established before I started using the bus. It therefore formed part of the objective reality of bus travel for me and I quickly conformed to type, identifying a seat that was unused and sitting there each day, thereby claiming it as 'my' seat. I had become 'socialised' into the institution of regular bus travel.

This very simple example of everyday life has highlighted some of the processes Berger and Luckmann identified as central to social construction: habitualisation leading to institutionalisation; objectivation; and socialisation. Crucially, there is nothing about regular bus travel that necessitates sitting in the same seat each day. This objective reality was entirely the result of individual and collective human actions. You can find a more extended account, introducing other, related processes, on the companion website.

Language is the most pervasive means of objectivation. As children learn the words used by those around them, they learn (shared) meanings about things, and these meanings enable us to make (common) sense of the world. The same is true for students learning the various branches of geography; certain words are used in certain ways, and you learn the shared use of language at the same time as learning the concepts. Language thus has a role in shaping our understanding of 'reality'.

Ultimately, social constructionism maintains that the objective reality of our everyday lives is being constantly constructed and reproduced socially. The way we think, communicate and act affects the world around us (Elder-Vass, 2012).

6.1.2 Social constructionism in geography

Within geography, social constructionist ideas have become particularly prevalent since the cultural turn of the 1980s. Peter Jackson is often cited as a leading proponent in this. Drawing on the work of cultural theorist Stuart Hall, Jackson and Smith (1981) developed an understanding of race and ethnicity as socially constructed. Jackson's 1989 book, *Maps of Meaning*, then urged geographers to look beyond a notion of culture as simply 'material artefacts', the products of the intellectual or artistic elite. He demonstrated that social and cultural theory from outside the discipline offered geographers a means of understanding culture as the on-going process of meaning-making through which identities are socially constructed, imposed and contested in our everyday lives. The unequal relations of power that underpin social and cultural categorisation (class, race, gender and sexuality) were a particular concern. **Discourse** and cultural politics became central to the 'new cultural geographies' (Jackson and Taylor, 1996; Lorimer, 2005; Mitchell, 2011), paving the way for postmodern and poststructuralist geographies. A key theme in this work is 'representation', and the ways in which social categories, groups and identities are constructed through social and cultural processes.

The adoption of a social constructionist perspective thus drew attention to identities and the social and spatial practices associated with them. Who we are, and who we consider others to be in relation to ourselves, becomes manifest in space. From women's fear of particular places in the city (Pain, 1991) to the role of planning and architecture in attempts to construct national identity in Israel (Yacobi, 2008); from depictions of Eastern Europe through novels and films such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (Dittmer, 2006) to risk-taking in the 'death zone' by

Himalayan climbers (Wilson, 2012), or vulnerability to climate change resulting from political discourses and policies (Shearer, 2012); places and identities are socially constructed in tandem.

6.1.3 The social construction of academic knowledge

Not only have geographers used social constructionist ideas to understand the world around us, but geography itself, and the popularity of particular philosophies and theories within it at any one time, can be understood as socially constructed. The ideas of Thomas Kuhn (1922–96) are central here.

Kuhn began his academic career as a physicist but became a particularly influential philosopher of science. His 1962 book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, is one of the most cited academic books of all time (Bird, 2013). When he wrote it, the development of science was commonly seen as a continuous accumulation of facts and theories, progressing ever closer to the ‘truth’. Kuhn directly challenged this understanding. By examining historic developments in science he found evidence of a cyclical pattern of development, rather than a continuous, linear progression.

The early stages of any science (such as physics, chemistry or biology) are dominated by the collection of ‘facts’, with any number of competing approaches to making sense of those facts. Gradually, one view becomes dominant, and so provides the frame of reference by which legitimate problems and methods for the science are determined. In the Earth sciences, the evolutionary perspective of landscape development promoted by Hutton and Lyell in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries could be seen as an example of this. Kuhn used the term ‘**paradigm**’ to describe this frame of reference, a point that we shall come back to later.

Once a dominant paradigm is established, the science enters a period that Kuhn termed ‘normal science’. He described this as being what the majority of scientists do throughout their careers, essentially solving puzzles within the frame of reference provided by the paradigm, further articulating and specifying its implications. My own doctoral research on river bank erosion provides an example. Examining the ways in which soil particle size distribution influences bank erosion processes, I was working firmly within the framing of deterministic systems geomorphology, drawing on physical and chemical theories of soil properties and river bank stability. The research did not challenge these theories, but added in a small way to the stock of knowledge developed within this framing (such as in Couper and Maddock, 2001).

Kuhn found that, over time, members of a scientific community come across anomalies, or problems that cannot be solved within the paradigm. These anomalies accumulate to a point of crisis, when it is clear that the paradigm is inadequate, and this opens the door to revolution. New approaches to resolving these problems are sought, and new theories developed, eventually leading the subject community to a new paradigm, and commitment to a new frame of reference. Kuhn’s structure of scientific revolutions thus runs as in Figure 6.2.

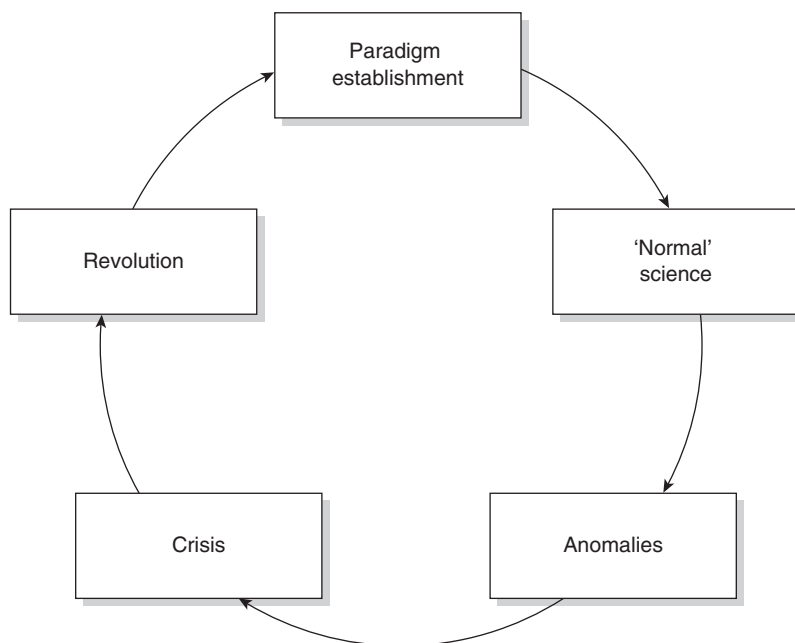


Figure 6.2 Summary of Kuhn's structure of scientific revolutions

On the surface of it this may not sound much like social constructionism. However, Kuhn (1962) describes a number of social processes operating in science. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of his work at the time that it was published was the assertion that there is always a degree of arbitrariness in science. What a researcher makes of a problem, or of a set of data, will be influenced by his or her prior education and experience, and the expectations these lead to. Different researchers will interpret data in different, but quite possibly equally valid, ways. Similarly, for a community of scientists, there is nothing that particularly necessitates the emergence of one paradigm and not another. Once established, though, a paradigm determines what entities are considered to be worth studying, what questions can legitimately be asked, and what methods can be used to establish answers. It provides a collective, *habitual* way for members of the subject community to approach research problems. The next generation of researchers is then *socialised* into these institutionalised practices and assumptions through their education.

A paradigm also affects the social structure of the scientific community. Other schools of thought become sidelined, ignored or disappear altogether, much as Davisian geomorphology did in the second half of the twentieth century. Specialisation occurs, with specialist journals established and individuals concentrating on specific topics. Communication becomes more restricted, confined to this specialist community (think how difficult some journal articles are to read!). The paradigm has become *institutionalised*. Except for student textbooks, there is no need

for every communication to articulate and justify its underlying principles, as the paradigm does this. The paradigm thus legitimates these foundations, providing both explanation of and prescription for the ways in which research is carried out.

In Kuhn's work, then, we can see the characteristic processes of social constructionism: habituation, institutionalisation and socialisation. Objectivation is there too. The ideas and practices of the paradigm have begun with the ideas and practices of individuals, yet they form the objective reality of the subject for those working within the paradigm, and particularly for new entrants to the community. Box 6.1 provides an example of paradigm shift within the Earth sciences.

BOX 6.1 THE PARADIGM OF PLATE TECTONICS

A classic example of a paradigm shift is provided by the Earth sciences, in the transition from a 'fixed Earth' paradigm to that of plate tectonics. Marx and Bornmann (2012) provide a very readable account of this shift, based on an analysis of citation networks (whose work was cited by whom). The early Earth sciences were based on the assumption that the Earth's crust is fixed. Marx and Bornmann trace the gradual accumulation of anomalies that could not be explained in this framework of thought: the match between fossil plants and animals in North America and Europe, identified in the mid-1800s; the similarity in geology between Africa and Brazil noted in the late 1800s. In the early 1900s, Alfred Wegener first published the idea that the continents originated from a single land mass, split apart. The problem was that Wegener could offer no convincing explanation for this. A gradual accumulation of further anomalies throughout the next 30–40 years meant that, by the end of the 1950s, serious doubts had been raised about the idea of the Earth's crust being fixed. With the growth of seismology after the Second World War (when seismology was seen as important for monitoring nuclear test ban treaties), the evidence that earthquakes were concentrated along the plate boundaries enabled connection to be made between seismology and tectonics in the late 1960s. This, according to Marx and Bornmann (2012), provided convincing evidence to ensure the paradigm shift. Their summary of this whole process emphasises both the logical and sociological elements involved in the scientific community's acceptance of an idea:

The initial starts (forerunners) were not taken up by the scientific community at first, since, for one, the consequences for the foundations of the geosciences were far-reaching and revolutionary, and, for another, the indications stood on shaky ground. It took the courage of unbiased,

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young researchers and support from some older leading figures in the geosciences ... to get broad discussion of the existing and the new paradigms going. The fragmentation of fields in the geosciences made it difficult to be aware of all of the relevant factors that spoke for the new paradigm. There were too few researchers working across the sub-disciplines or having overarching interests. It took a critical mass of convincing data in combination with the synthesis of the pieces in a satisfactory overall picture, which was finally accepted by the scientific community in the geosciences. (p. 611)

Kuhn's work presented a direct challenge to the commonly held view of scientific progress and so, unsurprisingly, it was subject to criticism. There has been much confusion over the term 'paradigm'. His original text used the word in over 20 different ways. Kuhn acknowledged this and tried to rectify it in a postscript (1969), but by this time the word had become so popular that it had effectively acquired a life of its own. His 1969 clarification (in the postscript to the second edition) identifies two usages of the term that were central to the 1962 book. The first of these is a 'global' sense, referring to the shared theories, generalisations, models, beliefs about the world, and values of a scientific community. Kuhn (1969) is clear that he considers this usage of the term to be erroneous, suggesting that 'disciplinary matrix' would be better. The second use is rather more specific (or 'local'), referring to a paradigm as an exemplar. Here Kuhn was thinking of the kinds of problems found in science textbooks. By working through these problems, students learn to 'think like' a physicist, or chemist, or whatever their discipline is. The problems model the practices of the discipline, and so are 'paradigmatic' examples. Within geography, Holt-Jensen (2009) suggests that the regional monographs written by Vidal de la Blache provided the paradigm for regional geography.

The second major criticism of Kuhn is one of **relativism**. In the transition between paradigms, proponents of different paradigms find themselves 'arguing past each other', their views so different that even the meaning of common words can be different, resulting in miscommunication. Some have interpreted this as a form of relativism, implying that both groups could in some sense be 'right', and so there is no such thing as scientific 'progress'. Kuhn (1974) argues against this criticism. Seeing science as essentially a problem-solving activity, he points out that more recent theories are generally better at solving problems than earlier theories, hence progress is made. Kuhn does quite clearly explain, though, that he is against the view of scientific progress as moving 'closer to the truth', as there is no basis for assuming that the things postulated in our theories have a 'real' match in nature. It would seem, then, that Kuhn allows for realism in the assumption that a mind-independent world exists, but he rejects the semantic commitment of scientific realism (see Chapter 1). With this in mind, he could be said to be a 'weak' social constructionist.

He is not necessarily claiming that things-in-themselves (such as trees or rocks) are socially constructed, but that our understanding of them is.

Kuhn's notion of paradigms reached geography quite quickly, being introduced by Chorley and Haggett in 1967 (Gregory, 2000). A number of contenders for 'paradigm' status have since been proposed. Hubbard et al. (2002) list: exploration; environmental determinism; regionalism; spatial science; **humanistic** and behavioural geography; and radical and structural geography. We could add **postmodern**, **poststructuralist** and **feminist** geographies. In geomorphology, the Davisian geomorphology of the early twentieth century and the systems geomorphology that developed from the middle of that century are often seen as different paradigms (Rhoads and Thorn, 1994). There seems to be little real agreement on paradigms in geography, though. The lack of clarity noted above may offer one reason for this. Holt-Jensen (2009) suggests that the 'disciplinary matrix' version of the term has been the most often used within geography, and this is exemplified by Inkpen (2005). Alternatively, Kuhn focused on the 'basic' sciences (physics, chemistry, biology), and it may be that his ideas do not apply quite so well to 'composite' sciences such as ecology and geography (Gregory, 2000). Geographers have long been eclectic in their influences, and competing schools of thought continue to co-exist.

Unwin (1992) suggests that perhaps Kuhn's work has been popular within geography because 'its concentration on the replacement of ideas could also be extended to apply to the replacement of practitioners' (p. 81). Those who advocated the notion of paradigms and revolution saw themselves as 'heroically' replacing an older generation whose ideas were outmoded. What is interesting here is the implicit suggestion that a social constructionist theory of academic knowledge was popular for social (rather than 'scientific') reasons. This is exactly the argument that Kuhn was making.

From a social constructionist perspective, then, academic disciplines such as geography and its sub-fields (social and cultural geography, historical geography, economic geography, geomorphology, hydrology, glaciology, etc.) are social phenomena, spatially and temporally situated as much as any other geographic phenomena.

6.2 Feminism

6.2.1 Some starting points

As a 10-year-old I went to a small, rural primary school, which found itself without enough boys in the junior class to form two teams for football practice. The head teacher asked for two girls to volunteer to stand in, and I jumped at the chance. I was in the netball team, but at home my football was one of my favourite possessions. I joined the boys in PE lessons for the rest of that term, scoring two goals. At the end of term the head teacher confessed to my parents that the only reason he

would not pick me for the school football team was that he thought the other schools, against which matches were played, would object.

I bought my first guitar shortly before turning 17. When I got to university, several times I was told by other students who heard me playing, 'You're really good... for a girl.' The compliment was always accompanied by the caveat. By the time I finished my doctorate I had been playing gigs in local pubs and clubs for a couple of years, and on more than one occasion had people tell me 'You're really good. You play like a bloke.' The guitar, it seems, is a very gendered instrument. In fact, the live music scene in that town during the 1990s consisted almost entirely of males.

These two short anecdotes recount minor events, but we can draw three points from them. First, they illustrate the kinds of – largely unconscious – expectations about males and females that permeate everyday life. Second, individuals who challenge these expectations, however unwittingly, encounter resistance. I was not allowed to play in the school football team, and the idea that a female could be a 'good' guitarist (whatever we mean by that) was clearly problematic. Third, both examples have spatial implications, in that the football pitch and the live music stage are dominated by men. Taken together they seem to suggest that the space for women is not at the centre of attention, but around the edges, in the audience, as spectators and supporters. Undoubtedly some things have changed since these events. England now has an international women's football team, whose matches are – at least sometimes – shown on television. But perhaps things have not changed a great deal. As recently as 2006, I heard from a music industry 'insider' that he had promoted a female rock band to a record company, but the band was not signed. The feedback from the company was that the young women were 'not pretty enough'. It was not their music that was criticised.

Women constitute roughly half of the global population but account for the majority of the world's poor (Browne et al., 2013). Globally just 21 per cent of seats in national parliaments were held by women in 2012 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2012). In 2006 the World Economic Forum devised the 'gender gap index', measuring national gender differences relating to economic, political, educational and health criteria for over a hundred countries. Having repeated the assessment annually since then, the *Global Gender Gap Report 2012* concluded that 'no country in the world has achieved gender equality' (Hausman et al., 2012, p. 33). Men's and women's lives differ, and this is the starting point for feminism.

Biologically, of course, there are differences between male and female sexes. But in 1949 French writer and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir undertook a phenomenological analysis of lived, embodied experience (see Chapter 5 for phenomenology). This led her to argue that biological sex and gender are two different things. Gender is socially constructed. Collectively we have particular ideas about masculine and feminine behaviours and characteristics, and we are socialised into these ideas from an early age. To take the obvious stereotype: pink baby clothes are for girls, blue for boys. A parent can dress a girl in blue, of course, but the child is sure to be mistaken for a boy. Boys have toy cars and guns, girls have dolls. 'Pirates and Princesses' parties

may be fun for small children, but reinforce the stereotypes. Through school, friends, television programmes, books, comics, advertising hoardings and more, children learn what it is to be female or male. To not conform is to risk being ostracised, teased and bullied.

Social constructions of gender persist into adulthood. Miller and Sassler (2012) studied cohabiting couples in the US who both work, and found that women still do the majority of household chores. In British universities, employment statistics for 2011–12 reveal that over 90 per cent of ‘secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists’ are female whereas almost 84 per cent of ‘drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives’ are male (Higher Education Statistics Agency Ltd, 2013). In our home and work lives, socially constructed expectations about men and women still shape what we do.

Recognising gender as socially constructed, however, tells us little about *why* women’s and men’s lives differ in the ways they do. Beauvoir’s work also highlighted that gender identity is relational. ‘Woman’ is constructed in relation to – and in opposition to – ‘Man’. As with other binaries in Western thinking, the two are not equally valued. In both French and English, for example, the word designating male humans (‘homme’ or ‘man’) is also used to refer to humans in general. Man is the norm, the archetypal human, against which Woman is defined as ‘Other’. Beauvoir illustrates this by describing how annoyed she used to get in discussions when men told her, ‘You only think such and such a thing because you’re a woman’ (Beauvoir, 1949, p. 5). The implication is that ‘woman’ is a particularity, an exception from normal human being. She goes on to highlight how long-held this unequal conception of the sexes is, traceable in the writings of ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, as well as in the Adam and Eve story of the Bible. Woman is ‘the second sex’, always inferior to dominant Man. Gender relations are thus inherently hierarchical, and this patriarchy (the dominance of men) operates on many levels.

6.2.2 Feminism and geography

The development of geographical societies in the early 1800s formalised geography as an academic discipline (Unwin, 1992), and established it as the preserve of men. Closely intertwined with exploration and **imperialism**, geography’s practitioners heroically conquered mountains and continents, subjecting the globe to the disciplining gaze of objective science. The Royal Geographical Society (established in 1830) was a male-only club, just one among many men’s clubs situated in the heart of London. It was not that women never travelled. On large expeditions they carried out essential, if informal, roles: cooking food, cutting hair, generally ensuring that the men were physically up to the task at hand (Evans, 2013). Some undertook expeditions of their own. But, for those who did write of their travels, their accounts were often dismissed as subjective and unscientific. Women’s lack of access to geographical institutions meant they had no access to training in surveying or other

measurement techniques required for the production of valid 'geographical' knowledge (Maddrell, 2009). As a result, the knowledge they did develop was not deemed geographical. Only objective, male accounts counted as scientific knowledge.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, movements for social reform developed across Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Women campaigned for suffrage, eventually achieving the right for all women to vote in New Zealand in 1896, with Australia, Britain, the USA and Canada following suit by 1920. More locally, women in the US were actively campaigning to change the cities in which they lived, participating in public life and gaining influential positions (Parker, 2011). Gender possibilities were changing, and geography was not isolated from this first wave of feminism. In Britain women began to gain admission to geographical societies from the 1880s. Having then proven their ability to produce scientifically credible work, women were admitted as Fellows (members) of the Royal Geographical Society in 1913, although this was only after considerable debate.

The second wave of feminism developed through the late 1960s and 1970s, the foundations having been laid by Beauvoir's 1949 book (Bergoffen, 2010). Increasingly, women in Western societies were challenging gender inequalities, campaigning on issues ranging from pay to violence against women. In the 1970s women held just 2.9 per cent of full professorships in geography in US universities. Criticisms of such under-representation began to appear in academic journals in the early 1970s, but it was not until the 1980s that feminism in geography began to gain real momentum. In 1982, Jan Monk and Susan Hanson provided a turning point with their paper, 'On not excluding half of the human in human geography'.

Monk and Hanson explained that geography was riddled with passive, inadvertent, sexism. Given that knowledge is socially constructed, the kind of knowledge produced is determined by who produces it and the methods they use. With such a small number of women geographers in universities, geographical knowledge production was dominated by men, and hence by men's interests. They argued that, as a result, geography was sexist in content, method and purpose.

In content, geographers were focusing on arenas traditionally dominated by men: farmsteads, housing exteriors and gas stations, for example. They were defining research problems in ways that neglected women's lives. Studies of family migration or urbanisation analysed only the experiences of men, yet the different family roles of men and women can lead to very different experiences and needs. Where women were explicitly addressed, Monk and Hanson found that they were assumed to play the traditional gender roles of home and childcare, exactly the kinds of activities that research did not focus on.

In methods, women were often rendered invisible. Households were defined in terms of a man's occupation. Women were difficult to trace in secondary data sources such as the census, their surnames changing between records through marriage. Knowledge was thus being formulated in ways that excluded women, and

Monk and Hanson argued that this meant geographers' results would only ever reinforce the power dynamics already existing in society. The lives of women, or of any other oppressed group, could never be changed by such research.

Since Monk and Hanson's analysis, geographers have drawn on feminist philosophy to more explicitly identify masculinist epistemologies dominating the discipline. Rose (1993) provided a particularly comprehensive and influential analysis. Since the Enlightenment of the seventeenth century, Western cultures have prioritised 'science': rational, universal, compartmentalised, and objective. These characteristics are associated with the male faculties of reason. Their opposites – irrationality, particularity, relationality, and subjectivity – are 'the domain of unreasoning, female faculties driven by mere sensibility' (Dixon and Jones, 2006, p. 45). In particular, fieldwork – often considered to be so central to the discipline – was highlighted by Rose (1993) as 'an example of geographical masculinities in action' (p. 65).

Feminist geography, then, began with the politics of the discipline. This led to the development of feminist approaches to studying geographical phenomena, exploring gender roles and relations, the operation of patriarchy in society, and the ways in which these intersect with space and place. That feminism has a place within geography is now without question. Gender is widely accepted as a valid analytical category (Browne et al., 2013), and feminism has had a significant impact on the way (human) geography research and, in some cases, teaching is practised. Whether it can be said to be part of the disciplinary mainstream is less certain. In terms of disciplinary politics, the practice of feminist geographies is still difficult in some countries. Geography – and physical geography in particular – remains a male-dominated discipline globally. Inequalities still exist.

EXERCISE 6.1

Gender in your local context

Use the following questions to think about how gender plays out in the department in which you are studying:

- 1) Among the academic staff, are there more males than females?
- 2) What is the gender balance of staff among human geographers and among physical geographers? If there is any difference, why do you think this is?
- 3) What gender are the administrative staff you come into contact with?
- 4) Think back to your own experiences of field trips. Have you noticed any differences in behaviour between male and female students?

6.2.3 Feminist geographies

The term 'feminism' has been used rather unquestioningly in the account above, but feminism is not a single entity. There are different forms of feminism, and different feminist geographies. A convenient way to make sense of the differences is to take a broadly chronological approach, outlining different emphases in feminist geography at different times. This risks over-simplification, giving the impression of a linear progression in ideas when the reality has been somewhat messier (McDowell, 1993a). With that caveat, I follow the lead of McDowell (1993a; 1993b) and Aitchison (2005) in highlighting three broad perspectives: empirical feminism; feminist standpoint theory; and poststructuralist feminism.

Empirical feminism

In the 1970s and early 1980s, geographers were increasingly recognising the exclusion of women from disciplinary life and public life (such as waged work and politics) more generally. In this context, much early feminist geography focused on illustrating such inequalities and advocating policies that would change them. Empirical feminist geography, in effect, represents a continuation of the kinds of methods that geographers were already using, but with a focus on women: the 'add women and stir' approach (McDowell, 1993a, p. 161). Spatial analyses highlighted the differences in living standards of women compared with that of men. In urban geography, feminist insights revealed that geographers' conceptions of urban life were male-centric, focused on 'public' activities (as was common across all kinds of geography). Domestic life and the domestic restructuring that accompanied industrial change and urbanisation were entirely neglected. More than that, feminist geographers revealed that gender divisions and power relations were embedded in the city itself, in land use patterns and architecture. Harman (1983, p. 104) explained:

The city has been shaped to keep women confined to their traditional roles as wives and mothers. Suburbs are built expressly for the family; job opportunities are few for many; the public transport system is geared for the movement of commuters in peak periods and it is difficult for women to cross between suburbs; public places equipped with revolving doors or turnstiles render the woman with a pram or pushchair a 'handicapped person'.

Gender shapes experiences of the city, but also perceptions. Gill Valentine (1989; 1990) highlighted the ways in which women's fear of crime affects their interactions with, and movements through, urban spaces, offering an early example of a now significant strand of work (recent examples including Sandberg and Tollefsen, 2010 and Paul, 2011).

Empirical feminism achieved much, but was not without limitations (McDowell 1993a; 1993b). Its emphasis lay in identifying gendered social relations in the material world and challenging inequalities. This was underpinned by a rationalist, modernist mode of thinking, rather than challenging the status quo at the level of epistemology and theory. In effect, feminist empiricism acts for reform rather than wholesale change (Aitchison, 2005).

Feminist standpoint theory

To begin with an example: Harriet Jacobs arrived in the world in 1813, born into slavery in the southern states of the USA. Having lived in slavery for 27 years she managed to escape, hiding in a small space above a store room for the next seven years before travelling north and eventually securing her freedom. Harriet then wrote her autobiography, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861). Through telling her story she hoped to help Americans in the northern (free) states to understand the lives of slaves. 'Only [by] experience can anyone realize how deep, and dark, and foul is that pit of abominations', she wrote (p. 6). Her account of the exploitation, the physical, emotional and sexual abuse she had suffered as a slave, did indeed reach out to the women in the northern states, who added their voices to the growing anti-slavery movement. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006, p. 53) explain: 'Speaking from a position of direct experience, Jacob's words filled the widespread silence and ignorance about the condition of female slaves and challenged many of the misconceptions about slave women that were predominant at the time.'

Harriet Jacobs' knowledge of slavery was not based on a distant, objective observation and analysis, but on her own experience. This gave her a kind of knowledge that was not available to others who did not share her position. Her account of the abusive power relations between master and slave shone a different light on slavery for people who had no direct experience of it. This illustrates three principal claims of feminist standpoint theory (Bowell, 2011):

1. Knowledge is socially situated. In other words, knowledge is developed from a particular position, and within a particular context, in society. Knowledge is shaped by this context and positionality. Harriet knew slavery as a (former) slave.
2. Marginalised groups are socially situated in ways that give them particular insights into society, enabling them to ask more, or different, questions from non-marginalised groups. A situation (in this example, slavery) may look very different from the 'inside' than from the 'outside'.
3. Research should begin with the lives of the marginalised, particularly research focusing on power relations.

The term 'standpoint' should not be taken to imply this is simply about 'women's views'. A standpoint is a collective identity or consciousness, achieved through

shared political struggle. A feminist standpoint, then, designates a women's perspective with a consciousness of women as an oppressed and marginalised group in society. In writing her account of slavery, Harriet Jacobs was conscious of her position as a member of an oppressed group and used that position to ask questions of society more broadly.

A fundamental difference between feminist standpoint theory and empirical feminism lies in understandings of equality. Empirical feminism views equality as 'sameness' (McDowell, 1993b). The implication is that 'difference' is unequal and hence unfair. From a feminist standpoint, this conception of equality is itself a masculinist position: it negates difference, arguing that we all deserve equal opportunities because we are really all the same. In contrast, feminist standpoint theory celebrates difference. This means seeking out 'female' knowledge specifically because it is different from male knowledge, seeking the voices of the marginalised because they will have a better understanding of their marginalisation than an 'outsider' would. Donna Haraway thus argued that researchers should recognise the knowledge they produce as 'situated', positioned in a certain way and in a particular context (McDowell, 1993b).

Second-wave feminism thus signalled a more significant shift in geography, challenging epistemological assumptions. Empirical feminism had continued the tradition of seeking objective, disinterested knowledge. Standpoint theory introduced different assumptions about what counts as valid knowledge and who has access to such knowledge, such that experiential knowledge became key (Feminist Pedagogy Working Group, 2002). This required different kinds of research questions, in an attempt to understand women's experiences and perspectives rather than just describe their lives from a distance. This, in turn, presented methodological challenges. If the kinds of data sources previously used in geography left women hidden, then new sources of data and new kinds of data needed to be found. Feminist geographers found themselves using diaries, letters, oral histories, folklore, artwork, songs and photographs, broadening ideas about what might constitute valid 'evidence' and analysis in geography (Baschlind, 2002; Cope, 2002).

Beth Bee's (2013) study of rural Mexican women's environmental knowledge and capacity to adapt to climate change provides a recent example of the use of feminist standpoint theory. Her research focused on two 'ejido' communities in Guanajuato state, ejidos being agrarian communities in which individuals are allocated the right to use plots of land, with decisions made collectively by an ejido assembly. In Guanajuato at large, just 17.8 per cent of the ejido assembly members are female. Bee's research set out to examine women's knowledge and decision-making, and how these influence their capacity to adapt to uncertainties associated with climate change.

Bee used a combination of four qualitative methods. She conducted 70 household interviews, with women being the main respondent in these, and undertook participant observation, visiting the two communities daily for four months each (Bee, 2011). She then worked with participants to construct 'gender resource maps'.

These involved drawing a participant's house and the resources on which it depended, and then labelling each resource according to the gender of who controlled it, whose labour went into it, and who was responsible for it. Finally, groups of eight women were gathered together for collaborative mental modelling activities, sharing and constructing knowledge of climate change and associated vulnerabilities.

Bee's research revealed that the women provided much labour in the fields, sowing, weeding, helping with harvest and often shepherding. Their knowledge of edible wild plants growing alongside the crops contributed to ensuring food security. Many of the women had little influence on decision-making in the fields, but were conscious to pass on their agro-environmental knowledge to their children – an act that Bee (2013) describes as representing the women's ability to act within the socio-political constraints of their labour responsibilities. In contrast to the fields, the home was where women provided the majority of labour, and had responsibility and decision-making control. Their day-to-day running of the home meant they had expert knowledge of increasing food prices, as well as costs of resources such as electricity and water. The small proportion of women who had decision-making control in the fields utilised this knowledge to inform their decisions about which crops to plant, in order to minimise vulnerability to uncertain climatic conditions (such as the risk of drought).

Bee's research, then, demonstrated that women in the ejido communities have significant knowledge, but the degree to which this knowledge can be transferred into actions and strategies for adapting to climate change is constrained by social and political structures. She concludes that, 'as feminist standpoint theory posits, there is often a gap between what women know and what they are able to do, and this difference has something to do with the relations of power in their families and communities' (Bee, 2013, p. 146).

Postmodern/poststructural feminism

In the summer of 2008, Canadian geographer Caroline Desbiens took her first trip to Salluit, Nunavik, in the Canadian Arctic. Not unlike Bee (2013) above, Desbiens aimed to study the local Sallumiut (Inuit) women's knowledge of the land in the context of climate change. From the outset this was a feminist project. Inuit men, who hunt large animals such as caribou, bear and whale, roam wide areas of land and develop an understanding of weather patterns and sea ice in order to hunt successfully. Studies of their knowledge and the large-animal resources it focuses on attract funds for researchers. The women's knowledge of resources is much closer to home and smaller scale. Berries, plants and fish are less impressive than bears and whales, less likely to attract research funding. Desbiens was starting with the marginalised, the overlooked.

Desbiens' (2010) paper recounts the process of her research with the women of Salluit, and the way her preconceptions about their environmental knowledge were dismantled. Having prepared questions to focus on changing resources, she found

herself setting these aside in order to listen to the women's narratives about themselves; their histories, their families, their lives. Knowledge of the environment was inseparable from these identities. Desbiens had to risk being distracted from her research, risk not achieving anything at all, to develop any kind of understanding. She comments (p. 414) that, 'at times building meaningful human connections during fieldwork is more important than "the project"'. In taking that risk, she achieved some insight into how 'climate change' is framed within Western, developed world agendas in ways that may never address the issues faced by Northern Aboriginal (or 'First Nations') communities.

A not dissimilar story is found in sociologist Janet Hinson Shope's (2006) account of her research, as a White North American researcher among rural Black women in South Africa. Having planned interviews, Shope found that focus groups were more appropriate in a culture that emphasises groups or collectivities. After conducting some interviews with married couples, she realised that she was then interpreting these encounters through a Western feminist framing that emphasises individualism. As she puts it, 'Too often feminist frameworks have presented a view of women and their subjectivities as universally homogeneous. Without cultural and historical specificity, women become an already constituted, homogeneous group with similar needs and interests regardless of their class and racial location, and despite the particular historic contexts that form the backdrop to their lives' (p. 171). Shope, like Desbiens, had to allow her own preconceptions to be dismantled.

The point is that, with somewhere in the region of 3½ billion women on the planet, of different ages, cultures, colours, shapes, sizes, life experiences and histories, there may be no such thing as *a* women's standpoint. In the 1970–80s the dominant feminist discourse had been one of solidarity, an urge to women to unite in 'universal sisterhood' against discrimination (Maddrell, 2009). By the middle of 1990s critiques of this position were well established.

These critiques stemmed particularly from postcolonial feminists. In the nineteenth century Europe's empires covered 90 per cent of the globe, and this has left a legacy of power relations. Globally, Western culture is dominant. Edward Said's (1979) book *Orientalism* used Foucauldian discourse analysis (see Chapter 7) to reveal the ways in which non-European peoples were – and still are – constructed as 'Other'. Identity, knowledge and power are interrelated.

Postcolonial feminists therefore questioned the use of gender as the most important social category. Gregson et al. (1993) identify three particular critiques:

1. Taking gender as the most important social category homogenises the experiences of 'men' and of 'women', ignoring other differences. But social hierarchy is not based on gender alone. Race and class are just as important, and a Black working-class woman's experiences will be very different from a White middle-class woman's experiences. If we ignore social categories other than gender, we are left with no way of understanding how the social relations associated with those

other differences may intersect with, and shape, the gendered nature of experiences and identities. 'Intersectionality', recognising the intersections of different facets of identity that shape individuals' experiences, is thus a key theme.

2. Focusing on gender as the primary social category assumes that it is possible to separate out the different components of our identity, to tell which experiences derive from gender differences, which from differences in sexuality, or age, for example.
3. Assuming gender is the most important social category also normalises particular identities. To base arguments on 'women's experiences' implies that all women's experiences are the same; other social categories such as race only needed to be identified when they meant that a woman experienced something other than 'normal'. In practice, this meant that these social categories were only identified when they were not White, middle-class, and heterosexual.

Such critiques coincided with the increasing influence of postmodernism and post-structuralism on geography, leading to an emphasis on meaning, representation and power relations. Together, postcolonial, postmodern and poststructural feminist geographies sought to destabilise and decentre gender; to dismantle gender as a stable construct, reposition it as one of many identity producers, and to examine the ways that gender categories themselves are socially constructed.

Meaning, representations and power relations come together in Gökarıksel's (2012) study of women's headscarves in the everyday spaces of Istanbul, Turkey. Muslim women's dress, in particular the headscarf, has become increasingly intertwined with geopolitical discourse (including debates about immigration, Muslim minority populations and Islamic extremism) and with religious/secular tensions. In the 1980s the Turkish government banned headscarves from universities, schools and courtrooms. In the intervening years, the development of a veiling-fashion has increased the popularity of a particular kind of scarf. The headscarf, then, is a means by which women's bodies are inscribed with, and produce, geopolitical discourses and practices. Gökarıksel's paper analyses the ways in which the 'intimate politics' (p. 2) of the headscarf play out in different spaces within the city.

Her research includes some analysis of a popular Turkish film, but is largely based on many years of fieldwork (including observation and interviews) in Istanbul. She provides 'analytical snapshots' of three very different parts of the city:

- Akmerkez shopping mall. A product of global capitalism, the mall symbolises and contributes to the growth of consumerism. This privately owned space is managed to explicitly align with secularism, evident in the images and advertisements displayed, and in the absence of veiling-fashion in its stores. Women in headscarves do not feel welcome in Akmerkez.

- The main street of Fatih district, a religiously and socially conservative area characterised by public spaces and 'rooted in history' (p. 9). On the streets of Fatih women of all ages can be seen in a multitude of dress styles, from head-to-toe coverings to headscarf-free.
- Beyazit Square, the site of many political protests including over the headscarf ban.

Gokanksel's work demonstrates the ways in which women's bodies, through headscarf-wearing, become part of the gendered spatial constructions of the secular and the religious across Istanbul. At the same time, veiling-fashion and the variety of headscarves and scarf-less heads on the streets of Fatih mean that women's everyday headscarf wearing serves to disrupt the simple binary distinction between secular and Islamic. Gokanksel argues that women 'create the dissident and discontinuous spaces that can be described as post-secular and post-Islamic' (2012, p. 15). Her research thus offers an example of the poststructuralist interests of examining the intersection of social categories (gender and religion) to understand how meaning and power are co-constituted with place.

6.2.4 Feminist geographies in practice

There is, then, a longstanding tension in feminist research. On the one hand, some feminist work seeks to build the identity 'woman' and develop its political significance. On the other hand, feminist research may operate to dismantle social categories (including the category 'woman'), celebrating difference and the legitimacy of multiple claims to 'truth' (Rose, 1993; Feminist Pedagogy Working Group, 2002). The two need not be seen as mutually exclusive. Rather, Rose (1993) suggests each may be useful in different contexts, each revealing dominations and possibilities the other may not.

The examples described above illustrate that if there are different kinds of feminism, it follows that there is no single way of doing feminist geography research. Rather, feminism presents an epistemological challenge (Aitchison, 2005) that demands careful attention to the whole research process, from defining research questions, to choosing methods for data collection and analysis, to representing the stories or lives of others in the presentation of the research.

Feminist research entails a commitment to research *for* and *with*, rather than *on*, women or other marginalised groups. A principle of feminist standpoint theory is that research should begin with the lives of the marginalised. Given the lack of women's presence in public life, this has opened geography up to studying the quotidian: the seemingly mundane experiences of everyday life. For researchers working in universities, by definition part of the educationally and economically privileged, an emphasis on the marginalised means that power differentials between researcher and participants will always be present.

Feminism rejects the notion that knowledge can ever be objective, value-free, independent of the 'knower'. Recognition that knowledge is not only cognitive, but embodied, has its own implications for methods. A rigorous and critical approach to

research involves acknowledgement of the researcher's positionality, a reflexive awareness of their multiple identities and the ways in which this may impact on the research. As Desbiens (2010) and Shope (2006) demonstrate, this is not easy to achieve and can be uncomfortable. It requires an openness and honesty to confront your own prejudices and preconceptions.

The power relations between researcher and research participants then have implications for methods. An emphasis on research *participants*, rather than research *subjects*, is often central, allowing participants some say in how the research is shaped. Analysis then requires interpretation, reflection and re-evaluation, considering implications and meanings (Cope, 2002). It is all too easy for a researcher to impose a framing on the basis of their prior experience, education and expectations. Often feminist geographers seek to confirm interpretation of the data with participants, giving them some say in the analysis and representation of the research. In some cases this extends to co-authorship of resulting publications.

These feminist approaches to research, emphasising collaboration, **reflexivity** and attention to power, have been taken up in geography beyond those studies directly concerned with gender. Work through Exercise 6.2 for an example of this.

EXERCISE 6.2

Where is the 'global city'?

Datta's (2012) research examines how male migrants from Eastern Europe experience London. Her research does not focus on women, representations of women or gender inequalities, yet is arguably feminist in approach. Read Datta's paper and try to answer the following questions:

- 1) In what way(s) are the migrants who participated in the research a marginalised or invisible group?
- 2) Feminist research often acts to destabilise categories. What categories are brought into question through this research?
- 3) In what way(s) was Datta doing research 'with' rather than 'on' her participants?
- 4) How was 'embodied' experience important in the research?

Datta's paper is available via the companion website, along with answers to the questions. The full reference for the paper is:

Datta, A. (2012) "Where is the global city?" Visual narratives of London among east European migrants, *Urban Studies* 49 (8): 1725–40. doi: 10.1177/0042098011417906.

6.3 Feminism at the beach

In British culture the idea of the beach as a place to visit and 'play', a site for recreation and relaxation, has developed since the industrial revolution. Increasing leisure time, combined with an increase in mobility provided by an expanding rail network, made the beach a popular destination for day or weekend visits. 'The beach', in terms of the popular imagination, is itself a social construct. Variants on the Western construction of beaches as leisure sites exist in different places and at different times, from the British deckchairs, sandcastles and donkey rides depicted in the 'saucy postcards' of the early twentieth century to the 'sun, sand and skin' sensual economy of the Australian beach (Khamis, 2010, p. 384). Indeed, Nagakawa and Payne (2011, pp. 97–8) describe Australian lifeguards as 'a caricature of national heroes who colonise the beach as the natural frontier into the human domain'.

The dominant Western construction of the beach, then, offers potential for feminist research just as it does for poststructuralist research (Chapter 7). An obvious avenue for study would be the ways in which gender is represented and performed within these constructions; from the masculinities of surfing and women's negotiation of this culture (McMahon, 2005), to women's bikini-clad beach volleyball as a spectator sport, or the idealised female 'beach body' promoted by women's magazines as summer approaches each year.

Equally interesting would be a focus on women's beach experiences. An analysis of surf lifeguarding underpinned by feminist standpoint theory might involve interviews with female lifeguards and beach users, along with observations of the roles and spatialities of male and female lifeguards. Questions of who drives the vehicles, who performs rescues from which parts of the beach, who takes on responsibility for lost children and who occupies the first aid station, for example, might be worthy of consideration. Lifeguards, though, are in the minority on the beach. The popularity of the beach for family outings offers opportunities for the study of domestic gender roles and relations, and the ways in which decisions and responsibilities are divided or shared between parents. Is a day at the beach equally relaxing for all?

6.4 Social constructionism and feminism in summary

Social constructionism has its roots in phenomenology, in that we know the world only through our perceptions. Geographers tend to associate phenomenology primarily with the humanistic geography of the 1970s, with acknowledgement of some influence in the more recent **non-representational** geographies (see Chapter 5). Where humanistic geography emphasised the individual, social constructionism emphasises the collective, social processes that shape our perception of the world.

Social constructionists are often divided into two camps: 'strong' and 'weak' constructionists. Strong social constructionism posits that the entities we perceive – even physical, material entities – are socially constructed. This is an anti-realist position that many physical geographers would find problematic. Weak social constructionism takes our concepts to be socially constructed, but does not deny the possibility of a reality independent of us. It is only that we can never know this reality directly, outside of our concepts.

Social constructionism is prevalent throughout much human geography, in that postmodernism and poststructuralism understand knowledge as socially constructed, albeit with different emphases. Feminism is founded on an understanding of gender as socially constructed. Geographers' first engagements with feminism were focused on disciplinary politics, exposing the gender inequalities within the discipline. This then led to feminist challenges to masculinist epistemologies dominating the discipline. Through feminist standpoint theory and poststructuralist feminism, geographers have come to understand knowledge as always partial, situated and political. Feminists have highlighted the power relations always inherent in knowledge production, and sought ways to conduct research 'with participants' rather than 'on subjects'. The feminist urge to give voice to the marginalised has expanded geographers' repertoire of research methods and data sources, to encompass diaries, letters, music, art, literature, auto-photography, participatory and collaborative mapping, modelling and storytelling, among others. The impact of these developments has, at least to some degree, spread throughout human geography.

A century after women achieved the right to Fellowship of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers), inequalities within the discipline still remain – more so in some parts of the world, and some parts of the discipline, than others. Geography, after all, is a social construct and is part of the societies in which it is found. It is no less susceptible to social influences than any other aspect of society.

FURTHER READING

For further explanations

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Examples

- Pain, R. (2001) 'Gender, race, age and fear in the city', *Urban Studies* 38 (5–6): 899–913.
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