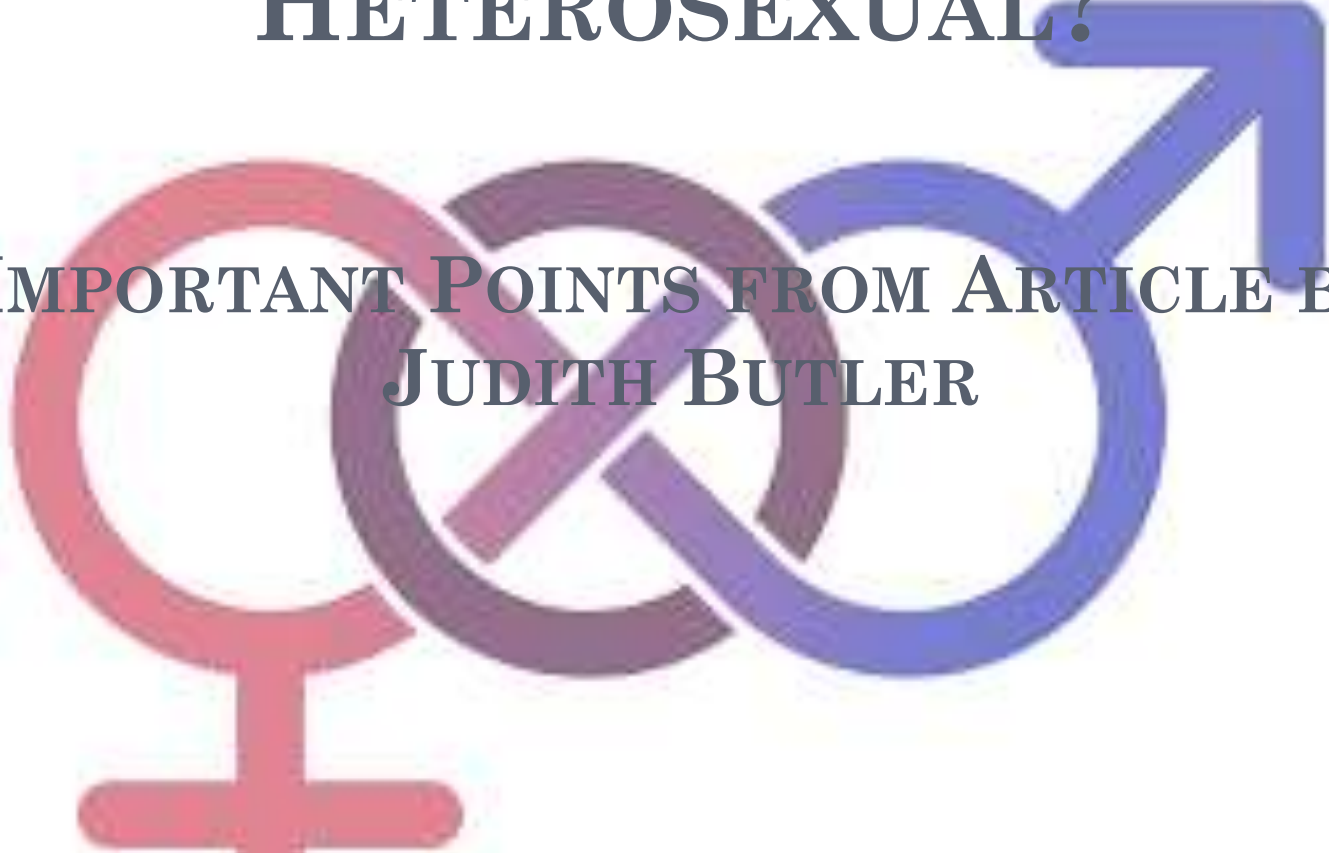


IS KINSHIP ALWAYS ALREADY HETEROSEXUAL?

IMPORTANT POINTS FROM ARTICLE BY
JUDITH BUTLER



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The power point briefly discusses the article by Judith Butler as mentioned. Every student must read the original reading for a better understanding of the article.

A link to free pdf is here:

https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/students/modules/archive/sexuality_and_the_body/bibliography/judith_butler_is_kinship_always_already_heterosexual_2002.pdf



- Marriage is often seen in heterosexual context.
- Kinship is most comfortably defined only in the ambit of a recognizable kin relationship either affinal or consanguineal.
- A classical definition of family is fixed on the legitimacy of heterosexual relationship.
- Thus, marriage is a legal status, a fulcrum in establishing family.
- Human dependency, child rearing, and all viable forms of social relationship ensue from kinship.



- Kinship is no more just based on biological ties, procreation and or state established established norms of relationship.
- The works of Kath Weston shows establishment of family ties outside heterosexual relationship.
- Similarly, Cai Hua in his research on Na of China describes the negotiation of patrilineal ties through marriage.
- However, the state holds the right in actualization of marriage rights beyond heterosexuality.
- Any kind of relationship that is beyond normal as per state is marked as dangerous, questioning the sustainability of cultural and natural meaning of marriage.



- An alternate opinion to heterosexual ties are disruptive to the very nature on which kinship has established its legacy of recognizable group formation.
- The Gay marriages are overshadowed by the questions of legitimization of such relationship by the state which has its own consequences.
- The very definition of 'being legitimate' will fall in the boundaries of state elucidation of sense of personhood.
- One of the most common ways of legitimizing intimate alliance is by highlighting what is to be considered illegitimate.



- It is also important to understand that the frame of legitimate and illegitimate is circled by sexuality in present context.
- Marriage defines the normative attitude towards legitimacy of relationship and also the sexuality.
- A legitimate marriage therefore is one which not only sanctifies the state's ruling on legal nuptial ties but also one which boundaries sexuality.
- Gay marriages become a sexual practice which falls outside the ambit of such normative definitions.
- The translation of legitimacy of sexual relationship is a slippery ground because it creates a hierarchy of what is illegitimate and also the future of the legitimacy of such relationship is jeopardized.



- The acceptance to most intelligible and acceptable form of sexual relationship are ridden by a normative structure of the nation.
- The questions of legitimacy of sexual relations are made intelligible by anchoring it in the debate of binary.
- It produces a kind of jargon which is not coherent with the actual practices.



- The tendency of the legitimating any sexual relationship rests on naturalizing the uncertainty of such practices.
- Judith Butler tries to elaborate on the non polar, non binary position which is beyond the present recognizable understanding based on social practices.
- The debate on gay marriages is not taking a political stand of 'for' or 'against' it.
- It is also not about criticizing the heterosexuality.
- It ought to be a discourse which is not homophobic, one which strives to secure the right for those who opt for it.



- The new normal in legitimizing sexual relationship is to reorder the established meanings of social organization, contract of marriages, intimate relationships which is not a substructure of state's centered narrative about it.
- Marriage historically is a norm which has strong alliance with property rights and a social construction of a conservative form of sexuality.
- An effectual sexual movement therefore is not one which is fixed on just legitimizing the intimate relationship outside heterosexuality.
- Even though the legitimization of intimate relationship by state brings the benefits covered under legal contract like those of health care benefits.



- Such legitimization is discriminatory in the sense that it fails to extend a safety plug to singles, divorced, nonmarried and the like.
- The debates on marriage outside heterosexual ties is also veiled under the ambiguous idea on new demography, opening up kinship structure to a whole new and implausible change.
- Parenting has naturally been seen as clear division of role based on gender.
- The process of procreation is founded in the feminine domain and the maternal and paternal roles are naturally and culturally established within heterosexuality.



- The social arrangement of child rearing and caring is symbolically legitimizes heterosexuality.
- Judith Butler critically reviews this through the psychoanalytic schema of Oedipalization of gender and heterosexual desire.
- She points out that incest taboo as per Levi-Strauss not only maintains exogamy but also maintains the the “unity to the “clan” through compulsory exogamy as it is articulated through compulsory heterosexuality”(Butler ,2002:32).
- Reproduction becomes a means of securing cultural identity.
- Butler puts forth that the idea of kinship has been very Westernized and heterosexual.



- Family is a reproducing unit which is not secluded from the politics and there is a high ground given to biological connections.
- The notion of family, inheritance and bearing child is very much grounded in the capitalism and there is no place given to alternate viewpoints on family except the traditional one.
- The legal benefits that state confers on family system is a privilege for many despite gender. But, for those who live at peril the legal benefits are not just an end to gay movements.

- The article by Judith Butler poses a lot of serious questions on conception of kinship and family.



- The concerns of article are located in the tradition definition of family and the politics of reproduction that surrounds it.
- The variations in kinship is portrayed as an alternative reality that co-exists with the much Westernized, and heterosexual approach.
- She critics the idea of kinship being as just a means to maintaining relationships.
- The role of modern reproductive technology reduces the role of kinship crucial in establishing community ties, narratives of origin of the child, and the like.
- She puts the reader in a position to rethink the idea of family and kinship beyond sexuality, normalcy and pathology.



The article highlights how the family and kinship are no more just about heterosexual or homosexual existence.

They are also driven by a state agenda of projecting an intelligible and normal ideology of kinship.

The state institutionalizes rationale of thinking about family and kinship in a particular way.

The movements seeking legalization of gay marriages are double edged where the legalization is sought from the state which established norms.



- These norms are exclusive. The natural and the cultural are coherently framed to appear as normal.
- The act of legitimization limits around possibilities of intimate alliance within marriage and does not move beyond it.
- The brutal dilemma is either way suffering continues. The system of hierarchy continues.



REFERENCE

- JUDITH BUTLER; Is Kinship Always Already Heterosexual?. *differences* 1 May 2002; 13 (1): 14–44. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1215/10407391-13-1-14>

