CONSTRUCTING GENDER & SEXUALITY

Dr. Alberto Pimentel Jr
STUDYING GENDER AND GENDER ROLES

➤ **Sex**: refers to whether one is biologically female or male, based on genetic and anatomic sex.

➤ **Genetic Sex**: refers to one’s chromosomal and hormonal sex characteristics.
  ➤ Whether one’s chromosomes are XY or XX.
  ➤ Whether estrogen or testosterone dominates the hormonal system.

➤ **Anatomical Sex**: refers to physical sex.
  ➤ Uterus, Vulva, Vagina, Penis
STUDYING GENDER AND GENDER ROLES

- “Sex” and “Gender” are often used interchangeably.
- It is important to note, gender is not the same as biological sex.
- Sex is rooted in biology, gender is rooted in culture.
- Gender relates to femininity or masculinity, the social and cultural characteristics associated with biological sex.
- Assigned Gender: is the gender given by others, usually at birth.
  - When a baby is born, someone may look at the genitals, label the baby by stating “it’s a boy” or “it’s a girl” and ultimately, transform the baby from an “it” to a “female” or “male”.
- Gender Identity: is a person’s internal sense of being female or male.
STUDYING GENDER AND GENDER ROLES

- **Gender Roles**: are the attitudes, behaviors, rights, and responsibilities that particular groups associate with our assumed or assigned sex.

- **Gender-Role Stereotype**: is a rigidly held, oversimplified, and overgeneralized belief about how each gender should behave.

- Stereotypes tend to be false or misleading, not only for the group as a whole but also for any individual in the group.

- Important to note, even if a generalization is statistically valid in describing a group average, such generalizations do not necessarily predict the facts.
Our gender is developed through the interaction of biological, cultural, and psychosocial components.

- **Biological**: includes genetic and anatomical sex.
- **Cultural**: creates gender distinctions.
- **Psychosocial**: includes assigned gender and gender identity.

**Example**: If a person looks like a girl (biological), believes she should be feminine (cultural), feels as if she is a girl (psychosocial), and acts like a girl (social), then her gender identity and role are congruent with her anatomical sex.
STUDYING GENDER AND GENDER ROLES: SEX AND GENDER IDENTITY

➤ Our culture emphasizes that there are only two genders and that there should be coherence among the biological, cultural, psychosocial, and social dimensions of each gender.

➤ **Gender Variations**: occurs when there is an absence of coherence among the dimensions of each gender...in other words, a person deviates from fulfilling all of the dimensions of each gender.

➤ **Gender Variant**: individuals who cannot or choose not to conform to societal gender norms associated with their biological sex.
Assigned Gender:

When we are born, we are assigned a gender based on anatomical appearance.

Assigned gender is significant because it tells others how to respond to us.

As young children, we have no sense of ourselves as female or male...as we progress through life experiences, we learn that we are a girl or a boy from the verbal responses of others and signals about our gender.
By the time we are 2 years old, we are able to identify ourselves as a girl or a boy based on what we have internalized from what other have told us.

We may also being to identify strangers as “mommy” or “daddy”.

We do not really know why we are a girl or a boy…we do not associate our gender with our genitals.

Until the age of 3, most children identify girls or boys by hairstyles and clothing.

At the age of 3, we begin to learn that the genitals are what make a person male or female.

By age 4 or 5, children have learned a wide array of social stereotypes about how boys and girls should behave.
Gender Identity:

- The feeling of our femaleness or maleness is our gender identity.
- For most people, gender identity is permanent and is congruent with their sexual anatomy and assigned gender.
- In the early 20th century, boys were dressed in gowns and wore their hair in long curls until the age of 2.
- After the boy turned 2 years old, their gowns were replaced by pants, their hair was cut, and they were socialized to conform with their anatomical sex.
- Children who deviated from this expected conformity were referred to as sissies (boys) or tomboys (girls) and ridiculed to conform to gender stereotypes.
STUDYING GENDER AND GENDER ROLES: SEX AND GENDER IDENTITY

➤ **Gender Expression:** refers to how people express their gender identity...the way we dress, the length of our hair, and the way we act or speak.

➤ **Gender Nonconforming:** refers to people who do not follow other people’s ideas or stereotypes about how they should look or act based on the female or male sex they were assigned at birth.

➤ **Transgender:** the umbrella term for those whose gender expression or identity is not congruent with the sex assigned at birth and whose gender is not validated by the dominant culture.
Parents As Socializing Agents:

- During infancy and early childhood, a child’s most important source of learning is the primary caregiver.
- Many parents are not aware that their words and actions contribute to their child’s gender role socialization.
- Many parents are not aware that they treat their daughters and sons differently because of their gender.
According to Oakley (1985), children are socialized in gender roles through several very subtle processes:

- **Manipulation:** Parents manipulate their children from infancy onward.
  - Treat their daughter gently, tell her she is pretty, and advise her that nice girls do not fight.
  - Treat their son roughly, tell him he is strong, and advise him that big boys don't cry.

- **Channeling:** Children are channeled by directing their attention to specific objects.
  - For example: toys are differentiated by sex. Dolls are considered appropriate for girls, and cars for boys.
Verbal Appellation: Parents use different words with boys and girls to describe the same behavior.

A boy who pushes others may be described as “active”, whereas a girl who does the same is usually called “aggressive”.

Activity Exposure: The activity exposure of girls and boys differs markedly.

Boys are discouraged from imitating their mothers, whereas girls are encouraged to be “mother’s little helper”.

Teachers As Socializing Agents:

- Day-care centers, nursery schools, and kindergartens are often a child’s first experience in the world outside the family.
- Most day-case workers, kindergarten and elementary school teachers are women, therefore, children tend to think of child-adult interactions as primarily the province of women.
- Schools reinforce the idea that women are concerned with children and men are not.
Teacher may also be conventional in the gender-role messages they convey.

They encourage different activities and abilities in boys and girls such as contact sports for boys and gymnastics and dance for girls.

Academically, teachers tend to reinforce gender stereotypes.
Peers As Socializing Agents:

- By granting or withholding approval, friends and playmates influence what games children play, what they wear, what music they listen to, what TV programs they watch, and even what cereal they eat.
- Children’s perceptions of their friend’s gender-role attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs encourage them to adopt similar ones to be accepted.
  - If a girl’s same-sex friends play soccer, she is more likely to play soccer.
  - If a boy’s same-sex friends display feelings, he is more likely to display feelings.
- Peers provide information about gender-role norms through play activities and toys.
  - Girls often play with dolls that cry or wet themselves or with glamorous dolls with well-developed figures and expensive tastes.
  - Boys often play with video games in which they kill or maim in order to dominate and win.
- Peers influence the adoption of gender-role norms through verbal approval or disapproval.
  - “That’s for boys!” or “Only girls do that!”
Media Influences:

- Much of television and video programming promotes or condones negative stereotypes about gender, ethnicity, age, ability, and sexual orientation.
- Female characters on television typically are under age 30, well groomed, thin, and attractive.
- Male characters are aggressive and constructive; they solve problems and rescue others from danger.
- Kids Assumption of Gender Roles: https://youtu.be/G3Aweo-74kY
MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY: OPPOSITES, SIMILAR OR BLENDED?

➤ Each culture determines the content of gender roles in its own way; however, cultural norms fluctuate and change with time and across cultures.

➤ Biology creates males and females, but it is culture that creates our concepts of masculinity and femininity and its inherent fluidity and complexity.

➤ In the traditional Western view of masculinity and femininity, men and women have been seen as polar opposites... “the opposite sex”.

➤ Gender stereotypes reinforce the concept of “polar opposites”... men are aggressive...women are passive...men are task-oriented...women are expressive and emotion-oriented...men are rational...women are irrational...men want sex...women want love.
MASCUINITY AND FEMININITY: OPPOSITES, SIMILAR OR BLENDED?

➤ Over the past decades, changes in gender stereotypes and related expectations have been occurring.

➤ Women have moved into the workforce and taken on occupations previously prescribed to men, their self-views and perceptions have also evolved and expanded.

➤ The male stereotype has not significantly changed.

➤ Female stereotypes have become more fluid.

➤ It is important to note, gender-role stereotypes, despite their depiction of men and women as opposites, are usually not all-or-nothing notions.

➤ Stereotypes merely reflect probabilities that a woman or man will have a certain characteristic based on her or his gender.
Gender, gender identity, and gender roles are conceptually independent of sexual orientation.

Unfortunately, in many people’s minds, these concepts are closely related to sexual orientation...WRONG!

Our traditional notion of gender roles assumes that heterosexuality is a critical component of masculinity and femininity...in other words, a “masculine” man is attracted to women and a “feminine” woman is attracted to men.

From this assumption, there are two beliefs about homosexuality that follow:

(1) if a man is gay, he cannot be masculine, and if a woman is lesbian, she cannot be feminine;

(2) if a man is gay, he must have some feminine characteristics, and if a woman is lesbian, she must have some masculine characteristics.
What these beliefs imply is that homosexuality is somehow associated with a failure to fill traditional gender roles.

A “real” man is not gay; therefore, gay men are not “real” men. A “real” woman is not lesbian; therefore lesbian women are not “real women”.

These negative stereotypes, which hold that people fall into distinct genders, with natural roles, and are presumed to be heterosexual, are referred to as heteronormativity.
SEXISM

➤ Prejudice or discrimination based on one’s sex or gender.

➤ The belief that one sex or gender is superior to or more valuable than another sex or gender.

➤ It imposes limits on what males can and should do and females can and should do.

➤ Sexism in society is most commonly applied against women and girls.
SEXISM

➢ It functions to maintain patriarchy or male domination, through ideological and material practices of individuals, communities, and institutions that oppress women on the basis of gender/sex.

➢ Oppression takes the form of economic deprivation and social domination.

➢ Sexist behaviors, conditions, and attitudes perpetuate stereotypes of social (gender) roles based on one’s biological sex.
➤ Extreme form of sexist ideology…the hatred of women.

➤ In a society where misogyny is prevalent, there are higher rates of brutality against women…forms of domestic violence, rapes, and the commodification of women and their bodies.

➤ When women are seen as property or second-class citizens, women are often mistreated at the individual and institutional level.

➤ Example: a female rape victim might be told by a judge and jury that she was culpable because of the way she was dressed.
OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN

➤ The American Psychological Association Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls (2007) found that the sexualization of women and girls is related to numerous societal problems, and sexual imagery can have adverse effects not on physical and emotional well-being of young girls.

➤ The cultural pressures that glorify “thinness” and obtaining the “perfect body” contribute to society valuing women on the basis of physical appearance and not inner qualities and strength (National Eating Disorder Association, 2013).

➤ Models in advertising present women with an ideal definition of beauty that is impossible to achieve.

➤ The images are created artificially by the means of studio lighting, airbrushing, and computer enhancement.

➤ The models in advertisements have a body type that represents only 5% of females.

➤ The average American woman is 5’4” and weighs 140 lbs.

➤ The average model is 5’11” and weighs 110 lbs.
The media presents women in a dehumanized manner, sacrificing their humanity in order to display the artificial ideal.

Women are turning into a “thing”…a “thing” that is then dismembered to highlight her lips, legs, breasts, butt or torso.

In advertisements, we witness the commodification of women…in other words, the presentation of women is nothing more than a product for male pleasure and consumption.

The female body is used to sell a material good.

Carl’s Jr: https://youtu.be/xpWMU0lUmR8
THE PERFECT “BODY”
PERFECT FIT. PERFECT COMFORT. PERFECTLY SOFT.
EXPLORE THE COLLECTION
show her
it's a man's world

Van Heusen
man's world
ties

For men only! ... brand new
man-talking, power-packed patterns that
tell her it's a man's world ... and
make her so happy it is. And man! ... how that Van Heusen
sewnmanship makes the fine fabrics hold their shape.
And for Christmas ... here's the
Christmas tie that is really different. $2.00

You mean a woman can open it?

Most men ask
"Is she pretty?"
not "Is she clever?"

Palmolive
Blow in her face and she’ll follow you anywhere.

Hit her with tangy TIPALET Cherry. Or rich, grape-y TIPALET Burgundy. Or luscious TIPALET Blueberry. It’s Wild!

TIPALET. It’s new. Different. Delicious in taste and in aroma. A puff in her direction and she’ll follow you, anywhere. Oh yes — you get smoking satisfaction without inhaling smoke.

Smothers of America, do yourself a flavor. Make your next cigarette a TIPALET®.

New from Muriet. About 5 for 25¢.

Keep up with the house while you keep down your weight.

Don’t lose vitality while watching your weight. Eat right, eat right. Get vitamins and iron from TOTAL. Now TOTAL has more vitamins than any other cereal. A one-ounce bowlful gives you 100% of the minimum daily adult vitamin and iron requirements — plus a delicious crunchy taste.

‘TOTAL’ watches your vitamins while you watch your weight.

total
Women don't leave the Kitchen!

We all know a woman’s place is in the home, cooking a man a delicious meal. But if you are still enjoying the bachelor's life and don’t have a little miss waiting on you, then come down to Hardee’s for something sloppy and hastily prepared.

Hardee’s

Spread Your Legs!

Enjoy maximum leg-room in the new Pontiac Star Chief
This is no shape for a girl.

That's why Warner's makes the Concentrate girdle and the Little Fibber bra.

We reshape your top with the Little Fibber bra. The super-soft fiberfill lining doesn't make a big production out of you. It rounds out your bosom just enough to go with your trimmed-down hips.

All of a sudden, you've got a proportioned body, and your clothes fit better. Warner's calls this a Body-Do. You can get it for one in any good store.

Becoming a donor is probably your only chance to get inside her.
Look good in all you do

#102 9916 81 Ave (back entrance) | 780 989 0204 | www.fluid-hair.ca
Voted as one of the best salons in the city by Edmontonians in SEE Magazine