



Chapter 12: Gender and Sexuality

Objective's for Today's Class:

The difference between sex and gender

Influences on gender

Gender roles and stereotypes



WHAT IS GENDER?

Sex: Designates the biological aspects of being female or male

Gender: The psychological and sociocultural characteristics of being male or female



● *Gender Role*

- A set of expectations that prescribe how females and males should act, think and feel

● *Gender Typing*

- The process by which children acquire the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are considered appropriate for their gender in their culture



According to social scientists, psychological sex differences are caused by contrasting roles in society

Social Influences on Gender

- Social role theory(Eagly): Gender differences result from the contrasting social roles of men and women.

-Women have adapted to their roles with less power and less status than men and control fewer resources.



Social Influences

- Social cognitive theory of gender (Bandura) proposes that children's gender development proceeds through observation and imitation.

- Also through the rewards and punishments that children receive for gender-appropriate and gender-inappropriate behavior.

- Jen, you are a being such a good girl when you help me do the dishes.
- Bobby, you are a big boy. Big boys don't cry.

Cognitive Influences on Gender

- According to cognitive psychologists, children actively construct their gender world:
- Cognitive developmental theory of gender (Kohlberg) believes children's gender typing occurs after they have developed a concept of gender.
 - Once they consistently conceive of themselves as female or male children prefer activities, attitudes, etc that are consistent with this label



Group Work!

- What characteristics describe female or male?
- What does it mean to be feminine?
- What does it mean to be masculine?





Gender Roles and Stereotypes

- **Gender roles:**
 - Sets of expectations that prescribe how females and males should act, think and feel
- **Gender stereotypes:**
 - Broad categories that reflect our impressions and beliefs about females and males



Gender Traits

- **Instrumental Traits (Roles):**

- Traits associated with males, they describe individuals who act on the world and influence it. (Aggressive and independent)
- As a traditional husband and father, a male would face the task of providing for the family and protecting it from harm. Thus, young boys are expected to become dominant, assertive, independent, and competitive

- **Expressive Traits (Roles):**

- Traits associated with females, they describe emotional functioning and individuals who value interpersonal relationships. (Warm and sensitive)

Gender Roles in Childhood

- In childhood, children learn quickly about gender roles, and boys receive earlier and more intense gender socialization than girls.
- The social cost of deviating from the social norm is HIGHER for males than females:
 - Effeminate behavior in boys causes a more negative reaction than masculine behavior in girls
 - Also peer rejection and parental disapproval



Gender Stereotyping in Childhood

- By kindergarten, children understand gender stereotypes and use this information to guide behavior
- Their understanding grows throughout the elementary-school years
 - They begin to understand that gender stereotypes do not always apply



Gender Roles in Adolescence

- Psychological and behavioral differences between boys and girls become greater during early adolescence because of increased socialization pressures to conform to traditional masculine and feminine gender roles

- *Gender-intensification hypothesis*



Gender Stereotypes in Adolescence

- In early adolescence, gender stereotyping might increase again
- By late adolescence, gender attitudes become more flexible



Is There Any Truth to Gender Stereotypes?

Cognitive Differences

- Some research suggests that males are better at math and visio-spatial skills while females are better at verbal skills
- National study by the US Department of Education (2000) found:
 - Boys slightly better at math and science
 - Girls better at reading and writing

Socioemotional Differences

- **Emotional Regulation:**
 - Girls are better able at expressing their emotions and interpreting others' emotions
 - Boys show less self-regulation than girls
 - Girls are more willing to admit to feelings, but boys and girls are equally able to feel what others are feeling

Communication Differences

- **Rapport Talk**
 - The language of conversation and a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships
 - More characteristic of females than of males
- **Report Talk**
 - Talk that conveys information such as public speaking
 - More characteristic of males than of females

Are These Gender Differences Real?

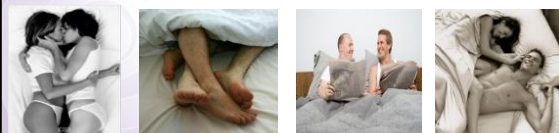
- Meta-analysis done by Janet Hyde found that gender differences were nonexistent or small
- Largest differences are shown in motor skills, sexuality, and physical aggression
 - Males are more physically aggressive in all cultures
 - Females are more verbally aggressive

Sexuality

- Sexual orientation
- Development of sexual identity

THINK

What motivates us to have sex?



Sexual Scripts:

Stereotyped expectations for how people should behave sexually

• **Traditional religious script**

- Sex is accepted only within marriage
- Extramarital sex is taboo, especially for women
- Sex means reproduction and sometimes affection

• **Romantic script**

- Sex is synonymous with love
- If we develop a relationship with someone and fall in love, it is acceptable to have sex with the person whether we are married or not

How Often Do Americans Have Sex?

• Three factors affect frequency of sexual activity:

1. Age
2. Whether people are cohabitating or married
3. How long the couple has been together

- One-third of 18- to 50-year-olds have intercourse as often as twice a week
- One-third of 18- to 50-year-olds have intercourse a few times a month
- One-third of 18- to 50-year-olds have intercourse a few times a year or not at all

How Often Do Americans Have Sex?

• Younger, dating people have more partners, but this doesn't translate into more sex.

- Sexual activity increases through the twenties as people either cohabit or marry. Then around 30, it declines even though hormone levels have not changed much.

• Married couples report more emotional satisfaction from sex than single or cohabitating couples.

- Frequency of sexual relations in marriage drops sharply after the early months and then declines gradually as time goes on.

What is the Likelihood of Sex Tonight?

(Clark & Hatfield, 1989; Thiessen, 1994)

• Men and women were approached by an attractive member of the opposite sex and were asked if they would go out on a date that night, go back to the attractive person's house that night, or have sex with that attractive person that night

- Women: 50% agreed to the date, 6% agreed to go back to his place, and 0% agreed to have sex
- Men: 50% agreed to the date, 69% agreed to go back to her place, and 75% agreed to have sex



What are the male-female differences in sexuality?

In a review of 177 studies of gender differences (Oliver and Hyde, 1993) found the largest gender difference was the incidence of masturbation

Masturbation and Casual Sex

- Males are more likely than females to report masturbating
- Males are more likely than females to begin masturbating at earlier ages
- Males report more casual attitudes about premarital sex than do females
- Males report pleasure as a motive, while females emphasize love and emotional commitment

Are There Other Differences?

- On average, men more consistently experience orgasm during sex than women
- On average, men have a stronger sex drive than women do
- On average, men think about sex more often
- On average, men desire more sexual partners and a greater frequency of intercourse

What is Sexual Orientation?



What is Sexual Orientation?

- A person's erotic and emotional orientation toward members of his or her own gender or members of the other gender
 - Heterosexual
 - Homosexual
 - Bisexual

Kinsey's Continuum





Why do people become heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual?

We do not know what causes sexual orientation. An individual's sexual orientation is determined by a combination of genetic, hormonal, cognitive, and environmental factors

The Statistics

- About 92% of men and 95% of women are exclusively heterosexual
- About 7-8% of men and about 4-5% of women have had at least one same-gender sexual experience in adulthood
- About 2% of men and 1% of women are exclusively homosexual

Development of a Sexual Identity

- An adolescent's sexual identity involves sexual orientation, activities, interests, and styles of behavior
- During adolescence heterosexual behavior gains prominence and becomes the major sexual outlet
 - Adolescent homosexual behavior *does not* seem to be predictive of adult homosexual orientation
 - About 10% of men in college and 6% of women report having had one homosexual partner in high school

Who Is Having Sexual Intercourse?

- The timing of sexual intercourse varies by country, gender, and other socioeconomic characteristics
 - 8 out of 10 girls and 7 out of 10 boys are virgins at age 15
 - 34% of 9th graders report having sexual intercourse compared with 63% of 12th graders

A New Trend

- A significant increase in oral sex (Schwartz, 1999)
 - Over 50% of boys and girls have engaged in oral sex at least once prior to their first sexual intercourse
 - Over 25% of boys and girls have engaged in oral sex on numerous occasions before ever having intercourse
