Describe and Evaluate the Evolutionary Explanations of Gender Roles (8+16 marks)

AO1
The division of labour in gender roles is an aspect of the evolutionary approach. It takes the idea that our behaviour is an adaptation from the ancestral humans. The idea that men were hunter gatherers and some domestic goddesses who spent their time either pregnant, growing crops or making clothes. This complimentary division of labour between males and females promoted reproductive success and was important in avoiding starvation. This can be see in todays society where men are usually the ones who go to work to provide for their family. Whereas women tend to stay at home and do housework and care for the children. Kuhn and Steiner believed that this male/female division of labour may be answer as to why the homosapiens survived and the Neanderthals didn’t.

AO1
Another aspect of the evolutionary approach is mate choice. This is the theory that men look for younger more attractive women, whereas women look for a man with resources. Research has suggested that these gender role differences are due to the want to maximise reproductive success. Women who are younger and healthier tend to be more fertile, and men with resources will be able to provide better for a family. Ultimately, women seek to make themselves more attractive, putting makeup on for example because they know its what men seek. Whereas men will advertise their status by buying expensive things like sports cars. This shows how mate choice has evolved and is still evident ion humans today as it was in our ancestors.

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