

SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER - AN EQUITY LENS



Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann
Open Oregon

Sociology of Gender - An Equity Lens

Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann

Open Oregon

This text is disseminated via the Open Education Resource (OER) LibreTexts Project (<https://LibreTexts.org>) and like the thousands of other texts available within this powerful platform, it is freely available for reading, printing, and "consuming."

The LibreTexts mission is to bring together students, faculty, and scholars in a collaborative effort to provide an accessible, and comprehensive platform that empowers our community to develop, curate, adapt, and adopt openly licensed resources and technologies; through these efforts we can reduce the financial burden born from traditional educational resource costs, ensuring education is more accessible for students and communities worldwide.

Most, but not all, pages in the library have licenses that may allow individuals to make changes, save, and print this book. Carefully consult the applicable license(s) before pursuing such effects. Instructors can adopt existing LibreTexts texts or Remix them to quickly build course-specific resources to meet the needs of their students. Unlike traditional textbooks, LibreTexts' web based origins allow powerful integration of advanced features and new technologies to support learning.



LibreTexts is the adaptable, user-friendly non-profit open education resource platform that educators trust for creating, customizing, and sharing accessible, interactive textbooks, adaptive homework, and ancillary materials. We collaborate with individuals and organizations to champion open education initiatives, support institutional publishing programs, drive curriculum development projects, and more.

The LibreTexts libraries are Powered by [NICE CXone Expert](#) and was supported by the Department of Education Open Textbook Pilot Project, the California Education Learning Lab, the UC Davis Office of the Provost, the UC Davis Library, the California State University Affordable Learning Solutions Program, and Merlot. This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1246120, 1525057, and 1413739.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation nor the US Department of Education.

Have questions or comments? For information about adoptions or adaptations contact info@LibreTexts.org or visit our main website at <https://LibreTexts.org>.

The LibreTexts name, logo, and book covers are trademarked by LibreTexts, Inc. (a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization) and protected against unauthorized use.

This text was compiled on 08/26/2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Licensing

Chapter 6: License Statement

Acknowledgments

About this Book

How to Read This Book Offline

Message to Students

About the Authors

Publisher's Message to Instructors

Additional Resources

Instructor Resources

Manuscript Development Process

Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept

- 1.1: Chapter Introduction
- 1.2: What Is Sociology?
- 1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power
- 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
- 1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?
- 1.6: Conclusion
- 1.7: References

Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

- 2.1: Chapter Introduction
- 2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution
- 2.3: Sexual Differentiation
- 2.4: Constructing Identity
- 2.5: Gender Expression
- 2.6: Conclusion
- 2.7: References

Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

- 3.1: Chapter Introduction
- 3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination
- 3.3: Who Do You Love?
- 3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy
- 3.5: Conclusion
- 3.6: References

Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

- 4.1: Chapter Introduction
- 4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives
- 4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory
- 4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
- 4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap
- 4.6: Conclusion
- 4.7: References

Chapter 5: Gender and Power

- 5.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
- 5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power
- 5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power
- 5.5: Shifting Power
- 5.6: Conclusion
- 5.7: References

Index

Glossary

Detailed Licensing

Attributions and References for Glossary Terms

Image Descriptions

Self-Check Questions

Transcripts

Detailed Licensing

Licensing

A detailed breakdown of this resource's licensing can be found in **Back Matter/Detailed Licensing**.

This page titled [Licensing](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

Chapter 6: License Statement

11

When possible, the creators of the original content for this project have applied a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0](#) license to make it easy to reuse our work. Re-users should refer to the attributions and licenses at the end of each section for more detailed information about copyright, authorship, and licensing. Some authors incorporated content with more restrictive licenses. Creators were also free to choose other Creative Commons licenses when they felt it was appropriate. Because important parts of people's lived experiences are not Creative Commons-licensed, some components (primarily media) are included with permission or under fair use (for more explanation of this idea, see [Fair Use and OER: Strange Bedfellows or BFFs?](#) by [Carla Myers](#), [Will Cross](#), and [Sunny Pai](#)). When copying or remixing this book, re-users must conduct their own fair use analyses, seek permission, or remove all rights-reserved elements.

This page titled [Chapter 6: License Statement](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

Acknowledgments

6

It has been the privilege of a lifetime to participate in rich collaboration with a diverse and dedicated team of educators, writers, editors, artists, researchers, project managers, and students with a shared vision to create this book. I am immensely grateful to the following people for their contribution to this project.

Family and Friends

Kyle Anne Bates (she/her), my beloved partner. Thank you for taking care of me and our life during the long hours I worked on this project.

Michelle M. Osborne (she/her) and Toni Belcher (she/her), my faithful friends and colleagues. Thank you for your thought partnership, and for the opportunity to refine and apply the concepts in this book in our shared work.

Luckisha Phillips-Miller (she/her), an amazing educator, and an even more amazing human being. Thank you for encouraging me in my aspiration to be an educator, and for introducing me to transparent and accessible instructional design.

OER team, Coauthors, and Reviewers

To Amy Hofer (she/her), for your vision of creating openly licensed, equity-focused textbooks. Thank you so much for the opportunity to participate in this project.

To Heather Blicher (she/her) and Valencia Scott (she/her), for your wise guidance. Thank you for the expertise, resources, and spirit that you brought to this project.

To Kim Puttman (she/her), for your friendship and your faith. Thank you for seeing me and believing in me.

To Colleen Sanders (she/her), for your patience, skill, and support. Thank you for challenging me, guiding me, and asking all the right questions to ensure that this project achieves its pedagogical objectives.

To Mindy Khamvonsa (she/her) and Katie Losier (she/her), for your artistry and responsiveness. Thank you for working with me to create the visual elements that illuminate this text.

To Phoebe Daurio (she/her) and Michelle Culley (she/her), for your skillful management of this project through its many iterations. Thank you for all you have done to make this happen.

To Veronica Vold(she/her), for your creativity and passion. Thank you for sharing your contagious enthusiasm for accessible instructional design with me.

This page titled [Acknowledgments](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

About this Book

Accessibility Statement

This book was created in good faith to ensure that it will meet accessibility standards wherever possible, and to highlight areas where we know there is work to do. It is our hope that by being transparent in this way, we can begin the process of making sure accessibility is top of mind for all authors, adopters, students and contributors of all kinds on open textbook projects.

If you encounter an accessibility issue, please let your instructor know right away.

Equity Lens

The Open Oregon Educational Resources Targeted Pathways Project seeks to dismantle structures of power and oppression entrenched in barriers to course material access. We provide tools and resources to make diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) primary considerations when faculty choose, adapt, and create course materials. In promoting DEI, our project is committed to:

1. Ensuring diversity of representation within our team and the materials we distribute
2. Publishing materials that use accessible, clear language for our target audience
3. Sharing course materials that directly address and interrogate systems of oppression, equipping students and educators with the knowledge to do the same

Designing and piloting openly licensed, intersectional, and antiracist course materials is one starting point among many when addressing inequities in higher education. Our project invites students and educators to engage with us in this work, and we value spaces where learning communities can grow and engage together.

We welcome being held accountable to this statement and will respond to feedback submitted via [our contact page](#).

Course Learning Outcomes

Educators, students, and future employers all benefit when course-level learning outcomes guide our shared work. When course-level learning outcomes are public, institutions demonstrate a commitment to equitable student success through the potential for increased collaboration and inclusive course design. This project analyzed learning outcomes across the state of Oregon to identify themes and commonalities. Authors used this analysis as a basis for developing course outcomes that could match the curriculum of multiple institutions in Oregon while still considering their local needs and context.

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Explore the social construction of gender through social institutions, interaction, ideology, and identity formation utilizing sociological theory and research to analyze gender as an organizing principle in human group life. Assess various theories and concepts and understand the distinctions between empirical and other methods of inquiry.
2. Examine the significance of gender as an organizing principle in social life, including social institutions and the process of social change.
3. Identify how gender intersects with additional socially constructed categories, such as race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and social class, about individual experiences, collective action, and established institutions.
4. Apply the sociological imagination to gendered social phenomena to understand human behavior, foster personal growth, and better appreciate the diverse social world in which we live.
5. Apply knowledge and skills to contemporary problems and issues. Use sociological perspectives and research to describe and analyze contemporary problems in social institutions related to gender difference and gender inequality. Consider the use of public policy and collective action to address gender-related social problems.

Teaching and Learning Approach

The authors of this book embraced an equity-minded design for structure, scope, and sequence of chapters and chapter content.

They sought to honor the needs and experiences of students who are often underserved in higher education in Oregon. Authors considered Transparency in Teaching and Learning (TILT), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and culturally responsive teaching to design meaningful learning pathways for you. You will find rich images and multimedia in addition to written content. You will also find provocative discussion questions that align with learning outcomes and objectives.

Culturally Responsive Teaching is not something you do superficially—it is something that you have to think about in the deeper motivation of students and your own motivation as an educator. You have to consider culture and all the elements and intersections that come with that.

Instructors, please see the Instructor Resources section in the Back Matter for an overview of curriculum design as well as openly licensed course packs and teaching tools.

Licenses and Attributions for About this Book

About this Book by [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#) is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Accessibility Statement was adapted from [Accessibility Features](#) by Dave Dillon, [Blueprint for Success in College and Career: Oregon Edition](#), licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

This page titled [About this Book](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

How to Read This Book Offline

Download This Textbook

This textbook is available in multiple formats to make it easy for students to access and read. All downloads are free. Look for the “Download this book” drop-down menu on the book’s home page to select the file type you want.

Format	Used for	How-to
Print	Read a hard copy of this book	Order a print copy
PDF (print)	Printing on paper	Print this textbook yourself
PDF (web)	Reading on a phone or computer in a PDF reader	Read and taking notes in a PDF reader
EPUB	Reading on Kindle, Nook, iBooks, and other e-readers	Learn About Sending Documents to Your Kindle Library NOOK Reading App for Windows – Importing PDF or ePub files Creating an ePub Document to Read in iBooks

Order a Print Copy

To order a print edition of this book, visit the bottom of its home page at <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e>.

Your instructor may have created a custom print copy that only includes the chapters assigned in your course, which might fit into one volume. If you want to print just the chapters your instructor assigns, see “Print This Textbook Yourself” below.

This book links to a number of external websites. For those using a print copy of this resource, the link text is underlined, and the web address is inside of pointy brackets next to the underlined text so that you can visit the link if you want to.

This book also has interactive self-check questions that do not appear in print chapters. You can find all the self-check questions, and their answers, in an appendix at the back of the printed book.

Print This Textbook Yourself

You can print out any number of pages of this textbook yourself. You can also print out the entire book if you want to (though it may be more cost-effective to order a print copy if you need the whole book printed).

You might have access to these options for accessing a printer:

- Personal printer
- Printers at your college or university. Often the library has printers that students can use. At some institutions, students get a set number of free pages printed per term.
- Print shop at your college or university
- Off-campus copy shop

Copy shops and print vendors are permitted under the copyright license to charge you to print a copy.

Read and Take Notes in a PDF Reader

If you prefer to make notes directly on an e-textbook (like highlights and comments), you may need to use a PDF reader beyond what is offered in your web browser. Readers like Adobe Acrobat or Foxit Reader will allow you to place comments in PDFs.

If the links inside your PDF do not work, you are using the print PDF instead of the web PDF. Use the print PDF to print the book, and the web PDF to read in a PDF reader.

Licenses and Attributions for How to Read this Book Offline

“How to Read this Book Offline” by [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#) was adapted from Downloads and resources for students by Matthew DeCarlo, Cory Cummings, and Kate Agnelli, Graduate research methods in social work, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#).

This page titled [How to Read This Book Offline](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

Message to Students

We are so glad you have chosen to study Sociology of Gender. Sociology of gender uses the tools of sociology—sociological perspectives, traditional and novel research methods, and expansive theories of gender and sexuality—to explore how gender and dominant gender norms are socially constructed, imposed, enforced, reproduced, challenged, and negotiated.

This textbook will introduce you to the thought leadership, research, and theories of contemporary sociologists—many of whom identify as women, LGBTQIA+, and People of the Global Majority—that are shaping this exciting field of study. This textbook also describes how social movements have influenced theories of gender and how the field of sociology has been responsive to these movements.

We invite you to bring curiosity, intellectual rigor, and self-reflection to your inquiry. As you work through these chapters, you will find sidebar elements to help you understand why sociologists can say that gender is “real but not true,” as well as resources for learning more about topics related to gender and sexuality. Each chapter also includes an opportunity for self-reflection, review, and discussion questions.

Now click the button in the lower right corner labeled “Next →” to turn the page!

About the Authors

7

Heidi Esbensen



Heidi Esbensen is the lead author of *Sociology of Gender: An Equity Lens* and a contributing author to Chapter 10 in *Sociology in Everyday Life*. Heidi holds a master's degree in Sociology from Portland State University with a focus on gender, sexuality, and families/parenting and a master's degree in Education from City University of Seattle with a focus on Special Education in behavioral analysis and reading interventions. Heidi has taught as an adjunct professor of sociology for ten years at multiple higher education institutions and works as a special education teacher in middle school. She has raised two wonderful children on her own while earning these degrees, working, and writing sociology texts. They all play music, love the outdoors, and are involved in social justice work for LGBTQ2SIA+ populations. Heidi is also the Board Chair of a local nonprofit organization, Bridging Voices, a queer youth choir that celebrates and supports queer youth through the love of music and activism in the community.

Dana Pertermann

Dana Pertermann (she/her) is a Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at Southwestern Oregon Community College. She earned her PhD in Anthropology from Texas A&M University as well as a masters in Historical Archaeology from Illinois State University and a bachelors degree in Geology from the University of Minnesota. Her research interests include historical archaeology, conflict archaeology, and archaeology of gender.

Nora Karena



Nora Karena (she/her), who identifies as White, is an antiracist educator, researcher, consultant, and writer with expertise in non-profit service delivery, sexual violence, homelessness, and child welfare. In her research, Nora interrogates White racial formation and White supremacy. In her classroom, she points her students toward the scholarship of women, people who identify as LGBTQIA +, and People of the Global Majority to engage them in questions of identity, power, and meaning. As a consultant and trainer, she champions the operationalization of antiracist policies and ideas that prioritize the well-being of people most impacted by systems of oppression. She has a B.A. in Social and Behavioral Sciences from Linfield College and an M.A. in Cultural Studies (MACS) from the University of Washington Bothell.

This page titled [About the Authors](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

Publisher's Message to Instructors

8

This book is published by Open Oregon Educational Resources. It is part of our Targeted Pathways project, which used statewide data to target disciplines and courses in which to develop high-quality, openly licensed materials with an equity lens.

Targeted Pathways textbooks were developed in partnership with [Chemeketa Press](#), which offers training in textbook development best practices and coaching to faculty authors. Chemeketa Press is the academic publishing arm of Chemeketa Community College in Salem, Oregon.

The contents of this book were partially developed under a grant from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief fund and a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. It is also supported by funding from Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

Tracking Adoptions

Are you using this book in your class? We really want to know! This information helps us estimate the impact of our openly licensed course materials and allows us to contact you if there's an update to the text. Thank you so much for engaging with our work!

Report your adoption: <https://tinyurl.com/pbadoptions>.

Let us know if you encounter a problem

If you encounter problems with this resource, please [contact us](#) so that we can address the issue. Please include the following information:

- The location of the problem by providing a web address or page description
- A description of the problem
- The computer, software, browser, and any assistive technology you are using that can help us diagnose and solve your issue (e.g., Windows 10, Google Chrome (Version 65.0.3325.181), NVDA screenreader)

Licenses and Attributions for Publisher's Message to Instructors

Publisher's Message to Instructors by [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#) is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

This page titled [Publisher's Message to Instructors](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

Additional Resources

12

Google Doc Version of This Book

Link to view-only Google Doc version of this book – make a copy to start editing! [Sociology of Gender: An Equity Lens](#)

Note: minor post-production changes might not be reflected in the Google Doc. Check the web book for the most current version of this textbook.

Detailed Outline

The following detailed outline lists the sequence of topics and sub-topics covered in each chapter. We hope that reviewing this sequence will help future educators who may wish to adapt parts of the textbook for a specific course or project. Please note that the Pressbooks Table of Contents offers a high-level outline of this sequence, whereas this detailed outline shows each subtopic. Content can also be located by keyword by searching this book (upper right).

1. Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept
 1. Chapter Introduction
 1. Chapter Overview: Thinking About Gender as a Sociological Concept
 2. Key Terms
 3. Learning Objectives
 4. Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. What Is Sociology?
 1. Sociological Perspectives
 1. Beginner's Mind
 2. Culture Shock
 3. Sociological Imagination
 4. Sociological Mindfulness
 2. Identifying Patterns
 3. Let's Review
 4. Licenses and Attributions for What Is Sociology?
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 3. Social Sciences and Systems of Power
 1. Sociology as an Evidence-Based Discipline
 2. Critique of the Scientific Process
 3. Reflexivity and Interpretive Frameworks
 4. Let's Review
 5. Licenses and Attributions for Social Sciences and Systems of Power
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 4. Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
 1. Real But Not True
 2. The Gender Binary
 3. Gender Inequality and Patriarchy
 4. Theories of Gender
 5. Let's Review
 6. Licenses and Attributions for Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
 1. Open Content, Original

2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
5. Why Study Sociology of Gender?
 1. Patterns of Inequality
 2. Working for Change and Future Activism
 3. LEARN MORE: Organizing for Social Justice
 4. Let's Review
 5. Looking Through the Lens: Reflexivity
 6. Licenses and Attributions for Why Study Sociology of Gender?
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
6. Conclusion
 1. Review of Learning Objectives
 2. Questions For Discussion
 3. Real But Not True: Check-in
 4. Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion
 1. Open Content, Original
7. References
2. Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct
 1. Chapter Introduction
 1. Chapter Overview: What Determines Gender?
 2. Key Terms
 3. Learning Objectives
 4. Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 2. A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution
 1. Gender as a Process
 2. LEARN MORE: Gender Expansive Parenting
 3. Gender as a System of Stratification
 4. LEARN MORE: Gender Stratification
 5. Gender as a Social Institution
 6. Let's Review
 7. Licenses and Attributions for A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 3. Sexual Differentiation
 1. The Chemistry Of Reproduction
 2. Sexual Variation
 3. Learn More: Sex Development and Best Interests
 4. Common Social Constructs of Sex and Gender
 5. Real But Not True: Binary Sexual Differentiation
 6. Let's Review
 7. Licenses and Attributions for Sexual Differentiation
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 4. Constructing Identity
 1. Sociological Theories of Self-Development
 2. Gender Identity
 3. Misgendering
 4. Let's Review
 5. Licenses and Attributions for Constructing Identity
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 5. Gender Expression
 1. Masculinities
 2. Femininities

3. Beyond the Binary
4. Let's Review
5. Looking Through the Lens: Barbie and the Deconstruction of Gender
6. Licenses and Attributions for Gender Expression
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
6. Conclusion
 1. Review of Learning Objectives
 2. Questions for Discussion
 3. Real But Not True: Check-in
 4. Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion
 1. Open Content, Original
7. References
3. Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality
 1. Chapter Introduction
 1. Chapter Overview: Let's Talk About Sex
 2. Key Terms
 3. Learning Objectives
 4. Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. All Rights Reserved Content
 2. Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination
 1. Early Research: What is Normal?
 2. Real But Not True: Sex Outside of Marriage
 3. Sexual Scripts
 4. LEARN MORE: Racialized Sexual Scripts
 5. Pleasure, Work, and Power
 1. Orgasms
 2. Sex Work
 3. Monogamy
 6. LEARN MORE: Polyamory, Monogamy and Power
 7. Let's Review
 8. Licenses and Attributions for Sex and the Sociological Imagination
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 3. Who Do You Love?
 1. Gay Liberation
 2. Coming Out
 3. Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation
 4. LEARN MORE: Queer Gender Expression
 5. Let's Review
 6. Licenses and Attributions for Who Do You Love?
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 4. Sexual Violence and Patriarchy
 1. Select Sexual Violence Statistics from The National Sexual Assault Resource Center (NSARC).
 2. Sexual Violence as a Social Problem
 3. The Sexual Violence Continuum
 4. A Social-Ecological Approach to Preventing Sexual Violence
 5. LEARN MORE: Ecological Systems Theory
 6. Let's Review
 7. Looking Through the Lens: The Gender Unicorn
 8. Licenses and Attributions for Sexual Violence and Patriarchy
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously

3. All Rights Reserved Content
5. Conclusion
 1. Review Learning Objectives
 2. Questions for Discussion
 3. Real But Not True: Check-in
 4. Let's Review
 5. Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion
 1. Open Content, Original
6. References
4. Chapter 4: Gender in Theory
 1. Chapter Introduction
 1. Chapter Overview: Women in Sociology
 2. Key Terms
 3. Learning Objectives
 4. Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. All Rights Reserved Content
 2. Early Theoretical Perspectives
 1. Structural Functionalism
 2. Conflict Theory
 3. Symbolic Interactionist
 4. LEARN MORE: Major Theorists
 5. Let's Review
 6. Licenses and Attributions for Early Theoretical Perspectives
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 3. Feminist Activism and Theory
 1. First Wave Feminism
 2. Second-Wave Feminism
 3. LEARN MORE: Students in The Civil Rights Movement
 4. Third Wave Feminism
 5. LEARN MORE: Gender Conflict Theory
 6. Let's Review
 7. Licenses and Attributions for Feminist Activism and Theory
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 4. Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
 1. Learn More: Othering and Belonging
 2. Post Structuralism, Gender, Sexuality and Embodiment
 3. Queer Theory
 4. LEARN MORE: PFLAG
 5. Crip Theory and Disability Justice
 6. LEARN MORE: Disability Justice
 7. Let's Review
 8. Licenses and Attributions for Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 5. Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap
 1. Early Theoretical Perspectives
 2. Feminist Theoretical Perspectives
 3. LEARN MORE: Body Labor
 4. Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives and the Gender Pay Gap
 5. Real But Not True: The Gender Wage Gap
 6. LEARN MORE: Transnational Mothers
 7. Let's Review

8. Looking Through the Lens: Queer Theory
9. Licenses and Attributions for Theorizing the Gender Pay Gap
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
6. Conclusion
 1. Review Learning Objectives
 2. Questions For Discussion
 3. Real But Not True: Check-in
 4. Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion
 1. Open Content, Original
7. References
5. Chapter 5: Gender and Power
 1. Chapter Introduction
 1. Chapter Overview: Locating Gendered Power
 2. LEARN MORE: Intimate Partner Violence
 3. Key Terms
 4. Learning Objectives
 5. Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. All Rights Reserved Content
 2. Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
 1. Four Domains of Power
 2. LEARN MORE: Safety Planning for IPV
 3. Social Identity + Privilege or Marginalization = Social Location
 4. LEARN MORE: Privilege
 5. Intersectionality: Complex Hierarchies of Privilege and Marginalization
 6. Learn More: Intersectionality
 7. Let's Review
 8. Licenses and Attributions for Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 3. Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power
 1. Tokenism
 2. Microaggressions
 3. Learn More: Microaggressions
 4. Internalized Oppression
 5. Let's Review
 6. Licenses and Attributions for Individuals Within Gender-based Systems of Power
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. All Rights Reserved Content
 4. Gender in Global Systems of Power
 1. Learn More: Africa
 2. Capitalist Heteropatriarchy
 3. White Supremacy and Settler Colonialism
 4. Impacts on Indigenous Genders and Sexualities
 5. Learn More: Decolonizing Gender
 6. Real But Not True: Binary Gender
 7. Let's Review
 8. Licenses and Attributions for Gender in Global Systems of Power
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
 5. Shifting Power
 1. Social Change
 2. Social Movements
 3. De-centering heteropatriarchy

4. LEARN MORE: Prison Abolition
5. Let's Review
6. Looking Through the Lens: The Matrix of Power and Intimate Partner Violence
7. Licenses and Attributions for Shifting Power
 1. Open Content, Original
 2. Open Content, Shared Previously
 3. All Rights Reserved Content
6. Conclusion
 1. Review Learning Objectives
 2. Questions For Discussion
 3. Real But Not True: Check-in
 4. Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion
 1. Open Content, Original
7. References

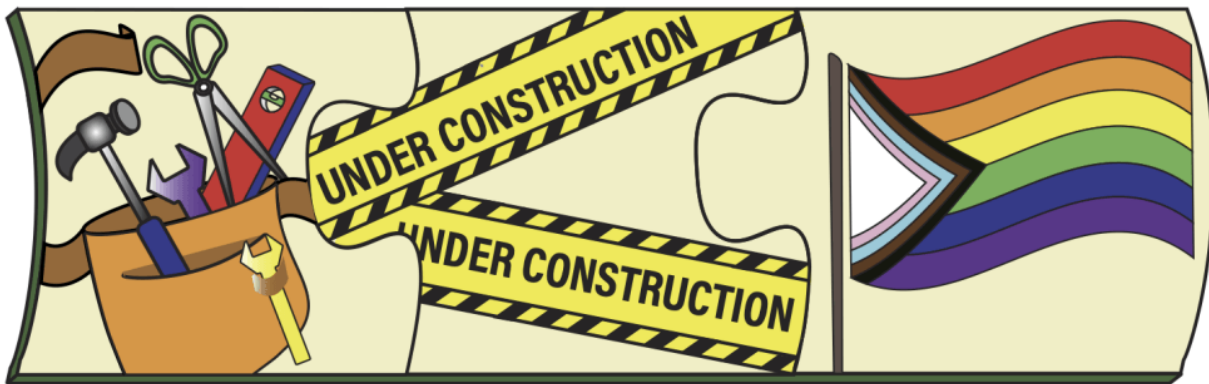
Instructor Resources

9

Thank you for choosing this textbook as a resource for teaching the Sociology of Gender. This textbook uses the tools of sociology (sociological perspectives, research, and theory) to demonstrate that dominant gender norms, including the gender binary, are *real but not true*. In other words, they are socially constructed, imposed, enforced, reproduced, challenged, and negotiated, that:

- ... have not always existed
- ... do not universally exist today
- ... are not biologically determined
- ... maintain unequal systems of power
- ... are maintained at the expense of people whose gender identity and sexuality do not align with dominant gender norms
- ... can be harmful to individuals and society

This theme is reinforced with **Real But True** sidebars that use three interlocking puzzle pieces to draw attention to examples of the sociological imagination in action, sociological research, and sociological theories that demonstrate that gender is real in its consequences but not universally true.



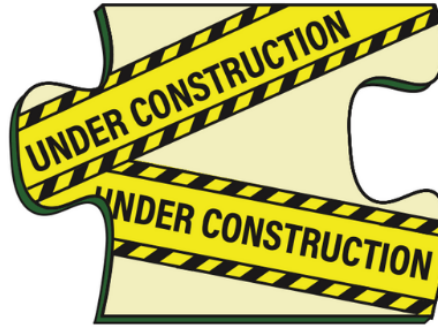
Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

The Tools Of Sociology



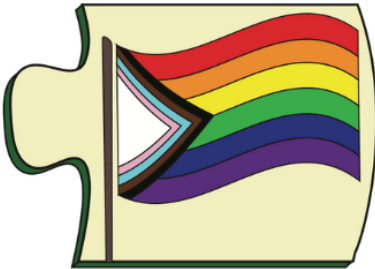
 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Socially Constructed - Not True



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

This textbook acknowledges that sociology has been a discipline historically dominated by White, cisgender men, in which the perspectives of women, people who identify as LGBTQIA+ and People of the Global Majority have been excluded, minimized, and tokenized. As an equity-focused project, this textbook embraces efforts to expand the sociological canon by highlighting efforts to recover and reconsider historical research, theory, and methods produced by women, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, and People of the Global Majority.

The equity focus of this textbook is also demonstrated by centering and celebrating the leadership, research, and theories of contemporary scholars and activists who identify as women, LGBTQIA+, and People of the Global Majority. Special attention is also paid to the relationship between theory-making and activism, as well as the relationship between the evolution of the feminist movement and other movements for civil rights and liberation.

This textbook takes care to accurately and respectfully represent culturally specific constructions of gender and sexuality from cultures Indigenous to the Americas and the Global South. As such, the relationship between colonialism and gender is surfaced and interrogated within the context of an intersectional analysis of unequal systems of power.

As an equity-focused project, this book also uses and models inclusive language. Diligent efforts were made to identify and use the pronouns and identity categories people use to describe themselves, and pronouns are used when people are introduced (i.e., they/them, she/her, he/him). We also try to avoid making assumptions about an individual's gender and therefore describe people as “nonbinary-, feminine- or masculine-presenting” rather than “male” or “female.”

Because this is a text about gender, we use the contested term “Latinx” in solidarity with people who are Queer, Trans, or Nonbinary that have adopted the term, except in cases where cited data sets, like census data, use “Hispanic” or another term. We also capitalize all racial categories in acknowledgment that race, like gender, is a social construction that is also real but not true. To further de-center white supremacy, we use “People of The Global Majority (PGM)” as a generalized term to refer to people who are not White.

Helpful elements for student learning include interactive review questions in each chapter section, discussion questions for reviewing learning objectives, and *Looking Through The Lens* exercises that encourage students to engage with the material through self-reflection. There are also sidebar “Learn More” resources that direct students to optional source material and readings.

Integrated Openly Licensed Course Materials

This book includes openly licensed course materials that fully integrate with the open textbook. Anyone can retain, revise, remix, reuse, and redistribute them. Best of all, future instructors can build on existing learning pathways that are aligned with textbook and chapter learning outcomes.

You can access openly licensed course materials in two ways:

- **Sociology of Gender Instructor Course Packs:** A collection of aligned and accessible course materials shared by pilot instructors teaching at multiple Oregon institutions. Instructors designed each course pack with an equity lens in consultation with an instructional designer. In most cases, each course pack was revised with feedback from Oregon students and an advisory board of workforce members. Each course pack includes a complete course map, an instructor guide, and ancillary materials including weekly assignment prompts, rubrics, and suggested activities.
- **Sociology of Gender OER Commons Group:** An ongoing repository of instructor-created course materials that integrate with the open textbook. Materials may include syllabi, assessments and assignments, lesson plans, activities, and entire course shells. Please note: not all OERC resources are reviewed for digital accessibility.

You are welcome to contribute your own openly licensed course materials that align with this textbook to the OERCommons Group. Thank you for building a more inclusive future for students and future educators!

Licenses and Attributions for Instructor Resources

Author Message to Instructors by Heidi Esbensen is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Integrated Openly Licensed Course Materials by [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#) is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

This page titled [Instructor Resources](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

Manuscript Development Process

10

Outline peer reviewers

- Heidi Esbensen, Portland Community College
- Helen R Fleming, Rogue Community College
- Jane Forbes, Clackamas Community College
- Alishia Huntoon, Eastern Oregon University, Oregon Tech
- Kylan Mattias de vries, Southern Oregon University
- Sharon Methvin, Mt. Hood Community College

Manuscript peer reviewers

- Kemi Balogun, University of Oregon
- Cynthia Fabrizio Pelak, New Mexico State University
- Brie Radis, West Chester University
- Rebecca Scott Yoshizawa, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Workforce advisory board members

- Rudyane Rivera-Lindstrom, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)
- Nuria Gamarra, former Education and Outreach Manager at the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence

Open Oregon Educational Resources

- Phoebe Daurio, Program Manager, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- Erin Wells, Grant Project Manager, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- Michelle Culley, Grant Project Manager, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- Melissa Williams, Interim Grant Project Manager, Linn-Benton Community College
- Stephanie Hubbard, Program Assistant, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- McKenzie Gentry, Program Assistant, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- Taylor Wynia, Program Assistant, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- Jennifer Gardner, Program Assistant, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- Beth Lyons, Interim Program Assistant, Linn-Benton Community College
- Veronica Vold, Open Education Instructional Designer, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- Amy Hofer, Statewide Open Education Program Director, Open Oregon Educational Resources
- Abbey Gaterud, Director, Chemeketa Press
- Stephanie Lenox, Instructional Editor, Chemeketa Press
- Melinda Crouchley, Publishing Assistant, Chemeketa Press
- Kimberly Puttman, Sociology Lead
- Heather Blicher, Equity Consultant and Instructional Designer
- Valencia Scott, Equity Consultant
- Tiffani Tijerina, Instructional Designer
- Casey Twining, Instructional Designer
- Michaela Willi Hooper, Research Consultant and Multimedia Developer
- Jonathan Poritz, Instructional Technologist
- Colleen Sanders, OER Development Consultant
- Chandra Lewis, Senior Research Associate, RMC Research Corporation
- Ben Skillman, Research Associate, RMC Research Corporation
- Debbie Berne, Book and Theme Design

- Petra Bitterli-Stoschitzky, Pressbooks Theme Developer, Von Gunten & Co. AG

This page titled [Manuscript Development Process](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

CHAPTER 1: GENDER AS A SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPT

- 1.1: Chapter Introduction
- 1.2: What Is Sociology?
- 1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power
- 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
- 1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?
- 1.6: Conclusion
- 1.7: References

This page titled [Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

1.1: Chapter Introduction

Chapter Overview: Thinking About Gender as a Sociological Concept

Think for a moment about stories in the news about sexual violence, gender inequality, and gender-based discrimination in the U.S.: the continuing pay gap between men and women, the rise in online sexual harassment, “don’t say gay” laws and other legislation that prohibit discussion of gender and sexual identity in schools, prohibit children from seeing drag performers, outlaw reproductive and gender-affirming healthcare and limit transgender and nonbinary individuals’ participation in sports and use of public restrooms (figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1 Gender Neutral Restrooms. Recent laws that limit the use of public restrooms for people who are transgender and nonbinary have led to an increase in all-gender bathrooms. Can you find a map of the gender-neutral bathrooms at your college?

LGBTQIA+ is an acronym that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and Plus, a continuously expanding spectrum of gender identities and sexual orientations. Canada issued a travel warning for people who identify as LGBTQIA+ who travel to the U.S. because of recent discriminatory laws in several American states (National Public Radio, 2023). This trend is part of a worldwide increase in harsh laws that threaten the well-being of women and people who identify as LGBTQIA+. According to Human Rights Watch, an international human rights organization, “*at least 67 countries have national laws criminalizing same-sex relations between consenting adults*” (Human Rights Watch n.d.).

The previous examples of social conflict around gender and sexuality are ripe topics for sociological inquiry. **Sociology of gender** applies the tools of sociology to explore how gender, sexuality, gender expression, and identity are socially constructed, imposed, enforced, reproduced, and negotiated. This chapter will introduce approaches sociologists use to understand the social aspects of gender and sexuality, including identity formation, interpersonal relationships, social movements, and systems of power. You will learn about foundational sociological perspectives and methods, as well as key sociological concepts, including intersectionality, systems of power, patriarchy, and the gender binary. You will also meet sociologists and gender theorists who have made important contributions to the field. The chapter closes by answering the question, “Why study the sociology of gender?”

Key Terms

This section contains a list of foundational key terms from the chapter. After reviewing them here, be on the lookout for them as you work through the rest of the book.

- **cisgender:** describes people who identify as the same gender they were assigned at birth.
- **culture:** a group’s shared practices, values, beliefs, and norms. Culture encompasses a group’s way of life, from daily routines and everyday interactions to the most essential aspects of group members’ lives. It includes everything produced by a

society, including social rules.

- **gender:** the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences (adapted from Conerly et.al. 2021a).
- **gender binary:** a limited system of gender classification in which gender can only be masculine or feminine. This way of thinking about gender is specific to certain cultures and is not culturally, historically, or biologically universal.
- **gender inequality:** the unequal distribution of power and resources based on gender.
- **heteronormativity:** the social enforcement of heterosexuality, in which there are only two genders, that these genders are opposites, and that any sexual activity between people of the same gender is deviant or unnatural.
- **LGBTQIA+:** an acronym that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and Plus, a continuously expanding spectrum of gender identities and sexual orientations.
- **patriarchy:** literally the rule of fathers. A patriarchal society is one where characteristics associated with masculinity signify more power and status than those associated with femininity.
- **peer review:** a process in which researchers evaluate one another's work to assess the validity and quality of proposed or completed research.
- **People of the Global Majority (PGM):** an emerging term that refers to people who identify as Asian, Black, African, Indigenous, Latinx, and other racial and ethnic groups who are not White (Campbell-Stephens 2020).
- **reflexivity:** a practice of self-reflection to examine how personal biases, feelings, reactions, and motives influence research.
- **research:** a systematic approach that involves asking questions, identifying possible answers to your question, collecting, and evaluating evidence—not always in that order—before drawing logical, testable conclusions based on the best available evidence.
- **sexual orientation:** emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people; often used to signify the relationship between a person's gender identity and the gender identities to which a person is most attracted (Learning for Justice 2024).
- **social institution:** a large-scale social arrangement that is stable and predictable, created and maintained to serve the needs of society (Bell 2013).
- **socialization:** the process of learning culture through social interactions.
- **society:** a group of people who live in a defined geographic area, who interact with one another, and who share a common culture (Conerly et al. 2021).
- **sociological imagination:** an awareness of the relationship between a person's behavior, experience, and the wider culture that shapes the person's choices and perceptions. (Mills 1959)
- **sociology of gender:** applies the tools of sociology to explore how gender, including sexuality, gender expression, and identity, is socially constructed, imposed, enforced, reproduced, and negotiated.
- **systems of power:** interconnected ideas and practices that attach identity and social position to power and serve to produce and normalize arrangements of power in society.
- **transgender:** describes people who identify as a gender that is different from the gender they were assigned at birth.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Explain how the practice of sociology studies patterns of individual and group behavior to better understand the role gender plays in our society.
2. Recognize how social power has shaped the social sciences and scientific process in general and the sociology of gender in particular.
3. Identify the foundational concepts of the sociology of gender.
4. Describe the value of studying the sociology of gender for both individuals and communities.
5. Explain why critical self-reflection is important practice for sociologists.

Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction

Open Content, Original

"Chapter Overview: Thinking About Gender as a Sociological Concept" by Heidi Esbensen and Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 1.1. "Gender Neutral Restrooms" by Heidi Esbensen is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

This page titled [1.1: Chapter Introduction](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

1.2: What Is Sociology?

We will start our exploration of sociological concepts by asking the question: What is sociology? Have you ever looked around and noticed patterns in social behavior? Have you wondered why some things are labeled normal and some are not? Have you thought about why some groups of people treat each other differently? Or do you wonder why toy advertisements appeal to either one gender or another but rarely to multiple genders? Asking those questions is a crucial part of sociology. We can study everything we see around us related to people and institutions through the lens of sociology.

The person jumping on the trampoline in figure 1.2 seems to be having a great time, don't they? It must take some skill and courage to stay upright like that when tossed so high in the air. However, our jumper's success is also dependent on the people around them. They are supported by all the people holding the trampoline. If one of the people holding the trampoline gets tired or injured, plenty of others will step in and help. The jumper and the trampoline holders are not the only ones having fun either. The crowd who are witnessing the jump are part of the event, as is the photographer who made the photo, everyone who has looked at it in the last hundred years, and the generations of people who turned nalakatuk into a traditional community ritual. The people who made the trampoline, who hunted the walrus and prepared the skin, even the walrus itself, and maybe the dogs who pulled the hunting sled, are a part of this event.

We could go on for a long time tracing the interconnected social relationships and meanings represented in this old photo of a person being tossed on a trampoline. Like walruses and dogs, we humans and many other animals are social creatures. Even though we think of ourselves as individuals, we are deeply connected to and dependent on our social world.



Figure 1.2. Nalakatuk, or blanket toss, using a walrus skin trampoline in Nome, Alaska. The interconnectedness of our social world can be compared to the people holding our trampoline. Who holds your trampoline?

If we imagine that we are on the trampoline, then we can think of our social world as the people holding our trampoline and those watching us jump. If we were to arrange our social connections in concentric circles, with family and closest friends in the inner circle, our community in the middle circle, and our society is the outer circle. **Society** refers to a group of people who live in a defined geographic area, who interact with one another, and who share a common culture (Conerly et al. 2021). Sociology is the scientific and systematic study of groups, societies, and social interactions. This study ranges from observing small and personal groups to large groups and institutions.

Each society has a culture, and many complex societies are composed of multiple cultures that sometimes struggle to coexist. **Culture** refers to a group's shared practices, values, beliefs, and norms. Culture encompasses a group's way of life, from daily routines to everyday interactions to the most essential aspects of group members' lives. It includes everything produced by a society, including social rules. Sociologists study culture to understand how social interactions create and reproduce shared meaning.

Sociological Perspectives

How do sociologists “do” sociology? The first step is to develop your sociological perspective so that you can examine the world around you in a new way. A sociological perspective is a lens that allows you to recognize the long-lasting social relationships, practices, and large-scale social arrangements that keep a society stable and predictable.

To illustrate these concepts, imagine walking through the toy aisle at your local department store. Having begun to think about sociology, you observe that the toys are divided into toys for boys, toys for girls, and toys for children of any gender (figure 1.3). What is your opinion about toys and gender? Does it seem totally silly, because you know boys who play with dolls and girls who play with trucks? Or does it seem normal because it seems like everyone knows that boys and girls play differently?

Since your sociology course requires that you engage in some research activities, you decide that toys and gender are good topics. To approach the topic with a sociological perspective, we might draw from some of the following concepts: beginner’s mind (McGrane 1994), culture shock (Berger 1963), sociological imagination (Mills 1959), and sociological mindfulness (Schwalbe 1998). We will discuss each of these approaches in the next sections.



Figure 1.3. What questions would you ask if you were writing a sociological paper about toys and gender?

Beginner’s Mind

Rather than approaching the world from the position of the expert, one strategy for developing the sociological perspective involves using the beginner’s mind. To understand the world around us, we approach the world without knowing in advance what to expect. Unlearning what we think we know, we become more open and receptive to the experience of seeing things through a new perspective (McGrane 1994). This concept draws on the Buddhist practices outlined by Shunryu Suzuki (he/him), a Sōtō Zen monk and teacher who helped popularize Zen Buddhism in the United States. At the core of the beginner’s mind is the idea that there are many possibilities, but an expert may only see a few possibilities (Suzuki 1970).

To approach research about gender and toys with a beginner’s mind, start by imagining that you don’t know anything at all about gender or toys. Even people who have a high degree of expertise benefit from letting go of assumptions and starting with an open mind. Don’t worry. Our hard-earned expertise will still be there for us when we need it.

Culture Shock

Another strategy for developing a sociological perspective is to create a sense of culture shock. Culture shock refers to the experience of disorientation that occurs when someone enters a radically new environment (Ferris & Stein 2018). We can experience new social or cultural environments by examining our own culture from an outsider’s perspective. Even the most familiar things can be made strange when we look at them in new ways. One way to make a familiar object strange is to describe it in minute detail as if the audience has never seen it.

For example, how would a researcher describe a baby doll without saying “baby” or “doll” to someone who has never seen or played with a doll? What does the baby doll look like? What is a baby doll for? Who plays with dolls? How would someone play with a baby doll? Can you see how a researcher might observe doll play differently after this exercise? What new research questions might come up?

Sociological Imagination

A third approach to developing a sociological perspective is what sociologist C. Wright Mills (he/him) calls the **sociological imagination**, an awareness of the relationship between a person’s behavior, experience, and the wider culture that shapes the person’s choices and perceptions. He described the sociological imagination as the intersection between biography and history. It’s a way of seeing behavior in relationship to history and social structures (Mills 1959).

The sociological imagination allows us to understand the relationship between how society influences us and how we can influence society. The sociological imagination points to how what we are experiencing is connected to larger social patterns and contexts.

The sociological imagination might inspire a researcher to question how socialization impacts individual choices about what kinds of toys to play with or how children react when a masculine-presenting child chooses to play with dolls. **Socialization** is the process of learning culture through social interactions. This book will pay special attention to how to learn about gender through socialization. Stay tuned for more.

Sociological Mindfulness

Finally, another way to develop your sociological perspective is through sociological mindfulness. Author and sociology professor Michael Schwalbe (he/him) uses the term sociological mindfulness to refer to a cultivated awareness of the interconnected social world (Schwalbe 1998). Sociological mindfulness helps us to look beyond an individualistic perspective towards an intrinsic interconnectedness of shared human experience.

For example, sociological mindfulness can help us look beyond a single interaction between children at play, or people participating in nalakatuk, to consider how the social impact of a single interaction is intertwined with a multitude of other interactions and reverberates across and beyond the social lives of each child to impact people that they may never meet.

Identifying Patterns



Figure 1.4. Same-gender parents. Nearly 15% of all same-gender couples have children (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.). Does this number surprise you? If 15% of your fellow students come from same-sex families, how many of your peers does that equal?

A vital component of the sociological perspective is the idea that the individual and society are inseparable. It is impossible to

study one without the other. German sociologist Norbert Elias (he/him) called it figuration—the process of looking at the behavior of individuals and the society that shapes that behavior (Elias et.al. 1979). In simpler terms, figuration means that as we study social institutions, the individuals using that institution must also be “figured” into the analysis. A **social institution** is a large-scale social arrangement that is stable and predictable, created and maintained to serve the needs of society (Bell 2013). Chapter Two will discuss gender as a social institution.

Sociologists also are interested in how interactions with social groups and society shape the lived experience of individuals. To a sociologist, an individual's private decisions do not exist in a vacuum. Cultural patterns, social forces, and influences exert pressure on people to make one choice over another. Sociologists try to identify these general patterns by examining the behavior of large groups of people living in the same society and experiencing the same societal pressures.

Consider the changes in U.S. families over time. The traditional U.S. family is considered as heterosexual, monogamous, and married parents living in a home with unmarried children. Within these homes, traditionally gendered parenting roles typically rely on traditional conceptions of gender-divided parenting into things fathers do and things mothers do. Even if all families in the U.S. have only sometimes conformed to this pattern, it has been the privileged standard against which all other families are measured and evaluated.

Today, the percentage of unmarried couples, same-gender couples, blended families, and single-parent or single-adult households is increasing. Extended family members such as grandparents, cousins, or adult children living together in the family home are also on the rise (Hurst 2022). In addition to highlighting the impacts of changes in the economy and other social institutions, these changes reflect changing norms about gender and parenting.

In keeping with the social norms that oblige women to bear and raise children and give men more options about how involved they choose to be in their children's lives, 80% of single parents are mothers. However, 20% of parents who raise their children alone are fathers (U.S. Census Bureau 2023). Increasingly, single people and unmarried couples choose to raise children outside of marriage through surrogacy or adoption, while more couples are choosing to remain childless. A 2021 Pew Research Center survey found that “44% of non-parents ages 18 to 49 say it is not too or not at all likely that they will have children someday, an increase of 7 percentage points from the 37% who said the same in a 2018 survey.” Only 38% of heterosexual couples have one or more children, and nearly 15% of all same-sex couples have children (figure 1.5). In 2019, 292,000 children in the U.S. had parents living with a same-sex partner or spouse (Brown 2021).

Furthermore, advances in both gender-affirming medical care and reproductive technology have driven an emerging pattern of more transgender, nonbinary, gender-expansive people and some intersex people creating families. 2021 research evaluated the reproductive histories of 1,694 transgender, nonbinary, and gender-expansive respondents and found that 210 (12%) had been pregnant at least once, and of those pregnancies. Of those, 169 (39%) resulted in a live birth (Moseseson, fix, et.al. 2021).

By studying patterns, we find trends and norms within a society. We can examine how societal expectations impact the family institution. Sociological research shows us examples of how these social norms and patterns change over time. It can also reveal inconsistencies between gendered norms and individual lived experiences, like families with men who stay home and take care of children while moms provide the primary source of income.



Figure 1.5. Stay-at-home Dads. As more women become “breadwinner mothers,” more fathers are assuming primary parenting roles. What questions would you ask if you were studying this trend?

For example, Noelle Chelsley (she/her) conducted 42 in-depth interviews with 21 heterosexual couples in which women earned 80-100% of the household income. She found that these “breadwinner mothers” experience the same sorts of financial pressures that breadwinner fathers report, and they also reported conflicted feelings about “undermining their husband’s masculinity” along with internal conflicts between being a good mother and doing well at their jobs. She concludes that *“Overall, while adopting gender-atypical roles may promote change in the direction of greater equality, as when mothers get more serious about paid work or feel accomplishment as a breadwinner, this process is constricted by embedded cultural ideals of mothering and masculinity”* (Chesley 2016).

Finding these patterns requires using sociological perspectives to compare current social patterns with past research to identify what has or has not changed, describe those changes, and draw logical conclusions about the reasons for these changes. Sociologists look for patterns in social structures and lived experiences of individuals. This textbook uses sociological perspectives to explore the relationships between these patterns and gender. As you work through each chapter, look for social patterns that reveal differences between gender norms and individual lived experiences.

Let’s Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=354#h5p-1>

Licenses and Attributions for What Is Sociology?

Open Content, Original

“What is Sociology?” by Noraarena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“What is Sociology? Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Sociological Perspectives” is adapted from “Sociological Perspective” by Jennifer Puentes, [Introduction to Sociology](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Lightly edited and remixed with examples added for context by Noraarena.

“Society” definition by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, and Asha Lal Tamang, [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), [Openstax](#), which is

licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Social institution” definition by Kenton Bell from the [Open Education Sociology Dictionary](#), which is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

Figure 1.2. “[Nalakatuk, or blanket toss using a walrus skin trampoline, Nome, Alaska](#)” is in the [Public Domain](#).

Figure 1.3. Photo by Екатерина Мясоед is shared under the Pexels License.

Figure 1.4. Photo by Kampus Production is licensed under the Pexels License.

Figure 1.5. “[A stay-at-home dad taking care of children in the American Midwest c. 2000](#)” by BCantrall is licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Sociological imagination” definition by Mills (1959) is included under fair use.

This page titled [1.2: What Is Sociology?](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power

Sociology of gender falls into the category of critical sociology. Critical sociology addresses power in sociological research, methods, and theory. Critical sociology proposes that society, and therefore, social sciences are embedded with **systems of power**. Systems of power are the interconnected ideas and practices that attach identity and social position to power and serve to produce and normalize arrangements of power in society. Sexism, racism, and capitalism are a few systems of power we will explore in this text. We will take a deeper dive into systems of power in Chapter Four.

Critical sociologists consider how these systems of power influence sociology as a field, society as a whole, and the individual and shared experiences of people. Critical sociology helps us understand how theories and methods can rationalize or challenge inequality. For example, researchers can have a great deal more power in terms of institutional authority and resources than the people they are researching. Research that does not acknowledge how power is distributed in the research relationship can reproduce existing systems of power.

Participatory research practices, in which the subjects of research become active partners in research, can redistribute power between researchers and the people they are researching. This redistribution of power can interrupt unequal systems of power. Throughout this book, we will share many examples of critical research practice related to the sociology of gender.

It is important to keep in mind that rigorous critique produces sound science. We begin this section by considering the value of systematic scientific research. We will also consider a historical critique of the European scientific tradition. We will meet an early founder of sociology whose significant contributions to sociology were excluded from the story of sociology for more than a century, and we will consider how reflexive methods can help make power more visible.

Sociology as an Evidence-Based Discipline

How have you learned about the society you belong to? Common knowledge of social reality can come from at least five sources: personal experience, common sense, media, expert authorities, such as teachers, parents, and government officials, and, tradition. These are all valuable sources of understanding how the world works, but they may not be interpreted the same by all people. How do we know that the conclusions we draw from our own experiences are true for someone else? What if another person's experience leads them to a different understanding? What if experts disagree? What if experts have a financial or social stake in what people think is true? How can we ever really know if something is true?

There is a common misconception that studying people, culture, and society is based only on experiences and opinions. Sociology is a scientific and evidence-based discipline, meaning that sociologists gather and interpret data to define and describe society. Like any other scientific field, sociology has strict codes of conduct, rigor, oversight of research, and validation of any statements made from research.

Research is a systematic approach that involves asking questions, identifying possible answers to your question, collecting, and evaluating evidence—not always in that order—before drawing logical, testable conclusions based on the best available evidence (figure 1.6). Research can be quantitative, using numbers to tell stories, or qualitative, turning stories into numbers.

In the previous section, we discussed both qualitative and quantitative examples of research. The census data about family composition came from quantitative research. Noelle Chelsley's research on breadwinner moms is an example of qualitative research. Rigorous research is essential for a sociological understanding of people, social institutions, and society.

Sociology is a social science like anthropology, economics, political science, and psychology. All these disciplines analyze data from research to better understand how people think, behave, and organize their lives. When we say that sociology is a social science, we mean that it uses the tools of science, observation, questioning, research, evaluation, and validation to try to understand the many aspects of society. In this book, we will use examples of each of these tools to better understand gender.

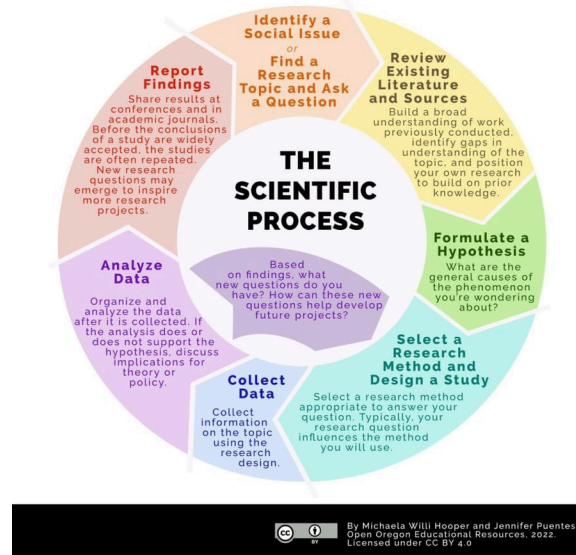


Figure 1.6. The Scientific Process. This graphic outlines seven key stages in the research process. Not every research project follows the steps in order, but this approach provides a plan for conducting research systematically. Careful research is essential for a sociological understanding of people, social institutions, and society. Image description available. [Image description](#).

An important goal is to yield generalizations, which are general statements regarding trends of social life. A generalization derived from research is that Black women have more maternal health complications in childbirth than White women (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2024). A generalization is a statement of a tendency rather than a hard-and-fast law, but can suggest policy changes that can, for example, improve maternal health outcomes for Black women and by extension, all pregnant people.

Of course, generalizations do not apply to everybody because people are influenced but not totally determined by their social environment. That is the fascination and the frustration of sociology. No matter how much sociologists can predict people's behavior, attitudes, and life chances, many people will not fit the predictions. These exceptions to generalizations are also important to sociologists. This is especially true of gender when so many of the generalizations that our society takes for granted do not match the lived experience of a significant portion of the population.

Critical research should also question the assumptions that can be hidden in generalizations and account for how social power influences those assumptions. High-quality, peer-reviewed research strives for objectivity but can not be totally neutral because research happens in institutions shaped by power. Therefore, critical sociology also questions the power structures of research institutions, asking whose perspective may have been overlooked or even suppressed. In the next section, we will examine the scientific process to identify some of the consequences of institutional bias in social sciences.

Critique of the Scientific Process

Social Sciences, including economics, psychology, political science, and sociology, emerged from the European "Age of Enlightenment." During this period, spanning the 17th and 18th centuries, natural scientists in England and Europe identified and applied an objective, systematic, and reproducible scientific method, described in the previous section, which drove rapid advancements in physics, astronomy, chemistry, biology, and medicine.

Until this time, Europeans primarily relied on religious institutions to explain human behavior and the proper ordering of society. Early European sociologists like Harriet Martineau (she/her, 1802 -1876) and Auguste Comte (he/him, 1798–1857) set out to define a more rational science of society. By applying rational scientific methods—questioning, observing, and testing hypotheses—to the study of society, early social scientists developed new ways to describe and theorize about human behavior and human society.

The European Enlightenment was inspired by indigenous intellectuals from European colonies and by ancient Greek philosophers and poets (Graeber and Wengrow 2023). This movement did a lot to advance rational scientific inquiry, but some of the science that was produced during the era was not always rational or unbiased. Scientific societies and universities excluded most women and non-European men and were financially supported by profits from brutal colonial enterprises in Asia, the Americas, and the African Continent.

Unacknowledged biases about human difference produced ethnocentric theories about racial hierarchy that falsely assumed the cultural, intellectual, and physical superiority of White men. These theories and practices reinforced existing systems of power, justified the marginalization of non-European civilizations, facilitated the continuing enslavement, exploitation, and extermination of non-European people, and fueled the global expansion of European colonization.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=356#oembed-1>

https://youtu.be/D_8bnTiUGl0

Figure 1.7. Watch this video for a quick overview of the emerging term, **People of the Global Majority**. How does this information shift your understanding of the term minority? [Transcript](#).

In this book, we use the term **People of the Global Majority (PGM)** (figure 1.7). This is an emerging term that refers to people who identify as Asian, Black, African, Indigenous, Latinx, and other racial and ethnic groups who are not White (Campbell-Stephens 2020). Critical scholarship by PGM, People who are LGBTQIA+, and women have thoroughly discredited these sexist and racist theories. However, the legacy of those theories is still present in terms of the persistent global marginalization of people who are not cisgender White men.

While the Enlightenment-era emphasis on a systematic rational inquiry led to significant advances in science, Europeans neither discovered nor invented science. Neither did the Ancient Greeks who inspired them. Clever and curious people have always engaged in forms of systematic rational inquiry. The ethnocentric biases of European scientists led to the exclusion, erasure, or appropriation of many scientific and philosophical ideas developed by technologically advanced societies in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Similarly, most women were excluded from European universities and scientific societies until the mid-20th century, and the contributions of the few who were able to do research were often minimized or suppressed.

For example, Martineau translated and edited Comte's six-volume *Course on Positive Philosophy* (1842) from French to English. Her translation, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte* (1853) is credited with making Comte's dense writing accessible to a broad audience and helped to establish him as a founder of sociology. She also published several important original texts that explored the conditions of women and argued for equality and the abolition of enslavement. Her original work was criticized by the powerful men who dominated social sciences in her time. After her death, her earlier writings were suppressed and forgotten. Her contribution to the field was reduced to that of Comte's translator until feminist scholars in the late 20th century revived her work (figure 1.8).

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=356#oembed-2>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CcvOgHCM198&t=217s>

Figure 1.8. **Harriet Martineau and Sociology** [Streaming Video]. Even though Martineau was popular while she was alive, most of her work was ignored until women began to engage in critical sociology. Why do you think men studying similar topics ignored her work? [Transcript](#).

Reflexivity and Interpretive Frameworks

What are you biased about? Have you ever had someone point out a bias you weren't aware of? Biases and blindspots are like opinions—we all have them. Biases are our prejudices. They can be benign, like a preference for cats, or deliberate and harmful, like a deeply held belief that a certain group of people cannot be trusted. Blindspots are biases that we aren't conscious of and are sometimes called implicit biases. Most people agree that good science should be objective and unbiased, but how do we know if it is? How can we know that a researcher isn't allowing bias to influence research?

Peer review is a process in which researchers evaluate one another's work to assess the validity and quality of proposed or completed research. Peer review can be an important check on bias that comes after research is complete, but it is also important for a researcher to be engaged in self-reflection at the beginning of the research design process. **Reflexivity** is a practice of self-reflection to examine how personal biases, feelings, reactions, and motives influence research. Reflexivity does not necessarily eliminate personal biases, but it does make them more visible. When bias is made visible, its impact can be reduced. Reflexivity also takes the perspective of research participants into account, making power dynamics between researchers and research participants more visible. Reflexivity and reflexive research practices can interrupt bias in research design.

Interpretive frameworks are reflexive approaches to research that rely on detailed observation and produce findings that are more descriptive and qualitative. Rather than formulating a hypothesis and method for testing it, an interpretive researcher will develop approaches to explore a topic. Direct observation, interaction with participants, and collecting stories, are examples of interpretive research. Interpretive research also includes participatory methods like Photo Voice, which invites research participants to document their lived experience (figure 1.9).

Participatory research allows research participants more power to describe and interpret their experiences, and to decide how research is used. Participatory interpretive methods can reduce bias, interrupt dominant power structures, and produce superior data. Look for other examples of participatory research as you work through this book.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=356#oembed-3>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAszQx62XxE>

Figure 1.9. Watch this 3:36 minute video to learn more about [PhotoVoice \[Streaming Video\]](#), which uses an interpretive research method called participatory research. Participatory research invites research participants to use photographs to document their lived experiences, which can produce rich qualitative findings. How might PhotoVoice reduce the impact of researchers' biases? [Transcript](#).

In addition to defining and describing systems of power, the sociology of gender advances sociological theories, methods, and conclusions that illuminate and interrupt inequality and oppression, including recovering and amplifying the perspectives of people who have been excluded from sociology, both as researchers and as subjects of research. As you will see in the next section, critical sociologists in the tradition of Martineau have been describing a sociology of gender since its earliest theories.

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=356#h5p-2>

Licenses and Attributions for Social Sciences and Systems of Power

Open Content, Original

"Social Sciences and Systems of Power" by Noraarena is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#).

"Social Sciences and Systems of Power Question Set" was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

"Sociology as an Evidence-Based Discipline" is adapted from:

- "Sociology as a Social Science" by the University of Minnesota, in [Sociology](#), which is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#).
- "Approaches to Sociological Research" by Jennifer Puentes, [Introduction to Sociology](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Adaptations by Noraarena, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#), include remixing and editing for context.

"Reflexivity and Interpretive Frameworks" is adapted from "Approaches to Sociological Research" by Jennifer Puentes, [Introduction to Sociology](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Remixed and edited for context by Noraarena.

Figure 1.6. "The Scientific Process" by Jennifer Puentes and Michaela Willi Hooper, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“People of the Global Majority” definition by [Campbell-Stephens \(2020\)](#) is included under fair use.

Figure 1.7. “GLOBAL MAJORITY- THIS VIDEO IS SO BEAUTIFUL” by [Rosemary Campbell-Stephens](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 1.8. “Harriet Martineau and Sociology” by [Learning the Social Sciences](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 1.9. “PhotoVoice” by [SecGovGroup](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender

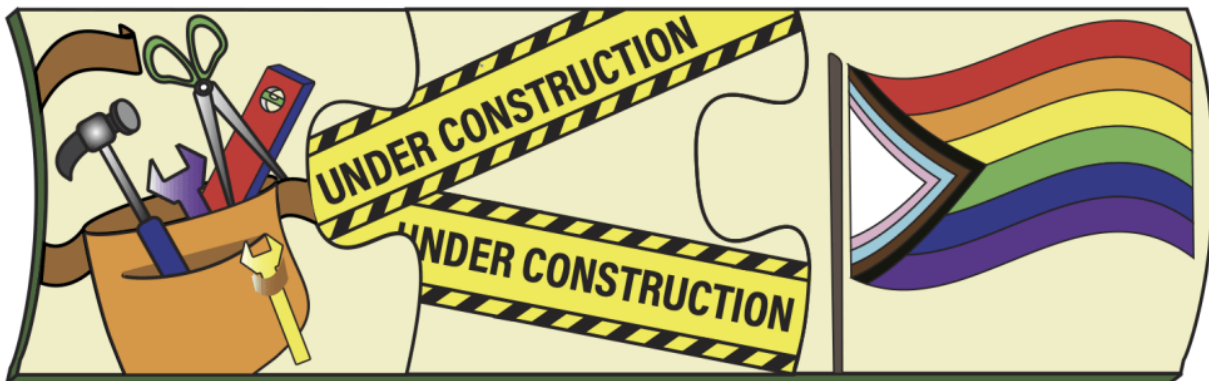
Gender is the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences. When we say that gender is socially constructed, we are saying that the meanings of gender are created, imposed, performed, enforced, reproduced, and negotiated in our shared culture, social norms, and social interactions. In other words, we learn and teach what gender is every day. This shared social learning and teaching is called socialization. Sociology of gender reveals that gender is real but it is not true.

Gender is real because it is a consequential aspect of identity that shapes how people are treated and can determine their general standing in society. Gender is commonly, but not always, divided into two categories: women and men. Gender differences are visible in behavior, emotions, relationships, and in the organization of social institutions such as family and the workforce.

Understanding that gender differences are socially constructed and therefore not universally true, helps us make sense of the shared expectations we have about how people with different gender identities should look and behave. It can also help us understand why people respond so strongly when our common understandings of gender are challenged by people whose lived experience, sexuality, and gender expression diverge from what we have been socialized to accept. By studying how gender is socially constructed, sociologists can explore the meanings and consequences of gender and sexualities, like gender inequality.

In this section, we will consider how gender is constructed and maintained. This section also introduces some foundational gender theories, which we will delve deeper into in the coming chapters.

Real But Not True



Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

We take it for granted that the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences are based on objective fact, and that are therefore true. Throughout this book, we will use these puzzle pieces to draw attention to examples of the sociological imagination in action, sociological research, and sociological theories that demonstrate that gender is real in its consequences but not universally true.

The Tools Of Sociology



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

The tools of sociology include:

- Sociological Imagination
- Research-based Evidence
- Social Theory

For example, in the section, Identifying Patterns, you learned that Noelle Chelsley's research on "breadwinner moms" was based on 42 in-depth interviews with 21 heterosexual couples, in which women earned 80-100% of the household income.

Socially Constructed - Not True



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

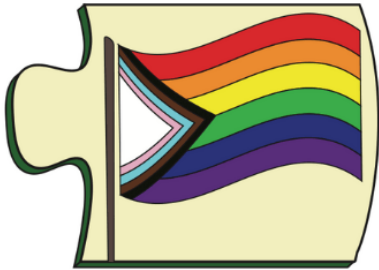
We can recognize that socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences are not universally true when we can demonstrate that they:

- Change over time
- Are not the same in all societies
- Are imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, or challenged through social interactions.

Returning to Chesley's research, she found that mothers who were serious about paid work and felt accomplished breadwinners could be understood as having taken on non-typical gender roles. She speculated that by taking on gender roles that are outside of accepted norms, these women may be promoting "change in the direction of greater equality" (Chesley 2016).

This is an example of gender norms being challenged and renegotiated and, therefore, an example of social construction. The gender norm that men should be the breadwinner is based on “embedded cultural ideals of mothering and masculinity.” It is not universally true; it is a social construction.

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Even though the gender norm that men should be the breadwinner is socially constructed and not universally true, challenging this norm has real consequences. The women in Chelsey’s research reported conflicted feelings about “undermining their husband’s masculinity” along with internal conflicts between being a good mother and doing well at their jobs, and Chelsey concluded that “embedded cultural ideals of mothering and masculinity” constricted their ability to achieve greater equality.

As you work through this book, be on the lookout for other examples of socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences and for the ways that tools of sociology can be used to reveal them as social constructions that are not universally true, but have real consequences.

The Gender Binary

The **gender binary** is a limited system of gender classification in which gender can only be masculine or feminine. This way of thinking about gender is specific to certain cultures and is not culturally, historically, or biologically universal. It is real but not true. Nonbinary gender classification systems may include more than two genders or place gender on a multi-dimensional spectrum of possibilities. People who identify as nonbinary or gender expansive may identify with no gender, a mix of multiple genders, a third or fourth gender, or their experience and expression of gender may change over time.

Transgender describes people who identify as a gender that is different from the gender they were assigned at birth. **Cisgender** describes people who identify as the same gender they were assigned at birth. **Sexual orientation** describes a person’s emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people; it is often used to signify the relationship between a person’s gender identity and the gender identities to which a person is most attracted (Learning for Justice 2024). **Heteronormativity** is the social enforcement of heterosexuality, in which there are only two genders, that these genders are opposites, and that any sexual activity between people of the same gender is deviant or unnatural. We will describe gender and sexuality more fully in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

Many societies have understood gender as nonbinary, expansive, and/or fluid. For example, some Indigenous people in the Americas have used the term “Two Spirit” to refer to individuals who occasionally or permanently dress and live as a “third gender.” Historically, people who are Two Spirit also have taken on labor roles traditionally associated with a masculine or feminine gender expression that is different from the gender they were assigned at birth, a practice often forbidden and harshly punished in societies with rigidly binary gender roles.

Samoan society has also traditionally accommodated a third gender, fa’afafine, which translates as “the way of the woman.” It is a term used to describe individuals born with male sex characteristics but who embody both masculine and feminine traits. Fa’afafines may have sexual partners who identify as men or women. Like Two Spirit People in the Americas, Fa’afafines have

traditionally been considered an important part of Samoan culture (Poasa 1992). We'll explore more transgender, nonbinary, and gender-expansive identities in Chapter Five.

"Two-Spirit" and Fa'afafines are only two of the many different ways non-binary gender has been recognized around the world. By exploring how gender is constructed, and the role of gender in systems of power, Sociology of Gender makes an important contribution to the larger sociological project of understanding the causes and consequences of social inequality.



Figure 1.10. Auckland Pride Parade. Like many indigenous gender identities, Samoan Fa'afafine are important to the cultural life of their community. How are LGBTQIA+ people important to the cultural life of your community?

Gender Inequality and Patriarchy

In this section, we will learn about gender inequality in the US and around the world. **Gender inequality** is the unequal distribution of power and resources based on gender. We will also learn how the study of gender inequality in its many forms is a key topic of the sociology of gender.

As you think about the data in this section, notice that most of the data assumes the gender binary. The omission of trans and non-binary genders from most of the available data on gender equality is itself an indicator of gender inequality. The data that is available suggests that worldwide, trans and nonbinary people are routinely excluded from full economic and political participation and access to healthcare and are subject to high rates of violence (United Nations 2019).

Worldwide, gender inequality has been well documented. The World Economic Forum (WEF) categorizes gender inequality in terms of economic participation, mobility, workplace, pay, marriage, parenthood, entrepreneurship, assets, and pensions. In 2020, the WEF assessed 190 countries and found that women only have the same rights as men in 14 countries (WEF 2020). This political inequality translates to women representing 60 percent of chronically hungry people, over two-thirds of the world's 796 million illiterate people, and less than 20 percent of the world's landholders Facts & Figures (n.d.). There is a specific history of gender inequality in the United States. When looking to the past, it would appear that society has made great strides in terms of abolishing some of the most blatant forms of gender inequality (see timeline below) but gender inequality still permeates many aspects of society.

- Before 1809—Women could not execute a will
- Before 1840—Women were not allowed to own or control property
- Before 1920—Women were not permitted to vote
- Before 1963—Employers could legally pay a woman less than a man for the same work

Despite making up nearly half (49.8 percent) of payroll employment, men vastly outnumber women in authoritative, powerful, and, therefore, high-earning jobs. Even when a woman's employment status is equal to a man's, she will generally make only 81 cents for every dollar her male counterpart makes (GPGR 2024). Women in the paid labor force also still do the majority of the unpaid work at home. On an average day, 86 percent of women (compared to 71 percent of men) spend time doing household

management activities (American Time Use Survey Summary 2024). Can you see how this unpaid double duty can keep working women in a subordinate role in the family (Hochschild & Machung 1989)?

Part of the gender pay gap can be attributed to unique barriers faced by women regarding work experience and promotion opportunities. A mother of young children is more likely to drop out of the labor force for several years or work on a reduced schedule than the father of young children. As a result, women in their 30s and 40s are likely, on average, to have less job experience than men. This effect becomes more evident when considering the pay rates of two groups of women: those who did *not* leave the workforce and those who did. In the United States, childless women with the same education and experience levels as men are typically paid a closer (but not exact) parity to men. However, women with families and children are paid less. Mothers are recommended a 7.9 percent lower starting salary than non-mothers, which is 8.6 percent lower than men (Correll, et al, 2007).

The gender pay gap in the US grows even wider when race is considered. In 2020, compared to every dollar that White, non-Hispanic men made, Latinas earned 57 cents, Native American women earned 60 cents, and Black women earned 64 cents (U. S. Census 2020a). The census does not yet count trans and non-binary genders.

Political representation can impact gender inequality. The number of women elected to serve in Congress has increased over the years but does not yet accurately reflect the general population. For example, in 2018, the population of the United States was 49 percent male and 51 percent female, but the population of Congress was 78.8 percent male and 21.2 percent female (Conerly 2021). Over the years, the number of women in the federal government has increased, but until it accurately reflects the population, there will be inequalities in our laws.

In the U.S., where we like to believe that all people are created equal, it is a provocative statement to assert that our society was founded and continues to function as a patriarchy. Patriarchy is a system in which masculine people hold more social power and status than feminine and nonbinary people. **Patriarchy** is literally the rule of fathers. A patriarchal society is one where characteristics associated with masculinity signify more power and status than those associated with femininity.

In patriarchal societies, gender differences produce gender inequality. Characteristics that are highly valued in women and girls, such as empathy, nurturance, and care for others, are considered to be weaknesses in men and boys, so many patriarchal cultures have traditionally considered trans- and nonbinary genders to be transgressive. Because men and boys in patriarchal societies are held in higher social regard than other genders, they tend to have more advantages and rights, as demonstrated in the previous section.

While gendered norms for labor exist in both patriarchal and matriarchal societies, feminine work in patriarchal societies tends to be less valued, and women tend to have less choice about working outside of the traditional domestic sphere. Feminine work is also generally not as well compensated as masculine work when they do. An exception to this construct sometimes exists in highly stratified patriarchal societies where more affluent women have access to high-paying, powerful careers, where they still may not be compensated at the same rates as men. No matter the opportunities available to them in the workplace, women in patriarchal societies still bear primary responsibilities for the care of home and children, although more affluent women may be able to hire one or more less affluent women to tend to domestic duties.

A core concern of sociology is understanding the reasons for inequality in human society. The three major sociological theories, structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism, each explain inequality differently. In simplest terms, structural functionalism accepts inequality as inevitable and even beneficial in societies. Conflict theory views inequality as the dysfunctional result of capitalism's competition for limited resources. Interactionists look at how inequality is created, maintained, and interrupted or maintained by the arrangements of power in social interaction. Feminist theory considers the relationships between power and gender.

Sociology of gender is specifically concerned with applying sociological theory to understand and address gender inequality. Because sociology of gender is a critical approach, it aligns with the critical theory's premise that gender inequality is dysfunctional, but also draws from structural theories to make dominant power structures visible, and from interactionist theory to describe the dynamics of social power that produce and sustain gender inequality.

Sociology of gender demonstrates that gender inequality is not rooted in biology. While humans with female sex traits may generally be physically smaller than humans with male sex traits, this generalization neither explains nor justifies the unequal wealth, health outcomes, education, political power, and rights of self-determination experienced by women, girls, and people who are LGBTQIA +. Rather these conditions are socially created and normalized patriarchy and other systems of power.

Theories of Gender

While sociologists have been theorizing about gender for as long as there have been sociologists, sociology of gender is a relatively new and exciting field. It has emerged to meet a social moment when issues of global inequality have become more urgent than ever. This section sketches out some key moments in the development of sociology of gender.

The term “gender role” was coined by John Money (he/his) back in 1955. He defined gender roles as “all those things that a person says or does to disclose himself or herself as having the status of boy or man, girl or woman” (Money 1955). Many of the sociology of gender theories and much of the research developed during the 1960s and 1970s when feminist theory became prominent. Some major historical moments for feminist theory included the publication of *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan (she/her) (1963) and research by Ann Oakley (she/her) in 1969, who earned a Ph.D. for research on women’s attitudes to housework.

Early sociology courses and research about gender were described as *sociology of women*, or more broadly, *women’s studies*. During this period, research was focused solely on cisgender women and femininity and excluded other genders, including men and masculinity, up until the 1980s and 1990s.

In 1987, Candace West (she/her) and Don Zimmerman (he/him) argued in their article “*Doing Gender*” (1987) that both men and women “do gender” every day and that “*their competence as members of society is hostage to its production.*” In other words, our success in society is based on how good we are at being the gender we are assigned. For an example of this, think about how boys are bullied and shamed with taunts of “Don’t be a girl.”

Judith Butler (1988) (they/them) broke new ground in the study of gender with “*Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory*,” arguing that since gender is made by our everyday doing of gender, it is possible to remake gender by doing gender in different ways. Both of these papers are foundational to contemporary gender studies.

As theorists and researchers like R. W. Connell (she/her) and Michael Kimmel (he/him) began addressing masculinity in their work, the field quickly shifted beyond the exclusive study of cisgender women and femininity to include all genders. We’ll explore more about sociological theories of gender and how they critique the dominant culture in Chapter Four.

Let’s Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=358#h5p-3>

Licenses and Attributions for Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender

Open Content, Original

“Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender” by Heidi Ebenson and Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Theories of Gender” is adapted from “Social Construction of Gender” by Jennifer Puentes, [Introduction to Sociology](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include Revision for context, style, and more inclusive language.

“Theories of Gender” is adapted from “[Gender and Sexuality](#)” by Carol C. Mukhopadhyay, Tami Blumenfield, Susan Harper, and Abby Gondek, [Perspectives: An Open Introduction to Cultural Anthropology \(2nd ed.\)](#), which is licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). Modifications include revision for context, style, and more inclusive language.

“Gender Inequality and Patriarchy” is adapted from “[Social Stratification and Inequality](#)” by Conerly, T. R., Holmes, K., & Tamang, A. L., [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), which is licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). Modifications include revision for context, style, and

more inclusive language.

“Gender” definition is adapted from “[1.1 What Is Sociology?](#)” by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang, [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), [Openstax](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 1.10. “[Auckland Pride Parade 2016](#)” by [Ле Лой](#) is in the [Public Domain](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Sexual orientation” definition by Learning for Justice (2024) is included under fair use.

This page titled [1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?

Why is it important to study sociology of gender? As stated earlier, a core theme in sociology is the origin and nature of inequality. We study sociology of gender to recognize and better understand the inequalities around us and to find solutions to social problems in our society. Chapter Three will apply a sociological perspective to the social problem of sexual violence. Throughout this book, we also will consider the intersectional impacts of gender in terms of inequitable outcomes related to education, access to abortion and healthcare, and income.

Sociology identifies and examines discriminatory policies and practices that are systematically embedded in the existing structure of society. Sociology of gender identifies and examines discriminatory policies and practices against women and those outside of the gender binary.

Another reason to study the sociology of gender is to recognize how individuals do and don't fit into the world, including how they are viewed and how they view others through the lens of gender. We may be able to understand how gender norms and socialization steer women and feminine-presenting people into teaching jobs in primary and secondary schools, while men and masculine-presenting people tend to be either maintenance staff, coaches, or administrators. Because sociology encourages us to be reflexive, we can also consider how gender norms, standards, and expectations have impacted our personal experiences. The Looking Through the Lens activity at the end of this chapter will give you an opportunity to practice reflexivity.

Sociology of gender helps us ask big questions about how gender and sexuality work in our society. Imagine you have a friend, colleague, or peer who is transgender and has been ostracized by their family, perhaps bullied at school, or lost a job. We can then ask some big questions: Why? Why did people react so strongly? Using the sociology of gender, we discover an interconnected web of culture, power, identity, and socialization.

Patterns of Inequality

By applying the tools and methods of sociology to questions of gender, sexuality, gender expression, and identity, the sociology of gender identifies gender-based inequality and reveals the social processes by which gender is socially constructed, imposed, enforced, reproduced, and negotiated in our everyday lives.

For example, the wage gap is not just an idea or an opinion. Most of us expect that our work will be fairly rewarded, based on our performance, and if some people are paid more than others, it is because they have more skill and experience. However, sociologists, economists, and other social scientists have identified overwhelming data that documents differences in compensation, hiring, promotion, retention, and job satisfaction for the same work between different genders and between PGM and people who are White.

They also record the experiences of individuals and groups through qualitative data methods and compare and contrast those experiences to explain the more nuanced patterns of the wage gap story. This combined research (numerical statistical data and the commonalities in stories) provides evidence of patterns of inequity. In the face of such patterns, we can conclude that the fault for these disparities lies with discriminatory systems and not with individual performance.

Working for Change and Future Activism



Figure 1.11. Black Trans Lives Matter. The leaders of the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests included many women and LGBTQIA+ People. In this book, you will learn more about how social activism has challenged and changed some of the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that our society ascribes to sexual differences.

Activism and voting are two ways people change social systems and structures (figure 1.11). Social research can also support and inspire social change. When we connect social research with experiences in our everyday lives and the lives of those around us, we start to see patterns of exclusion and oppression, as well as shared interests. When a woman notices that her male colleagues have advanced in position and compensation, data from pay equity can affirm that she is not alone in her experience. When a Black man is continuously passed over for interviews based on his name, research on discriminatory hiring practices can let him know that he is also not alone in his struggle. When LGBTQIA+ people face microaggressions and discrimination at work, research about the experiences of LGBTQIA+ workers can validate individual experiences.

Recognizing these patterns reveals common ground upon which people can work together to create healthier, more positive, and equitable spaces in the world. In the face of unjust systems created and controlled by powerful people who benefit from those systems, political organizers rely on data from social research to help inform coalition-building efforts based on shared interests across differences. Small movements and actions can lead to big changes when we work together.

LEARN MORE: Organizing for Social Justice

To learn more about organizations that organize for justice, equity, access, and equal rights, Check out these websites:

- [Human Rights Campaign](#)
- [Poor People's Campaign](#)
- [MeToo](#)
- [Mom's Demand Action](#)
- [Movement for Black Lives](#)

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=360#h5p-4>

Looking Through the Lens: Reflexivity

In this activity, you will use the lens of reflexivity to examine your personal biases and blindspots in order to understand how

critical self-reflection can help you be a more objective researcher.

Before you begin this activity, let's acknowledge that fairness and objectivity are important social values. Since you probably want to be fair and objective, it can be tempting to deny your biases or to judge yourself harshly when we discover them. If you notice the urge to deny or judge your biases, try reminding yourself that acknowledging biases and blindspots can help you be more objective and fair.

Step 1. Reread the section of this chapter about reflexivity.

Step 2. Answer these questions:

1. Describe your identity in terms of race, gender, sexual identity, income level, faith tradition, and education.
2. Describe a person of good moral character.
3. Describe a person of bad moral character.
4. Describe a time you acted with integrity.
5. Describe a time that you wish you had acted with more integrity.
6. List any personal biases or blind spots you are aware of.
7. List any biases or blind spots that people close to you may have pointed out. (You can pause this activity to ask someone if you want to)
8. Write a few sentences about how your race, gender, sexual identity, income level, faith tradition, and education might influence your biases and blind spots.

Step 3. Imagine that you are working on a research project about people who you have identified as having bad moral character. Write a short paragraph about how being aware of your personal biases and blindspots can help you be more objective in your research.

Licenses and Attributions for Why Study Sociology of Gender?

Open Content, Original

"Why Study Sociology of Gender?" by Heidi Esbensen and Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

"Looking Through the Lens: Reflexivity" by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

"Why Study Sociology of Gender? Question Set" was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

Figure 1.11. Photo by PDBVerglag is licensed under the Pixabay License.

This page titled [1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

1.6: Conclusion

We began this chapter by asking big questions about gender and society. Can you see how sociology of gender can help answer these questions? Using sociological perspectives can help us see patterns, social structures, and systems of power. Sociology of gender looks at how gender shapes and is shaped by these patterns, structures, and systems. Sociology of gender also demonstrates that dominant binary constructions of gender are real in their impacts, but they are not biologically true nor universally consistent. Gender, like other elements of culture, is an expansive notion shaped by individual and collective experiences, cultural context, and socialization.

Review of Learning Objectives

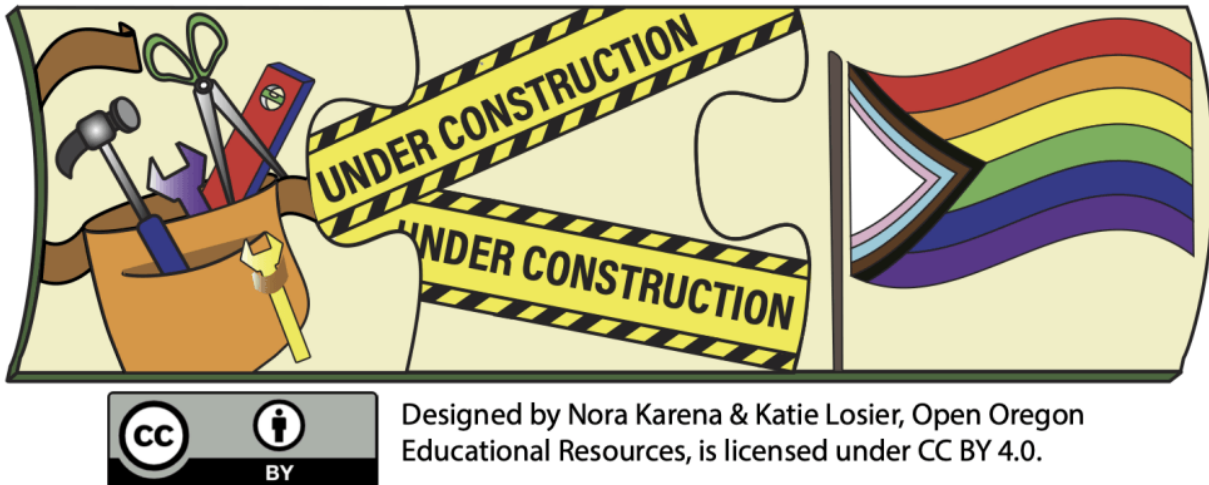
After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Explain how the practice of sociology studies patterns of individual and group behavior to better understand the role gender plays in our society.
2. Recognize how social power has shaped the social sciences and scientific process in general and the sociology of gender in particular.
3. Identify the foundational concepts of the sociology of gender.
4. Describe the value of studying the sociology of gender for both individuals and communities.
5. Explain why critical self-reflection is an important practice for sociologists.

Questions For Discussion

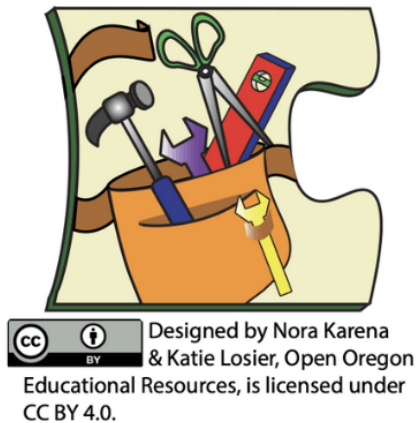
1. Why is it important to study patterns of individual and group behavior related to gender?
Answer: By studying patterns of individual and group behavior related to gender, we can identify gender-related trends and norms within a society and how gender-related trends and norms change over time. We can also reveal inconsistencies between gendered norms and individual lived experiences.
2. How did the biases of the early social sciences founders enforce existing power systems?
Answer: Unacknowledged biases about human difference produced theories about racial hierarchy that falsely assumed the cultural, intellectual, and physical superiority of White men. These theories and practices reinforced existing systems of power, justified the marginalization of non-European civilizations, facilitated the continuing enslavement, exploitation, and extermination of non-European people, and fueled the global expansion of European colonization.
3. What does the claim, "Gender is Real, but Not True," mean?
Answer: Gender is real because it is a consequential aspect of identity that shapes how people are treated and can determine their general standing in society. Gender is not universally true because the social meanings of gender and gender norms are culturally specific, socially constructed, and change over time.
4. Why is sociology of gender a valuable course of study?
Answer: Sociology of gender helps us recognize and better understand the social inequalities, so we can identify possible solutions to social problems.
5. Why is critical self-reflection an important practice for sociologists?
Answer: Critical self-reflection can interrupt bias in research design by making researcher's personal bias and interpersonal power dynamics between researchers and subjects more visible.

Real But Not True: Check-in



Let's take a moment to reflect on what you've learned in this chapter about socially constructed gender norms.

The Tools Of Sociology



Tools of Sociology:

What specific examples of the tools of sociology have been discussed in this chapter?

- Sociological Imagination
- Research-based Evidence
- Social Theory

Socially Constructed - Not True



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Socially Constructed: Sexual Norms

- What examples of gender being imposed, enforced, reproduced, challenged, and changed have you discovered in this chapter?

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Real in Consequence: Social Stigma

- What examples of real consequences for violating or conforming to socially constructed gender norms have you discovered in this chapter?

Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion

Open Content, Original

“Conclusion” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

“Real But Not True Puzzle Images” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

This page titled [1.6: Conclusion](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

1.7: References

- American Time Use Survey Summary—2023 A01 Results. (2024). Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved September 15, 2024, from www.bls.gov/news.release/atus.nr0.htm
- Bell, K. (Ed.) (2013). Open education sociology dictionary. <https://sociologydictionary.org/>
- Berger, Peter. (1963). *Invitation to sociology: A humanistic perspective*. Doubleday.
- Brown, A. (2021, November 19). Growing share of childless adults in U.S. don't expect to ever have children. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/11/19/growing-share-of-childless-adults-in-u-s-dont-expect-to-ever-have-children/>
- Butler, J. (1988, December). Performative acts and gender constitution: An essay in phenomenology and feminist theory. *Theatre Journal*, (4), 519-531. John Hopkins University Press. doi.org/10.2307/3207893
- Campbell-Stephens, R. (2020). Global Majority; Decolonising the language and reframing the conversation about race. <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/schools/school-of-education/final-leeds-beckett-1102-global-majority.pdf>
- Chesley, N. (2017). What Does It Mean to Be a “Breadwinner” Mother? *Journal of Family Issues*, 38(18), 2594–2619. doi.org/10.1177/0192513X16676857
- Conerly, T. R., Holmes, K., & Tamang, A. L. (2021a). 1.1 What Is Sociology?, *Introduction to Sociology* 3e. OpenStax. <https://openstax.org/books/introduction-sociology-3e/pages/12-1-sex-gender-identity-and-expression>
- Conerly, T. R., Holmes, K., & Tamang, A. L. (2021b). 1.1 What Is Sociology?, *Introduction to Sociology* 3e. OpenStax. <https://openstax.org/books/introduction-sociology-3e/pages/1-1-what-is-sociology>
- Conerly, T. R., Holmes, K., & Tamang, A. L. (2021). 12.2 Gender and Gender Inequality—*Introduction to Sociology* 3e | OpenStax. OpenStax. <https://openstax.org/books/introduction-sociology-3e/pages/12-2-gender-and-gender-inequality>
- Correll, S. J., Benard, S., & Paik, I. (2007). Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty? [Abstract]. *American Journal of Sociology*, 112(5), 1297–1338. doi.org/10.1086/511799
- Elias, N., Mennell, S., Morrissey, G., Bendix, R., & Elias, N. (1978). *What is sociology?* Hutchinson.
- Facts & Figures. (n.d.). UN Women – Headquarters. Retrieved September 15, 2024, from www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/commission-on-the-status-of-women-2012/facts-and-figures
- Ferris, K., & Stein, J. (2018). *The Real World: An Introduction to Sociology*. W.W. Norton & Company.
- Friedan, Betty. (1963). *The feminine mystique*. Norton & Co.
- Hurst, K. (2022, May 18). More than half of Americans live within an hour of extended family. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/05/18/more-than-half-of-americans-live-within-an-hour-of-extended-family/>
- Hochschild, A., & Machung, A. (2012). *The second shift: Working families and the revolution at home* (Original text 1989). Penguin.
- Human Rights Watch (n.d.) #OUTLAWED “The love that dare not speak its name” https://features.hrw.org/features/features/lgbt_laws/
- Learning For Justice. (2024). A Glossary of Terms. The Acronym and Beyond. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/best-practices-for-serving-lgbtq-students/lgbtq-terms-definitions-the-acronym-and-beyond>
- McGrane, Bernard. (1994). *The Un-TV and the 10 MPH Car: Experiments in Personal Freedom and Everyday Life*. Small Press.
- Mills, C. W. (1959). *Sociological Imagination*. Oxford University Press.

Moseson, H., Fix, L., Ragosta, S., Forsberg, H., Hastings, J., Stoeffler, A., Lunn, M. R., Flentje, A., Capriotti, M. R., Lubensky, M. E., & Obedin-Maliver, J. (2021). **Abortion experiences and preferences of transgender, nonbinary, and gender-expansive people in the United States**. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 224(4), 376.e1–376.e11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2020.09.035>

Money, J., Hampson, J. G.; Hampson, J. (1955, October). An examination of some basic sexual concepts: The evidence of human hermaphroditism. *Bull. Johns Hopkins Hosp. Johns Hopkins University*, 97(4), 301–19. A Call to Update Standard of Care for Children With Differences in Sex Development. (2021). *AMA Journal of Ethics*, 23(7), E550–556. doi.org/10.1001/amajethics.2021.550

Nation Public Radio. (2023). Canada issues travel advisory warning over U.S. states' LGBTQ+ laws. <https://www.npr.org/2023/09/01/1197169683/canada-issues-travel-advisory-warning-over-u-s-states-lgbtq-laws#:~:text=Canada%20issues%20U.S.%20travel%20advisory%20warning%20overs%20states%27%20LGBTQ%2B%20laws%2C,Canada%20issues%20U.S.%20travel%20advisory%20warning%20overs%20states%27%20LGBTQ%2B%20laws,for%20their>

2024 Gender Pay Gap Report (GPGR). (2024, February 20). Payscale – Salary Comparison, Salary Survey, Search Wages. <https://www.payscale.com/research-and-insights/gender-pay-gap/>

Poasa, K. (1992). The Samoan fa'afafine: One case study and discussion of transsexualism. *Journal of Psychology & Human Sexuality*, 5(3), 39–51.

Schwalbe, M. (1998). *The Sociologically Examined Life: Pieces of the Conversation*. Mayfield Publishing Co.

Suzuki, S. (1970). *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. New York

West, C., & Zimmerman, D. (1987). Doing Gender. *Gender & Society*, 1, 125–151.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2020a). PINC-05. Work experience-People 15 years old and over, by total money earnings, age, race, hispanic origin, sex. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-05.2020.html#list-tab-1165542147>

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). America's Families and Living Arrangements: 2023. Table FG6. One-Parent Unmarried Family Groups with Own Children Under 18, by Marital Status of the Reference Person. Census.Gov. Retrieved September 15, 2024, from <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2023/demo/families/cps-2023.html>

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024, April 8). Working Together to Reduce Black Maternal Mortality. <https://www.cdc.gov/womens-health/features/maternal-mortality.html>

CHAPTER 2: GENDER AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

2.1: Chapter Introduction

2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution

2.3: Sexual Differentiation

2.4: Constructing Identity

2.5: Gender Expression

2.6: Conclusion

2.7: References

This page titled [Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

2.1: Chapter Introduction

Chapter Overview: What Determines Gender?

What is gender? How do you identify a person's gender? Is gender indicated by the presence or absence of certain reproductive organs or physical sex characteristics people are born with? Is it the clothes they wear, or the presence or absence of hair on parts of their body (figure 2.1)? It is common practice to identify babies at birth as either “boys” or “girls” based on their visible sex characteristics. While most people identify as the same gender they are assigned at birth, 1.6 million people in the U.S. identify as a gender that is different from the gender they were assigned when they were born (Herman et al. 2022).

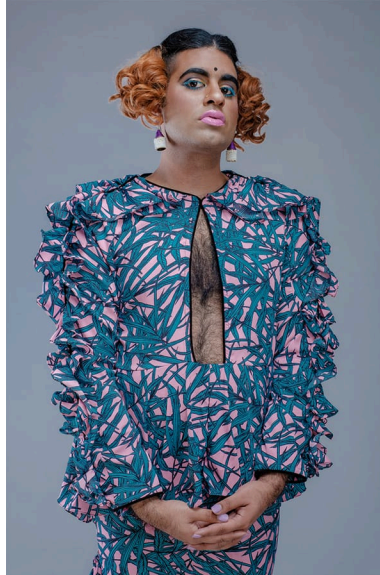


Figure 2.1 Alok Vaid-Menon (they/them). Alok is an artist and entertainer who identifies as transfeminine. To learn more about Alok, optionally watch “What We Are is Free” Alok Vaid-Menon at the New York LGBT Center Dinner [Streaming Video]. This chapter uses the tools of sociology to answer the question, “What determines gender?”

Here are a few more questions: What does it mean to be a boy, or a girl, or trans, or nonbinary? Have you ever felt like you were good at being your gender? How do you know? How did you learn this? Or do you feel like your gender isn't something that you need to “get right?” Is gender something you do, or is it something you are? These are some of the complicated questions that the sociology of gender explores.

This chapter uses sociological imagination, research-based evidence, and social theories to explore gender as a social identity that is socially constructed, imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, and challenged. This chapter will also demonstrate that the dominant gender binary is real but not true. The chapter begins with the basics of sexual differentiation and explores how the meaning of sexual differentiation is socially constructed as gender. This chapter will also explore how individuals form their gender identity. The chapter will close with a look at how the intersectional feminist social movement for gender equity and social justice has revolutionized gender theory.

Key Terms

This section contains a list of foundational key terms from the chapter. After reviewing them here, be on the lookout for them as you work through the rest of the book.

- **agents of socialization:** social institutions that create and maintain normative expectations for behavior.
- **deadnaming:** the harmful practice of continuing to call trans people by the name associated with the gender they were assigned at birth rather than the name they ask you to call them. It is closely related to misgendering.
- **differences in sexual development (DSD):** describes genetic, hormonal, or anatomical variations that produce atypical sex

characteristics, including variations in chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals.

- **emphasized femininity:** expressions of femininity that emphasize women's subordination by accommodating the interests and desires of men.
- **feminine apologetic:** the expectation that women learn to balance their interest in "masculine" activities and traits with feminine gender expression.
- **gender dysphoria:** a marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and their assigned gender (APA 2022).
- **gender expression:** the way our gender identity is expressed outwardly through clothing, personal grooming, self-adornment, physical posture and gestures, and other elements of self-presentation.
- **gender identity:** the gender we experience ourselves to be.
- **gender policing:** imposing or enforcing normative gender expressions on someone who is perceived to be not adequately performing those gender norms via their appearance or behavior, based on their sex assigned at birth.
- **gender socialization:** the process by which people learn the norms, stereotypes, roles, and scripts related to gender through direct instruction or by exposure and internalization.
- **genderqueer:** an umbrella term that covers gender identity and expression that falls outside the binary/non-normative labels.
- **hegemonic masculinity:** the masculine ideal commonly viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity and any form of femininity (Connell 1987; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005).
- **identity formation:** a process of coming to understand ourselves and differentiate ourselves in relation to our social world.
- **intersex:** people with differences in sexual development (DSD) sometimes identify as intersex.
- **misgendering:** the harmful practice of referring to people by a gender other than their stated gender identity (Kapusta 2016).
- **nonbinary:** refers to gender identities beyond binary identifications of man or woman/masculine or feminine.
- **sex assigned at birth:** the assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on a combination of anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes.
- **sexually dimorphic traits:** variations within a species, including secondary sex characteristics, that indicate sexual differences but are not necessarily related to reproduction.
- **social construct:** shared meaning that is created, accepted, and reproduced by social interactions between people within a society.
- **social stratification:** a set of processes in which people are sorted, or layered, into ranked social categories based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and status.
- **socioeconomic status (SES):** individual or group's place within a system of social stratification. SES can be influenced by race, social class, religion, and other socially constructed categories or human differences, including gender.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the social construction of gender from a sociological perspective.
2. Describe biological indicators of sexual difference.
3. Discuss the gender identity formation process from a sociological perspective.
4. Differentiate between gender identity and gender expression.
5. Reflect on your personal experience of gender socialization

Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction

Open Content, Original

"Chapter Overview" by Noraarena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

Figure 2.1. "Alok Fashion Collection 2018" by Abhinav Anguriai is in the [Public Domain, CC0 1.0](#).

This page titled [2.1: Chapter Introduction](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Noraarena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution

“Once a child’s gender is evident, others treat those in one gender differently from those in the other, and the children respond to the different treatment by feeling different and behaving differently. As soon as they can talk, they start to refer to themselves as members of their gender” – Judith Lorber (2009)

Think back to the first time you thought about your gender or noticed it. You can connect that here to the first time you told someone you were a boy or girl or referenced your “sister” or “brother.” Can you remember learning the rules of being a boy or a girl? What to wear, how to play, and what you might be and do when you grow up? Were you taught that boys must be tough and girls have to be tender? Perhaps your parents taught you not to be limited by traditional gender expectations and encouraged you to be a kind, sensitive boy or a powerful, assertive girl. These examples of social teaching and learning reveal how gender is socially constructed.

A **social construct** is a shared meaning created, accepted, and reproduced by social interactions between people within a society. Laws, customs, countries, races, religions, and even ideas about knowledge and “common sense” are examples of social constructs. A social construct has no inherent meaning or definition. It means what society agrees it means. The production, normalization, and reproduction of social constructs is a major function of culture. We know that socially constructed meanings are not objectively true because they change over time and across different cultures.

While all cultures differentiate between women and men—the norms, roles, and social expectations about how men and women are expected to properly express their gender are different in different cultures and have changed over time. Furthermore, many cultures also include third genders or more fluid gender norms, roles, and social expectations. Restricting gender to one of two categories constructs a gender binary. This deeply ingrained way of thinking results in the social acceptance of people who are cisgender, to the exclusion of those who don’t fit neatly into this category. Binary constructions of gender are common in patriarchal societies.

Social constructs are how humans create meaning in social contexts. Because social constructs result from a natural process, the meanings we create, reproduce, and normalize can seem objectively true and universal. However, socially constructed gender meanings and norms can vary over time and across cultures. Even though they are not objectively or universally true, social constructs are important aspects of social life and have real-life consequences for individuals and societies in terms of power, status, and social norms. In other words, social constructions are not true but they are real. Chapter Five will describe systems of power that are based on socially constructed gender.

Judith Lorber (she/her), a founding theorist of the social construction of gender, developed and taught some of the first courses on the sociology of gender. Her theory states that gender is a *process* that creates the social differences that define gender, a *system of stratification* that assigns power to different genders, and a *structure or social institution* in which individuals’ social life is organized around gender (Lorber 2010). This section breaks down what gender looks like as a process, a system of stratification, and a social institution.

Gender as a Process

LEARN MORE: Gender Expansive Parenting

Some parents choose to delay revealing their gender and allow time for a child to discover their own gender. To learn more, watch [Raising a Gender-Neutral Child \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Recall from Chapter One that socialization is the process of learning culture through social interactions. The social institutions that create and maintain normative expectations for behavior are called **agents of socialization**. Gender socialization relies on four major agents of socialization: family, schools, peer groups, and mass media. Each agent reinforces gender roles by creating and maintaining normative expectations for gender-specific behavior. Exposure also occurs through secondary agents such as religion and the workplace. Repeated exposure to these agents over time leads us to believe that gender is real rather than a socially constructed identity.

Family is the first and most important agent of socialization because it is the center of a child’s life. Parents, siblings, guardians,

and grandparents, plus members of an extended family, all teach a child what he, she, or they need to know through primary socialization. Sociologists recognize that race, ethnicity, social class, religion, education, and other societal factors also play an important role in socialization. For instance, there is evidence that some PGM families are more likely than White families to model an egalitarian gender role structure for their children (Johnson & Staples 2004).

Sociologists examine how families enact **gender socialization**, the process by which people learn the norms, stereotypes, roles, and scripts related to gender through direct instruction or by exposure and internalization. For example, a child who grows up in a two-parent household with a mother who stays at home and a father who acts as the breadwinner may internalize these gender roles, regardless of whether or not the family is directly teaching them. Likewise, if parents buy dolls for their daughters and toy trucks for their sons, the children will learn to value different things.

There is considerable evidence that parents socialize boys and girls differently. Even when parents set gender equality as a goal, there may be underlying indications of inequality. Boys in many cultures typically have greater privileges, such as being allowed more autonomy and independence at an earlier age. Boys may be asked to take out the garbage or perform other tasks that require strength or toughness, while girls may be expected to fold laundry or perform duties that require neatness and care. Boys may be given fewer restrictions on appropriate clothing, dating habits, or curfew. Girls may be given more permission to step outside their prescribed gender roles in dress and play but limited by an expectation to be passive and nurturing, generally obedient, and to assume domestic responsibilities.

Gender assignment is the first step of gender socialization. In the mid-20th century, birth announcements with gender assignment phrasing like “It’s a boy!” became common. This is an example of the social aspect of gender assignment. The advent of ultrasound technology that can identify sex organs before birth has led to a new trend in gender assignment of assigning gender even before birth, called gender reveal parties.

These social events involve parents or families planning an activity that reveals the biological sex of an unborn child, thus socially assigning a gender to the unborn child. Some may pop a balloon to release pink or blue confetti, cut a cake that is pink or blue inside, or shoot off colored pink or blue fireworks. You might have seen a gender reveal on social media. Some gender reveals even make the news when something goes awry. One particularly unfortunate gender reveal included fireworks that started a massive fire.

Our initial gender identity is assigned or imposed based on our visible genitalia and anatomical or physiological markers described in the last section. Once a child is labeled biologically male or female, they are raised as a girl or boy. They are then socialized to their assigned gender.

Gender as a System of Stratification



Figure 2.2. Stratification. It is easy to see layers of stratification in rocks. The sociological imagination helps us recognize layers of social stratification, like gender.

Geologists also use the word “stratification” to describe the distinct vertical layers found in rock stratification in rocks, like the one

pictured in figure 2.2, as a result of geological processes. **Social stratification** is a set of processes in which people are sorted or layered into ranked social categories based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and status. Sociologists use the term social stratification to describe a system of social standing. Social stratification refers to the social categorization of people into rankings based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and power. Typically, society's layers, made of groups of people, represent the uneven distribution of society's resources, with people with more resources as the top layer of the social structure of stratification. Other groups of people, with fewer and fewer resources, represent the lower layers. An individual or group's place within a system of social stratification is called **socioeconomic status (SES)**. SES can be influenced by their race, social class, religion, and other socially constructed categories or human differences, including gender. In other words, social stratification isn't just a process of creating differences. It also attaches social status to those differences.

Most people in the United States indicate that they value equality, a belief that everyone has an equal chance at success. In other words, hard work and talent—not inherited wealth, prejudicial treatment, institutional racism, or societal values—should determine social mobility. This emphasis on choice, motivation, and self-effort perpetuates the American belief that people control their social standing. However, sociologists recognize social stratification as a society-wide system that makes inequalities apparent.

While inequalities exist between individuals, sociologists are interested in larger social patterns. Sociologists look to see if individuals with similar backgrounds, group memberships, identities, and locations in the country share the same social stratification. No individual, rich or poor, can be blamed for social inequalities, but instead, all participate in a system where some rise and others fall. Most Americans believe that rising and falling are based on individual choices. But sociologists see how the structure of society affects a person's social standing and, therefore, is created and supported by society.

Recall from Chapter One that global gender inequality is the unequal distribution of power and resources based on gender. This is what Lorber meant when she theorized that gender is a system of social stratification. In patriarchal societies, the process of socially constructed gender, as described in the previous section, limits social possibilities for people socialized as feminine, as well as people who are excluded from the dominant gender binary. In doing so, this ensures that people with male sex traits and who are socialized as masculine have political, economic, educational, legal, and cultural advantages over women.

An example of the historical stratification of gender in the U.S. is the prohibition of voting for women until 1919. The political impact of denying political power to women is still impacting women today. Even though U.S. women have been legally allowed to vote for more than a hundred years, there has not yet been a woman president, and women are still not equally represented in state and national politics (figure 2.3). This unequal representation also translates into unequal laws that negatively impact the health and safety of women, as well as trans and nonbinary people.

118th Congress (2023-2025)

	 Men	 Women	 Transgender or Nonbinary	 Lesbian, gay or bisexual
Senate	75	25	0	2
House	309	126	0	11

Figure 2.3. Breakdown of Congressional Membership by Gender. Even though there is more gender diversity in Congress than ever before, gender inequality persists. Why do you think men still dominate the Congress?

Does equal representation in state and national legislatures produce laws that reduce gender inequality in society? The answer is yes. The National Women's Law Center (NWLC 2020) reports that Women serving in legislatures with greater representation of women introduced and enacted more legislation than women serving in legislatures with lower levels of women's representation, that the majority of women in state legislatures tend to be Democrats, who introduced more legislation about child care, sexual

harassment, paid family leave, and minimum wage (National Women's Law 2020).

Political stratification is just one aspect of gender stratification. Education, income, food security, health, and employment are also similarly stratified to favor men over women, trans and nonbinary people. Chapter Five will discuss the relationship between social stratification and unequal systems of power. Can you think of other aspects of society that are stratified by gender?

LEARN MORE: Gender Stratification

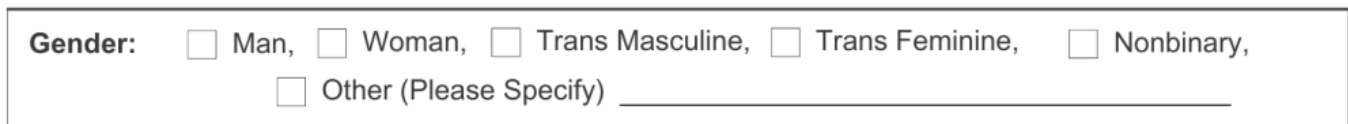
To learn more about gender stratification in families, education, employment, politics, and other aspects of society, watch [Gender Stratification: Crash Course Sociology #32 \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Pro Tip: Crash Course Sociology Videos are helpful overviews of key topics in sociology, but the presenter speaks really fast. Fortunately, YouTube allows users to slow down videos. Learn how to adjust playback speed here: [Learn about features that help you control your viewing experience on YouTube \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Gender as a Social Institution

The third function of gender that Lorber offered is gender as a social institution, in which individuals' social lives are organized around gender. Recall from Chapter One that a social institution is a large-scale social arrangement that is stable and predictable, created and maintained to serve the needs of society. Recall from Chapter One that social institutions are large-scale social arrangements that are stable and predictable, created and maintained to serve the needs of society. We can say that gender is a social institution because it also creates and maintains social order and is deeply embedded in all aspects of our social life.

Nearly every application that we fill out asks us about our gender (figure 2.4). Sometimes, our gender is used simply as a marker of identification, but it is also used to determine our eligibility for certain services, educational programs, clubs, jobs, and resources. It can determine our role in our family, places of worship, and social groups. It determines our recreation, how entertainment and products are marketed to us, and even what bathrooms we can use. The gender assignment process we discussed earlier in this chapter determines how we fit into society.



Gender: ☐ Man, ☐ Woman, ☐ Trans Masculine, ☐ Trans Feminine, ☐ Nonbinary,
☐ Other (Please Specify) _____

Figure 2.4. Check The Box. How many in the last year have you been asked to state your gender? The frequency of this question demonstrates how much of our shared social life is organized around gender.

Some sociological methods focus on examining social institutions over time or comparing them to social institutions in other parts of the world. In the United States, for example, there is a system of free public education but no universal healthcare program, which is not the case in many other affluent, democratic countries. Social institutions can be most visible when they break down. For example, for six days in January 2019, public school teachers in California went on strike. The Los Angeles school district (the second-largest in the nation) scrambled to provide substitute teachers and staff to stay with students after 30,000 teachers walked out, demanding smaller class sizes, more teachers and support staff, and a 6.5% raise. They eventually compromised with a 6% raise, more support staff, and a gradual reduction in class size, but the six days out of school cost the district over 125 million dollars.

How do breakdowns of social institutions like this one (public education) affect individuals? How does it affect students? Parents? Teachers and administrators? How would the strike affect other school employees, such as cafeteria workers or custodial staff? Our public education system meets many complex societal needs, including the training and preparation of future voters and workers. Still, on a more pragmatic level, it also provides a place for children to go while parents work.

Since the middle of the 20th century, we have seen remarkable changes in acceptable gender norms, growing resistance to an imposed gender binary, and increasing social acceptance of more expansive gender expression beyond the masculine/feminine binary. These can be understood as a breakdown of institutionalized gender and a reordering of society. It's no surprise, then, that these changes are perceived as a threat to patriarchal society by people who benefit from the existing arrangements of social power.

Understanding gender as a socially constructed process, a socially constructed system of stratification, and a socially constructed social institution can help reduce anxiety around changing gender norms. Social constructs are flexible and adaptable to the needs of society and are always subject to change and adaptation over time and across cultures.

What about biological sex? Is it also socially constructed? In the next section, we will see that while the actual biology of the chromosomes and hormones that determine our sexual physiology are not social constructs, many of the meanings that cultures attach to them, including a false binary, are socially constructed as well.

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=368#h5p-5>

Licenses and Attributions for A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution

Open Content, Original

"A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution" by Nora Karena and Heidi Ebensen is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

"A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution Question Set" was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

"Gender as a Process" is adapted from "[Agents of Socialization](#)" by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang, [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), [Openstax](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Heidi Esbensen and Nora Karena include revision for length and context.

"Gender as a System of Stratification" is adapted from "[What is Social Stratification?](#)" by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang, [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), [Openstax](#), which is licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include revision for length and context.

Figure 2.2. "Strata in the Badlands" by Darrell Darwent is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

Figure 2.3. "Breakdown of Congressional Membership by Gender" by Nora Karena and Katie Losier, [Oregon Open Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 2.4. "Check The Box" by Nora Karena and Mindy Khamvongsa, [Oregon Open Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

"[Gender Stratification: Crash Course Sociology #32](#)" by [CrashCourse](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

2.3: Sexual Differentiation

Reproduction in animals requires eggs, or ova, to be fertilized by semen, followed by a period of incubation to allow for sufficient physical development to allow the offspring to survive as it continues to mature. This can happen outside the body in birds, fish, and insects, while in mammals, it happens naturally inside the body. With the advent of reproductive technologies, like in vitro fertilization, an ovum can be fertilized outside of the body and then implanted into a uterus. Some animals, like female sharks, can reproduce asexually if there are no male sharks around to get the job done. Unlike sharks, humans cannot reproduce asexually. These reproductive functions, production of an ovum, fertilization of an ovum, and gestation of the fertilized ovum, usually require two different sets of reproductive organs.

In the U.S. and many Western countries, we are socialized to assume that a person's sex is based on the biological differences that determine these two reproductive functions of egg production and fertilization and that gender and sex are the same things. We are generally taught that females have two XX chromosomes, a uterus, ovaries, and vagina, and higher levels of the hormone estrogen. Conversely, males always only have XY chromosomes, a penis, testicles, and higher levels of androgens like testosterone. We are also socialized that people born with variations from this binary pattern must still be either male or female.

This chapter aims to distinguish between sex assigned at birth, as defined by reproductive biology, and socially constructed gender. **Sex assigned at birth** is the assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on a combination of anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes. The argument that sex assigned at birth and gender are the same thing is closely related to the argument that there can only be two sexes/genders. This section describes the biology of sexual differentiation in terms of physical markers of biological sex and the relationships between genetics, hormones, and physical traits. You will learn that, while it can be tempting to reduce reproductive biology to binary terms (i.e., either ovaries or testes), biological variation, an essential component in the evolution of all life, produces a spectrum of possible genetic, hormonal, and physical combinations.

The Chemistry Of Reproduction



Figure 2.5. Stages of Human Development. The development of sex traits begins in the zygote stage, which lasts about four days.

Chromosomes are threadlike structures made of protein and a single DNA molecule that carry the genomic information from cell to cell (National Human Genome 2024). In plants and animals (including humans), chromosomes reside in the nucleus of cells. Humans have 22 pairs of numbered chromosomes (autosomes) and one pair of sex chromosomes, for a total of 46. Some babies at birth have two X chromosomes, and others have XY chromosomes, and these combinations are inherited from the father. At conception, each parent contributes a chromosome to the new zygote, which has the potential to develop into a fetus (figure 2.5). The male parent contributes either an X or Y chromosome to be combined with the female parent's X chromosome (see figure 2.6).

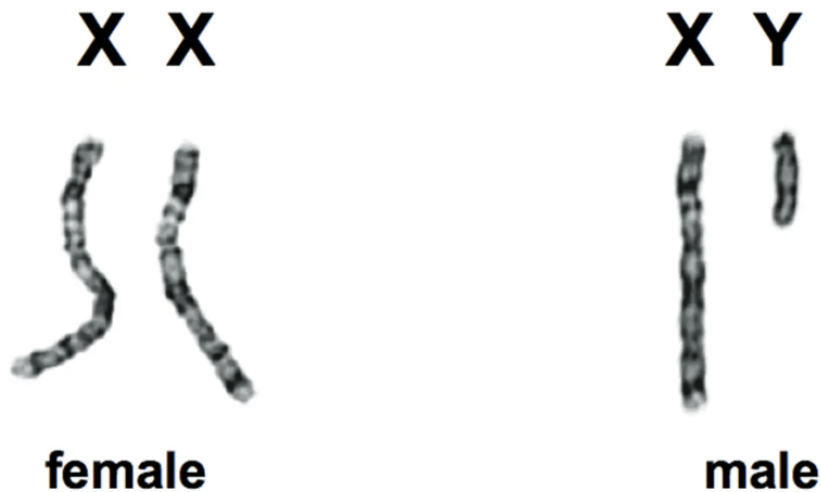


Figure 2.6. Sex Chromosomes. Male and female sex chromosomes carry the genetic blueprint that guides the development of sex traits.

XX chromosomes signal the development of ovaries, a vagina, and a uterus. XY chromosomes flood the developing zygote with hormones, and transform cells that would have developed into ovaries to become testes and cells that would have developed into a vagina to become a penis.

While most infants are born with either a penis or a vagina, these are not the only options. Rather, a spectrum of normal infant genitalia from “fully masculinized” to “fully feminized” is possible. Although these variations might be considered atypical, they occur in as many as 1 in 5000 live births. The “Quigley Scale” was developed by pediatric endocrinologist Charmian Quigley in 1995 to describe this range (figure 2.7).

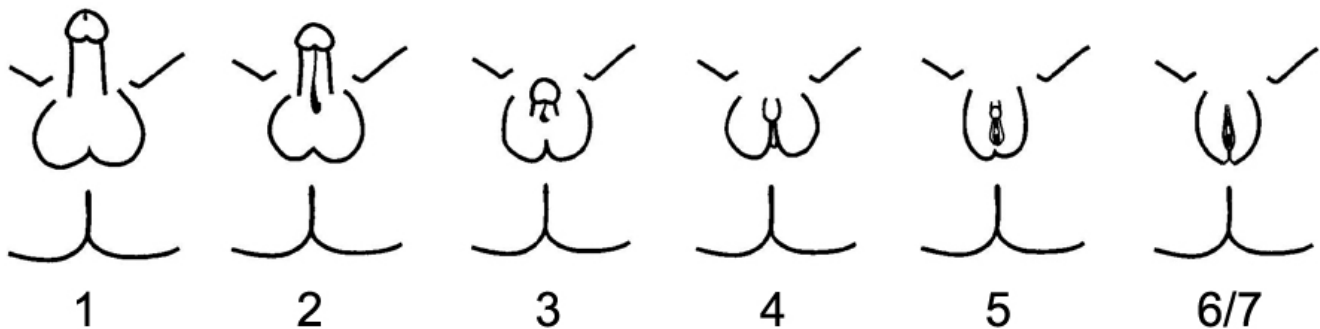


Figure 2.7. Quigley scale range of infant genitalia descriptors from 1 to 6/7. Is it a surprise to learn that there are more than two options possible for infant genitalia?

Hormones that regulate sexual reproduction include estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. Everybody has all of these hormones, but people with XX chromosomes typically have higher estrogen and progesterone levels, whereas people with XY chromosomes have higher testosterone levels. However, many variations have been found across medical research.

Estrogen and progesterone support the development of female sex organs and physical traits during puberty, such as breast and uterus development, as well as fertility. Estrogen and progesterone levels can affect mood, emotions, brain function (such as focus and processing), and connection during and after childbirth to offspring.

Testosterone works similarly in men, assisting in the development of the penis and testes, regulating sex drive, bone mass, muscle development and strength, and production of sperm. Some studies show that testosterone affects social behavior. For example, aggressive or dominant behavior has been linked to higher testosterone levels (Dreher, et al. 2016).

When trans or nonbinary people take hormone blockers or hormone therapy, the treatment can prevent or assist in the development of secondary sex characteristics (facial hair, breasts, muscle tone, hips, etc.). Many studies show that these therapies

have positive effects on transitioning individuals both physically and psychologically. These treatments shift the balance of the hormones for trans individuals, increasing testosterone in trans men or increasing estrogen and progesterone in trans women to support their gender identity. We will explore this more later, but it is important to understand how hormones affect the development of the sex traits humans are born with (primary sex traits) and those that develop after puberty (secondary sexual traits).



Figure 2.8. Boy or Girl? What visual cues signal the gender of this baby?

Sexual Variation

Since it is impossible to tell the sex of a baby or young child without inspecting their genitals, parents and caregivers routinely signal assigned gender with multiple visual and social cues like names, clothing, hairstyle or decorations, and color scheme (figure 2.4) (Lorber 2010). As children begin to mature sexually, they start to develop physical traits associated with femininity or masculinity. These are **sexually dimorphic traits**.

Sexually dimorphic traits are variations within a species, including secondary sex characteristics that indicate sexual differences but are not necessarily involved in reproduction. In other words, the physical characteristics that we generally associate with sex and gender include weight, muscle mass, facial and body hair, stature, and disease prevalence.

Here, too, there is broad variation. Sometimes, an individual can appear female, express themselves as female, use feminine pronouns, but also have masculine traits such as beard growth. The “bearded lady” of circus sideshows was a person with hirsutism, a dimorphic condition where women grow excessive body hair. This condition gained popular attention in early 19th century “freak shows” and circuses, making this either seem like a curse or a path to fame and money. Some of these women were also broad in the shoulders and much taller than other women of the time.



Figure 2.9. A and B. Gynandromorphic Butterflies. The existence of gynandromorphic sex traits in birds, insects, shellfish, and spiders reinforces the claim that binary gender is not natural but is socially constructed.

The existence of sex variations in animals, including humans, challenges the notion of biological sex as binary. A particularly striking sex variation, which has been observed in a variety of birds, insects, shellfish, and spiders, is Gynandromorphism (figure 2.9). Gynandromorphs appear to literally be half male and half female.

Gynandromorphism is a condition that is not found in humans, but people are born with **differences in sexual development (DSD)**. **DSD** describes genetic, hormonal, or anatomical variations that produce atypical sex characteristics, including variations in chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals. People with DSD sometimes identify as **intersex** (Intersex Society of North America n.d.).

The bodies of people born with DSD do not fit strict binary definitions of male or female. Intersex, like female and male, is a socially constructed category that humans created to label bodies. The term marks biological variation among bodies. Several distinct biological sex variations are commonly observed in people born with DSD. For example, people with Klinefelter Syndrome possess one Y and more than one X chromosome. Does the presence of more than one X mean that the XXY person is female? Does the presence of a Y mean that the XXY person is male? They are neither chromosomally male nor female; they are chromosomally intersex. As noted previously, some people have genitalia that are not easily classified as fully male or fully female. So, why is this knowledge not commonly known?

Many individuals born with genitalia not easily classified as male or female are subject to genital surgeries during infancy, childhood, or adulthood. Infants with genital appendages smaller than 2.5 centimeters have routinely had their genitals reduced in size and been assigned female (Dreger 1998). In other words, surgeons literally construct and reconstruct individuals' bodies to fit into the dominant binary sex/gender system.

While parents and doctors have justified this practice as “in the best interest of the child,” many people with DSD who experienced surgeries and arbitrary sex assignments, which they were too young to consent to, as traumatic. Some parents may not have all of the information or time to intervene in an infant surgery. Medical organizations, including the World Health Organization and the American Academy of Pediatrics, have called for deferring surgeries on children born with DSD until they are old enough to give informed consent (Mulkey et al. 2021).

Individuals often discover their chromosomal makeup, surgical records, or intersex status in their medical records as adults after years of physicians hiding this information from them. The surgeries do not necessarily make bodies appear “natural” due to scar tissue, disfigurement, or chronic infection. The surgeries can also result in psychological distress. In addition, many of these surgeries involve sterilization, potentially part of historical eugenics projects that aim to eliminate intersex people (Sparrow 2013). Therefore, a great deal of shame, secrecy, and betrayal surround these surgeries.

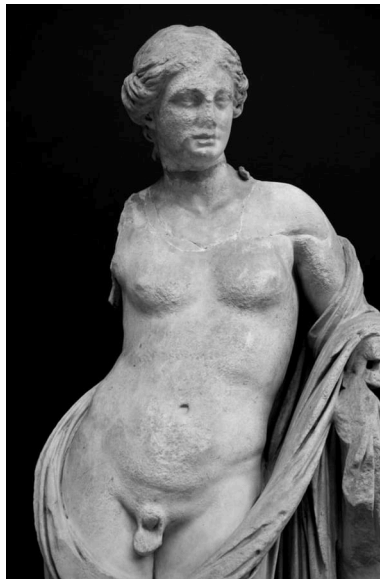


Figure 2.10 Statue of Hermaphroditus a Greek god with both male and female sex characteristics. Can you identify other intersex, trans, or nonbinary deities?

This is not a universal response to DSD conditions. Historically, individuals with DSD have been seen as special and celebrated in many cultures. Many religious traditions include deities that could be called intersex, transgender, or nonbinary. A notable example is the ancient Greek deity, Hermaphroditus (figure 2.10), who merged with a nymph so they could be together forever, shown in depictions as having both male and female attributes and mixed-sex characteristics.

The term “Hermaphrodite” has been used as a pseudo-scientific word for people born with DSD, but most people reject the label as derogatory. Around the world, people with DSD and their allies are advocating for full inclusion and acceptance beyond a rigid gender binary. You will learn more about third genders and other expansive gender identities and expressions in Chapter Four and Chapter Five.

Learn More: Sex Development and Best Interests

To learn more about DSD read “A Call to Update Standard of Care for Children With Differences in Sex Development” [Website] from the American Medical Association Journal of Ethics.

Common Social Constructs of Sex and Gender

When we say that sex and gender are socially constructed, we are also acknowledging that while many of the social constructs we have learned about sex and gender are not objectively true, they do have real consequences because society and culture are organized as if they are true. Let’s look at three common and harmful social constructs about sex and gender: sex as a single trait, sex as binary, and genitals as reliable indicators of gender.

The first social construct is that sex can be determined by a single trait, i.e. “*All women have breasts, and no men have breasts.*” As we’ve discussed, sex is the product of a combination of traits influenced by chromosomes, hormones, reproductive organs, genitals, and secondary sex traits like hair patterns, breasts, and body types. These highly variable traits exist in multiple combinations, and no one combination can definitively determine a person’s sex.

The second social construct is that sex is binary, i.e., “*There are only two sexes.*” The numerous possible variations in biological sex traits can result in a spectrum of sexes. A binary construction of sex presents a false choice that disregards and invalidates the lived experience of people who fall outside that oversimplified binary.

The third social construct is that genitals are reliable indicators of gender, i.e., “*Everyone born with a penis is a boy.*” There are many variations of biological sex, including chromosomal variations or biological variations. While genitals are a biological sex component, gender is a social construct. Reinforcing the idea that a penis makes one masculine and a vagina makes one feminine is harmful. We can see this damage in current events involving sports and schools. Laws in Ohio (2022) and New Jersey

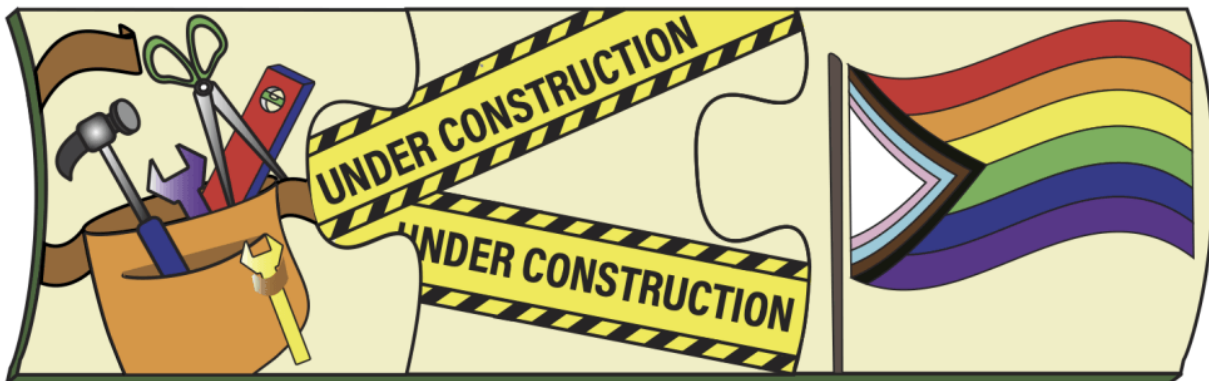
(2021) allow school staff and sports coaches to “check for genitals” on their students/players to decide if they can participate in gendered sports and on which team. For example, whether someone can participate in “girls’ basketball” (figure 2.11) can be based on a genital check that affirms they have a vagina. If they do not, they would not be able to participate in the sport. This is dangerous and harmful for many reasons, including the invasion of privacy and the potential for sexual assault.



Figure 2.11. Women’s Basketball. Recent laws in Ohio and New Jersey have made it so that a person’s genitalia can be checked to decide if they can play or participate in gender-specific sports.

So far, we have examined how socially constructed gender and sex are the result of social interactions that create shared meanings. We have also suggested that these meanings are not universal and can change over time and across cultures. Recall that a sociological perspective considers the impact of social factors on individual experience. Be sure to use your sociological imagination in the next section of this chapter to examine a fourth construction of gender: gender as a choice.

Real But Not True: Binary Sexual Differentiation



Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

We take it for granted that the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences are based on objective fact, and that is, therefore, true. Throughout this book, we will use these puzzle pieces to draw attention to examples of the sociological imagination in action, sociological research, and sociological theories that demonstrate that gender is real in its consequences but not universally true.

The Tools Of Sociology



 Designed by Noraarena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

The tools of sociology include:

- Sociological Imagination
- Research-based Evidence
- Social Theory

The biology of sexual differentiation has been empirically demonstrated to describe a spectrum of possible combinations of genetics, hormones, and physical characteristics.

Socially Constructed - Not True



 Designed by Noraarena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

We can recognize that socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences are *not universally true* when we can demonstrate that they:

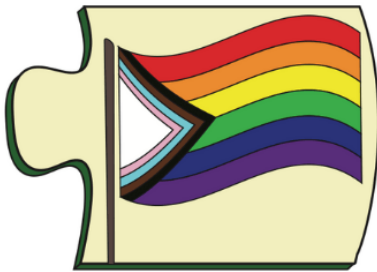
- Change over time
- Are not the same in all societies
- Are imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, or challenged through social interactions

Common social constructs related to sexual differentiation include:

- Sex can be determined based on a single trait., i.e., “All women have breasts, and no men have breasts.”

- Sex is binary, i.e., “There are only two sexes.”
- Genitals are reliable indicators of gender, i.e., “Everyone born with a penis is a boy.”

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

The *real* social consequences of binary gender differentiation include:

- People are routinely assigned a binary sex at birth.
- People with differences in sexual development have been assigned binary sex at birth to enforce the binary construction of sex. These people have historically been subject to many unnecessary surgeries and therapies that have been shown to do lasting physical and psychological harm.
- People whose gender identity (the gender they experience themselves to be) does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth experience gender dysphoria.

As you continue to work through this book, be on the lookout for other examples of socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences and for the ways that tools of sociology can be used to reveal them as social constructions that are not universally true, but have real consequences.

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=370#h5p-6>

Licenses and Attributions for Sexual Differentiation

Open Content, Original

“Sexual Differentiation” by Heidi Ebensen and Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True: Binary Sexual Differentiation” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 2.9. “Gynandromorphic Butterflies” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Sexual Differentiation Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

Figure 2.4. “Check The Box” by Nora Karena and Mindy Khamvongsa, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 2.5. “Stages of Human Development” is adapted from “[The development and the ways to rejuvenate cells – en](#)” by Kaidor, which is licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#). Modifications include cropping.

Figure 2.6. “[XY Chromosomes](#)” by Amanda CXZ is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 2.7. “[Quigley scale for androgen insensitivity syndrome](#)” by Jonathan Marcus is licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

Figure 2.8. “[Baby girl in swimsuit blue eyes with sunglasses](#)” by Tammy Anthony Baker is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

Figure 2.9 A. “[Gynandromorph of the common blue butterfly \(Polyommatus icarus\)](#)” by Burkhard Hinnersmann is licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

Figure 2.9 B. “[Papilioandroeusgynandromorph](#)” by Notafly is licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

Figure 2.10. [Image](#) by Levi Clancy is in the [Public Domain](#), [CC0 1.0](#).

Figure 2.11. Image by planet_fox is licensed under the Pixabay License.

This page titled [2.3: Sexual Differentiation](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

2.4: Constructing Identity

Who are you? Take a moment and write down all the different identities that you might answer that question with. Your list likely includes references to your race, gender, sexual orientation, political identity, ethnicity, or age. Maybe it also includes your family background, the work you do, your social status, and your hobbies and passions. Your list of the things that make you who you are is as individual as you are.

Here's another question: How did you become you? How much of who you are were you "born with," and how much is because of things you've learned, your experiences, or your choices? Most people would agree that our identity is based on a combination of all of these factors and much more.

In sociology, **identity formation** is a process of coming to understand ourselves and differentiate ourselves in relation to our social world. Identity formation relates to our presentation of self, or how we portray ourselves to society through actions, expressions, and affiliations with others. As demonstrated by the list you just made, identity is multifaceted. In this section, we will look briefly at identity formation in general and then explore how individuals form and express gender identity.

Sociological Theories of Self-Development

As discussed in the previous section, we are born with a genetic makeup and biological traits. However, who we are as human beings develops over time, often through social interactions. Many scholars in psychology and sociology have theorized about identity development. Psychologists tend to look inward at the qualities of individuals (mental health, emotional processes, cognitive processing). In contrast, sociologists tend to look outward to qualities of social context (social institutions, cultural norms, interactions with others) to understand human behavior.

One of the pioneering contributions to sociological perspectives on self-development was Charles Cooley (he/him) (1864–1929). He stated that people's self-understanding is constructed, in part, by their perception of how others view them—a process termed "the looking-glass self," which is thoroughly social (Cooley 1902). It is based on how we imagine we appear to others. This projection defines how we feel about ourselves and who we feel ourselves to be. Therefore, the development of a self involves three elements in Cooley's analysis: "the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of [their] judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification." For example, how we express gender is based on how we think society and others will view us, and we internalize the positive or negative consequences of what others think of us, as well as how we feel in response to this social process.

Later, George Herbert Mead (he/him) (1863–1931) advanced a more detailed sociological approach to the self. He agreed that the self, as a person's distinct identity, is developed through social interaction. He further noted that the crucial component of the self is its capacity for self-reflection (Mead 1934). He broke the self down into two components or "phases," the "I" and the "me." The "me" represents the part of the self in which one recognizes the "organized sets of attitudes" of others toward the self. It is who we are in other's eyes: our roles, our "personalities," or our public personas (like some of the identities on the list you made at the beginning of this section). The "I," on the other hand, represents the self that acts on its initiative or responds to the organized attitudes of others.

Mead theorized a developmental process of identity formation based on growing awareness and integration of the I and the Me, in which we move from imitating others in a preparatory stage to practicing possible identities in a play stage, to learning the social rules that are attached to different identities in the game stage, and finally, with a growing understanding of what society expects of us specific contexts, we internalize those norms and expectations as though they are our own identity (figure 2.12). As we move on to consider gender identity formation, see if you can identify these stages.

Figure 2.12. Mead's Development-of-self Theory. Mead proposed that people move through four developmental stages of identity formation. Can you think of examples of each stage that relate to gender identity? Image description available. Image description.

Stage of Development	Description
Preparatory Stage	Imitation and copying of parents and family
Play Stage	Imitation through role play

Stage of Development	Description
Game Stage	Differentiation of difference and learning the expectations that accompany different roles
Generalized other	Understands common norms and expectations; understands self within the context of how others view us

Gender Identity

Using Mead's model, the formation of gender identity can be understood as a process of learning gender, discovering and understanding our gender, and learning how to navigate our social world as our gender. **Gender identity** is the gender we experience ourselves to be. Since gender assignment at birth is so heavily emphasized in patriarchal societies, gender identity formation is heavily influenced by gender socialization. Think of it as coming to a conscious awareness of what our assigned gender is and then learning and internalizing the meaning and rules of conforming to social expectations of our gender.

A growing body of research reveals that gender identity is not purely based just on socialization or biology but a combination of the two and also on individual preference. While many children develop a gender identity that aligns with their assigned gender, transgender and gender-nonconforming children as young as three display a preference for gender-nonconforming clothing and play and a tendency to self-socialize as a gender other than the one they were assigned (Gülgöz et al. 2019). Many adult trans and nonbinary people report experiencing similar preferences when they were children.

This standard assignment of sex at birth led to the creation of the term transgender—trans as an abbreviation—which means that one's sex assigned at birth does not align with one's gender identity. This term dates back to the 1970s, but the term cisgender came much later in the mid-1990s (Merriam-Webster n.d.). In America, 1.6 million people identify as transgender (Herman et al. 2022). Transgender people who identify as men or women may describe their identity as transgender women, transfeminine (trans femme), transgender men, transmasculine (transmasc), or they may simply identify as women or men without disclosing their transgender identity.

Some people who do not identify as men or women may identify as nonbinary or genderqueer, for example. **Nonbinary** refers to gender identities beyond binary identifications of man or woman/masculine or feminine. **Genderqueer** is an umbrella term that covers gender identity and expression that falls outside the binary/non-normative labels. It can also be used by people who wish to hold queer gender identity without any other defining specifics about their gender identity or expression. Some people use gender-neutral pronouns, such as ze/hir or they/them, rather than the gendered pronouns she/her or he/his.

Misgendering

The trauma of navigating a society that privileges binary gender can cause severe social and emotional distress for trans and nonbinary people. The term gender dysphoria refers to intense feelings and struggles and disconnection from one's biological sex, body, and gender identity. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision* (DSM-5-TR) describes **gender dysphoria** as "a marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and their assigned gender" (APA 2022). Trans and nonbinary gender identities are not disorders. Rather, transitioning to a trans or nonbinary identity can provide relief and even resolve gender dysphoria.

Have you ever had someone get your gender wrong? How did that feel? **Misgendering** is the harmful practice of referring to people by a gender other than their stated gender identity (Kapusta 2016). Misgendering people can also reinforce feelings of gender dysphoria. Many, but not all, people who transition choose new names to match their gender identity. **Deadnaming** is the harmful practice of continuing to call trans people by the name associated with the gender they were assigned at birth rather than the name they ask you to call them. It is closely related to misgendering. You can help reduce anxiety related to gender dysphoria for trans and nonbinary people by interrupting misgendering and deadnaming, and by using stated pronouns.

In workplaces where inclusion is a priority, misgendering and deadnaming are classified as harassment. As pronouns and gender identities are not visible on the body, trans communities have created procedures for communicating gender pronouns, which consists of verbally asking and stating one's pronouns (Nordmarken 2014). The practice of stating pronouns during introductions has helped create social settings that are more inclusive and welcoming of trans and nonbinary people (figure 2.13).



Figure 2.13. Peel-and-Stick Name Tag. Name labels that include gender pronouns normalize gender inclusiveness. What are your pronouns?

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=372#h5p-7>

Licenses and Attributions for Constructing Identity

Open Content, Original

“Constructing Identity” by Heidi Esbensen and Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 2.12. “Mead’s Development-of-self Theory” is adapted from “[5.1 Theories of Self Development](#)” by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, and Asha Lal Tamang, [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), [OpenStax](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include creating a table to visualize the theory.

“Constructing Identity Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Sociological Theories of Self-Development” is adapted from the first five paragraphs of “[Theories of Self-Development](#)” by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, and Asha Lal Tamang, [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), [Openstax](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include revision for length and context.

Figure 2.13. “2016.07.01 Nametags with Pronouns – Avery 5392_nonbranded” by Ted Eytan is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#).

This page titled [2.4: Constructing Identity](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

2.5: Gender Expression

Gender socialization includes the expectation that norms of self-presentation should be aligned with our assigned gender. Society expects women to be pretty, long-haired, and so forth, whereas men are expected to be strong, masculine, and the like. Whether they are cisgender or transgender, some people are most comfortable when their gender expression aligns with normative expectations of their gender. Others are more comfortable with nonconforming or transgressive gender expressions. Many are comfortable somewhere in between. How do you express your gender identity?

Gender expression is the way our gender identity is expressed outwardly through clothing, personal grooming, self-adornment, physical posture and gestures, and other elements of self-presentation. Recalling theories of identity development, we can think of gender expression as beginning when people internalize their identity and are aware enough to present it externally to society.

Some people often have strong reactions to transgressive gender expression. **Gender policing** is the act of imposing or enforcing normative gender expressions on someone who is perceived to be not adequately performing those gender norms via their appearance or behavior based on their sex assigned at birth.

Interestingly, parents open to gender-nonconforming behavior still discouraged femininity to protect their children from social disapproval. As this example illustrates, the fear of social disapproval stems from a culture that defines masculinity in opposition to femininity. Let's look at these expectations independently and at gender expressions that fall somewhere between those binaries.

Masculinities

Masculinity involves the performance of gender shaped by society's expectations for men. Parents of young boys express concern over their children's participation in "feminine" activities such as wearing pink, dressing up in feminine attire, or wearing nail polish (Kane 2006). In Emily Kane's (she/her) research, parents assumed "feminine" behaviors were inappropriate for boys outside of learning to cook and clean. They often expressed distress to boys who exhibited these traits. Indeed, much of what it means to be masculine is about affirming that a boy or man is not feminine.

In her 1987 foundational text *Gender & Power*, Raewyn Connell (she/her), a sociologist and transgender woman, introduces the idea that there are multiple masculinities. Forms of masculinity that are generally valued and perceived as socially acceptable in the dominant culture can be highly constraining to men, according to Connell. **Hegemonic masculinity** is the masculine ideal commonly viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity and any form of femininity (Connell 1987; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005). Hegemony is the influence or authority held by members of a dominant group over others. Characteristics and behaviors associated with this ideal standard of masculinity may change over time (Connell 1987, 1995). However, the dominant culture continues to emphasize masculinity that aligns with characteristics of independence, aggression, competition, and toughness (figure 2.14).



Figure 2.14. Advertising Masculinity. Can you describe the elements of hegemonic masculinity in this image?

Some scholars discuss an even more extreme form of hegemonic masculinity as toxic masculinity. The term toxic masculinity captures the cultural pressures on men to conform to hegemonic masculinity. Men may engage in risky behaviors to achieve the culturally approved standards of manhood that exhibit toughness, reject anything feminine, and prioritize power and status (Thompson & Pleck 1986).

Masculinities research includes various forms and styles of masculinity, different ways scholars use the concept of hegemonic masculinity, female masculinities, and how power and masculinity intertwine through the lens of globalization.

Femininities

On the flip side of masculinity is femininity. Expressions of femininity include nurturing, caring, emotional, softness, prettiness, and smallness. Sociologists refer to this type of gender expression as emphasized femininity, idealized femininity, or traditional femininity. Emphasized femininity are expressions of femininity that emphasize women's subordination by accommodating the interests and desires of men. These hegemonic femininities hold power in patriarchal cultures and are rewarded with access to resources and power (Hamilton et al. 2019) (figure 2.15).

In *Gender & Power*, Connell also theorized emphasized femininity. **Emphasized femininity** is "the pattern of femininity which is given most cultural and ideological support" (Connell 1987, p. 24). It is "defined around compliance with subordination and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men" (Connell 1987. p. 187). Connell argues that this version of femininity is a reaction to hegemonic masculinity, and although it has value, masculinity at large is still perceived as more highly valued.

This does not mean that women and other people whose gender expression is feminine are automatically aligning themselves with the patriarchy. Many women, gay men, and trans people who identify as feminists take pleasure in femininity and feel empowered by a feminine gender expression (Lerum 2015). Chapter Three will discuss specific queer gender expressions that sometimes repurpose traditional binary gender expressions.

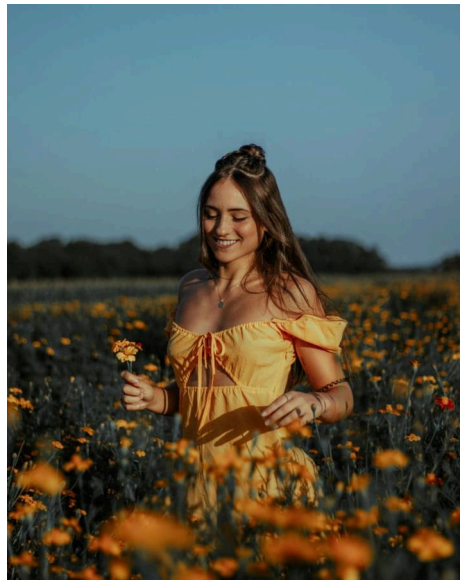


Figure 2.15. Emphasized Femininity. Can you describe the elements of emphasized femininity in this image?

There are also subordinate femininities that do not embody the qualities of emphasized femininity. Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (she/her) (1990) extends Connell's theory of femininity with an intersectional lens. She argues that hegemonic femininity is based on race, class, and gender. For example, the hyper-sexualized stereotypes about Black, Latina, and Asian women, as well as idealized standards about hair and skin color, privilege the femininity of wealthy White women over the femininity of women of the global majority. Additionally, hegemonic femininity favors a youthful and pampered appearance that may be unattainable for many poor and working-class women. We will define and explore more about intersectionality in Chapter Five.



Figure 2.16. Alternative or Subordinate? How does this woman's gender expression resist emphasized femininity?

Alternative femininities intentionally reject emphasized femininity (figure 2.16). While men's expression of gender is routinely subjected to gender policing, women often have more freedom and are sometimes rewarded for gender expression that includes masculine elements. A "tomboy" (a girl who acts masculine) is usually regarded more positively than a "sissy" (a boy who acts feminine). Kane found that parents are nervous about boys' expressions of femininity and discouraged feminine practices, but they expressed delight in their girls' gender-nonconforming behavior and even encouraged participation in traditionally male activities such as T-ball, football, and using tools (Kane 2006, pp. 156-7). This does not mean that women are free of gender policing completely. Instead, the approval reflects how masculinity is more valued in a patriarchal society. Women are simply tapping into characteristics that are valued and rewarded.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=374#oembed-1>

<https://youtu.be/Cs3lh6XD6E>

Figure 2.17. All Purpose Household Pink Tool Kit Review [Streaming Video]. As you watch this short video, look for examples of the feminine apologetic. [Transcript](#).

Have you ever wondered why pink tools are marketed to women (figure 2.17)? Women's participation in masculine activities requires balance to achieve social acceptance in the face of gender policing. The expectation that women learn to balance their interest in masculine activities and traits with feminine gender expression is called the **feminine apologetic** (Wade & Ferree 2015). Another example is how women athletes may make extra efforts to affirm femininity while displaying aggression and competency in activities considered masculine (Davis-Delano et al. 2009). The feminine apologetic strategy enables women to gain benefits that come with participation in masculinity without attracting violent gender policing (Hardy 2013).

Beyond the Binary

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=374#oembed-2>

<https://youtu.be/QntGEb-KgXo>

Figure 2.18. Watch [this video](#) to hear a trans person discuss “passing.” How does expecting trans people to pass reinforce binary gender norms? [Transcript](#).

Trans people may express gender in any of the ways that cisgender people do. Many trans people also experience pressure to “pass.” Passing requires binary gender expression that is so “flawless” that a person's trans identity cannot be detected (figure 2.18). Can you see how this adds another layer of complexity to gender expression? Some trans people consciously resist the social pressure to pass and deliberately focus on cultivating nonbinary gender expressions that feel authentic and align with their gender identity. In doing this, they also challenge and expand gender norms.

Whether cisgender or trans, many people express gender in ways that fall somewhere in the middle or outside of binary gender norms. Many women work in traditionally masculine jobs, many others are more comfortable in clothing that is less “girly,” and some avoid makeup and elaborate jewelry. Is their claim to womanhood less authentic than highly emphasized femininity?

Binary social constructions offer only two mutually exclusive categories. When gender expression is restricted to a false binary, masculinity only has meaning as the opposite of femininity. Binary thinking works strategically so that the dominant groups in society are associated with more valued traits, while the subordinate groups, defined as their opposites, are always associated with less valued traits. The poles in a binary system define one another and only make sense in the presence of their opposites.

In reality, gender identity and expression are complex and multi-faceted. When we acknowledge the complexity of gender and expand our understanding of gender to include nonbinary, genderfluid, and transgender expressions, we make room for a fuller and fairer human experience of both sex and gender for all of us.

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=374#h5p-8>

Looking Through the Lens: Barbie and the Deconstruction of Gender

In this activity, you will use the lens of gender as a social construct to reveal and explore the contradictions and inconsistencies of binary gender by comparing your experience of gender socialization with your experience of being and expressing your gender identity.

Step 1. Draw a line down the center of a blank sheet of paper.

Step 2. On the left side, list all the physical and social traits that represent emphasized femininity.

Step 3. On the right side, list all the physical and social traits that represent hegemonic masculinity.

Step 4. Based on your own gender identity and expression, circle each of the traits on either list that apply to you.

Step 5. Reflect on how you have felt affirmed or policed based on your own unique gender identity and expression.

Step 6. Watch: [America Ferrera's Iconic Barbie Speech \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Step 7. Write a brief paragraph expressing how you have experienced the contradictions between your socialization about gender and your lived experience of being your gender.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=374#oembed-3>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBqIDWHkdHk>

Figure 2.19. “Impossible to be a Woman.” In [this iconic monologue](#), America Ferrara points out the contradictions of emphasized femininity. [Transcript](#).

Licenses and Attributions for Gender Expression

Open Content, Original

“Gender Expression” by Heidi Ebensen and Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Looking Through the Lens: Barbie and the Deconstruction of Gender” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Gender Expression Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

Figure 2.15. Photo by David Gari is shared under the Pexels License.

Figure 2.16. “[Weightlifting girls’ 63 kg at the 2018 Summer Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires on 12 October 2018. Snatch.](#)” by Martin Rulsch is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Gender dysphoria” definition from the American Psychiatric Association (2022) is included under fair use.

“Hegemonic masculinity” definition from Connell (1987) and Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) is included under fair use.

“Misgendering” definition from Kapusta (2016) is included under fair use.

Figure 2.14. [Image](#) © Gillette is included under fair use.

Figure 2.17. “[All Purpose Household Pink Tool Kit Review](#)” by [JennyKnits Reviews](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 2.18. “[Why ‘Passing Privilege’ Is A Problem In The Trans Community | Queer 2.0 | NBC News](#)” by [NBC News](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 2.19. “[America Ferrera’s Iconic Barbie Speech | Barbie | Max](#)” by Max is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [2.5: Gender Expression](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

2.6: Conclusion

The social construction of culture is an important topic in sociology. This chapter has introduced some of the ways sociologists use the tools of sociology to explore and describe the social construction of gender. We began with the provocative idea that gender is not just an individual identity but also a process, a system of social stratification, and a social institution.

We also discovered that sexual variation differentiation in humans and other animals is not a strictly binary process. We also explored the difference between assigned gender and the dynamic processes of gender identity formation and expression.

While the other chapters in this textbook include a section that describes collective action for social change, this chapter is the exception because it describes groundbreaking theoretical work that informs the social activism you will encounter in the coming chapters.

Review of Learning Objectives

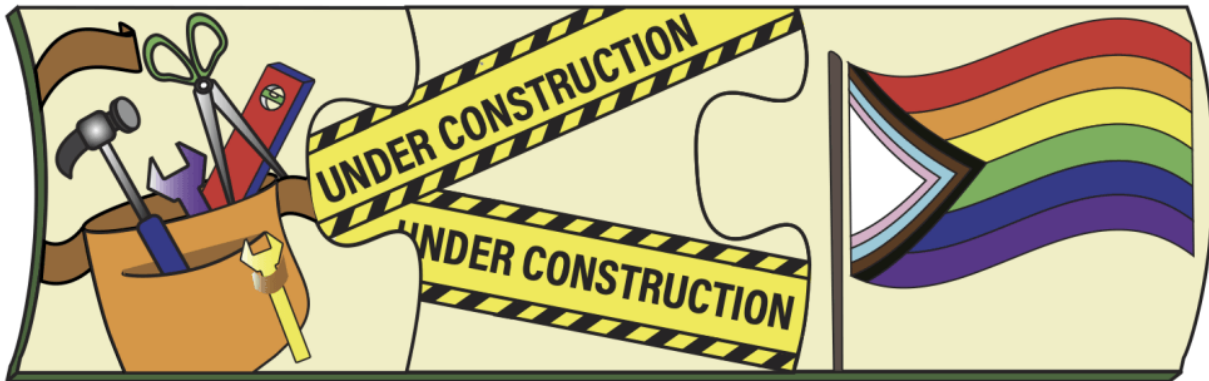
After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the social construction of gender from a sociological perspective
2. Describe biological indicators of sexual difference.
3. Discuss the gender identity formation process from a sociological perspective
4. Differentiate between gender identity and gender expression
5. Reflect on your personal experience of gender socialization

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is it important to understand gender as a socially constructed process?
Answer: Social constructs are flexible and adaptable to the needs of society and are always subject to change and adaptation over time and across cultures. Understanding gender can help reduce anxiety around changing gender norms.
2. How can understanding the biology of sexual differentiation help people understand that the gender binary is socially constructed?
Answer: While it can be tempting to reduce reproductive biology to binary terms (i.e., either ovaries or testes), biological variation, an essential component in the evolution of all life, produces a spectrum of possible genetic, hormonal, and physical combinations.
3. Describe the relationship between sex assigned at birth and gender identity.
Answer: A growing body of research reveals that gender identity is not purely based just on socialization or biology but a combination of the two and also on individual preference. While many children develop a gender identity that aligns with their assigned gender, transgender and gender-nonconforming children as young as three display a preference for gender-nonconforming clothing and play and a tendency to self-socialize as a gender other than the one they were assigned.
4. How do people develop their gender expression?
Answer: Recalling theories of identity development, we can think of gender expression as beginning when people internalize their identity and are aware enough to present it externally to society through clothing, personal grooming, self-adornment, physical posture and gestures, and other elements of self-presentation.
5. (Critical self-reflection) What have you learned about your own experience of gender socialization?
Answer: Only you can answer this!

Real But Not True: Check-in



Designed by Nora Karna & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Let's take a moment to reflect on what you've learned in this chapter about socially constructed gender norms.

The Tools Of Sociology



Designed by Nora Karna & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Tools of Sociology:

What specific examples of the tools of sociology have been discussed in this chapter?

- Sociological Imagination
- Research-based Evidence
- Social Theory

Socially Constructed - Not True

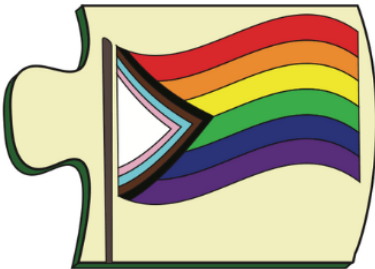


 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Socially Constructed:

- What examples of gender norms being imposed, enforced, reproduced, challenged, and changed have you discovered in this chapter?

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Real in Consequence: Social Stigma

- What examples of real consequences for violating or conforming to socially constructed gender norms have you discovered in this chapter?

Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion

Open Content, Original

“Conclusion” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

“Real But Not True Puzzle Images” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

This page titled [2.6: Conclusion](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

2.7: References

- American Psychiatric Association. (2022). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, Fifth Edition [DSM-5-TR]. doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787
- Connell, R. (1987). *Gender and power: Society, the person, and sexual politics*. Stanford University Press.
- Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity. *Gender & Society*, 19(6), 829–859. doi.org/10.1177/0891243205278639
- Cooley, C.H., (1902) *Human Nature and the Social Order*. New York: Scribner's
- Davis-Delano, L. R., Pollock, A., & Ellsworth Vose, J. (2009). Apologetic Behavior Among Female Athletes: A New Questionnaire and Initial Results. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 44(2-3), 131-150. doi.org/10.1177/1012690209335524
- Dreger, Alice. 1998. "Ambiguous Sex—or Ambivalent Medicine?" *The Hastings Center Report* 28(3): 24-25.
- Dreher, J. C., Dunne, S., Pazderska, A., Frodl, T., Nolan, J. J., & O'Doherty, J. P. (2016). Testosterone causes both prosocial and antisocial status-enhancing behaviors in human males. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 113(41), 11633–11638. doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1608085113
- Gülgöz, S., Glazier, J. J., Enright, E. A., Alonso, D. J., Durwood, L. J., Fast, A. A., Lowe, R., Ji, C., Heer, J., Martin, C. L., & Olson, K. R. (2019, December 3). Similarity in transgender and cisgender children's gender development. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences [PNAS]*, 116(49), 24480–24485. www.jstor.org/stable/26861643
- Hamilton, L. T., Armstrong, E. A., Seeley, J. L., & Armstrong, E. M. (2019). Hegemonic Femininities and Intersectional Domination. *Sociological Theory*, 37(4), 315–341. www.jstor.org/stable/26870430
- Hardy, E. (2013). *Competition, Racial Identity and Sexual Orientation*. University of Manitoba, Winnipeg
- Herman, J. L., Flores, A. R., & O'Neill, K. K. (2022). How Many Adults and Youth Identify as Transgender in the United States? Williams Institute. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/trans-adults-united-states/>
- Hill Collins, P. (1990). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. Routledge.
- How common is intersex? | Intersex Society of North America. (n.d.). Retrieved September 15, 2024, from <https://isna.org/faq/frequency/>
- Johnson, L. B., & Staples, R. (2004). *Black Families at the Crossroads: Challenges and Prospects*. Jossey-Bass.
- Kane, E. W. (2006). "No way my boys are going to be like that!": Parents' responses to children's gender nonconformity. *Gender & Society*, 20(2), 149–176. doi.org/10.1177/0891243205284276
- Kapusta, S. J. (2016). Misgendering and Its Moral Contestability. *Hypatia*, 31(3), 502–519.
- Lerum, K. (2015). A FemmeNist ManiPedifesto. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 15(2), 156-162. doi.org/10.1177/1532708614562886
- Lorber, J. (2010). *Gender inequality: Feminist theories and politics* (4th ed). Oxford University Press.
- Mulkey, N., Streed, C. G., & Chubak, B. M. (2021, July). A call to update standard of care for children with differences in sex development. *AMA Journal of Ethics*, 23(7), 550–556. doi.org/10.1001/amajethics.2021.550
- Mead, G.H. (1934). *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago
- What does "cisgender" mean? (n.d.). Retrieved September 15, 2024, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/word...gender-meaning>

National Human Genome Research Institute. (2024, August 12). Chromosome. <https://www.genome.gov/genetics-glossary/Chromosome>

National Women's Law Center. (2020). Women's political representation and legislative achievements: How women are changing state legislatures [Fact sheet]. https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/v2_final_NWLC_WomenStateLegFactSheet-4.pdf

Nordmarken, S. (2014). Microaggressions. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 1(1-2), 129-134. doi.org/10.1215/23289252-2399812

The Ohio Legislature. (2022). Senate Bill 132 Documents. Retrieved December 7, 2022, from www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-documents?id=GA134-SB-132

Sparrow, R. (2013, September 11). Gender Eugenics? The ethics of PGD for intersex conditions. *The American Journal of Bioethics*, 13(10), 29-38. doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2013.828115

State of New Jersey, Senate, No. 3540. (2021, March 11). Retrieved December 7, 2022, from https://pub.njleg.gov/Bills/2020/S4000/3540_I1.HTM

Thompson, E. H., & Pleck, J. H. (1986). The structure of male role norms. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 29(5), 531-543. doi.org/10.1177/000276486029005003

Thompson, E. H., & Pleck, J. H. (1986). The structure of male role norms. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 29(5), 531-543. doi.org/10.1177/000276486029005003

Thompson, E. H., & Pleck, J. H. (1986). The structure of male role norms. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 29(5), 531-543. doi.org/10.1177/000276486029005003

Wade, L., & Ferree, M. M. (2023). *Gender: Ideas, interactions, institutions*. W.W. Norton.

CHAPTER 3: GENDER, SEX AND SEXUALITY

3.1: Chapter Introduction

3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

3.3: Who Do You Love?

3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

3.5: Conclusion

3.6: References

This page titled [Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

3.1: Chapter Introduction

Chapter Overview: Let's Talk About Sex

Sex is an intensely personal and private topic. On an interpersonal level, sex can be pleasurable and create connections between people. In public, it can also be a divisive and politically charged topic. Sex is also used as a weapon or as a means of social control. **Sexuality** refers to a person's personal and interpersonal expression of sexual desire, behavior, and identity. The sociology of gender is concerned with how socially constructed norms about sex, sexuality, and sexual orientation impact individuals, interpersonal relationships, communities, and societies.

This chapter will explore socially constructed patriarchal norms about sexuality that reinforce heteronormativity and the social construction of gender as binary. In this chapter, you will also consider how LGBTQIA+ people have led an intersectional social movement that has demanded full inclusion in society and the right to fully embody their gender and sexual orientations. In so doing, they challenged the patriarchal status quo in contemporary culture. Finally, this chapter will demonstrate how patriarchal social norms contribute to sexual violence and apply a sociological model to the prevention of sexual violence.

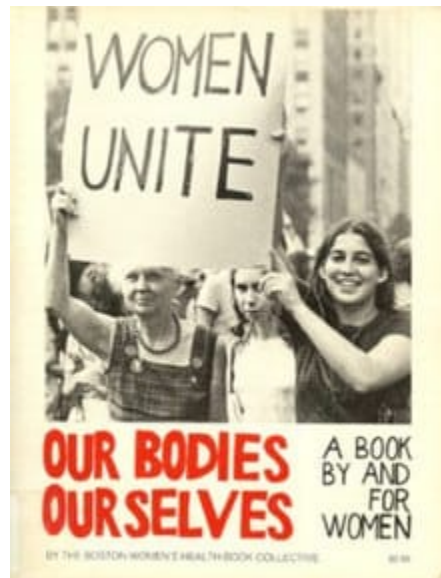


Figure 3.1 Our Bodies Ourelves. Early feminists challenged patriarchal medical systems with a Do-it-Yourself guide to sexuality and sexual health. This book, which has been updated eight times, empowered generations of women. How did you learn about sexuality? You have the option to learn more about Our Bodies Ourelves [Website] if you'd like to.

Key Terms

This section contains a list of foundational key terms from the chapter. After reviewing them here, be on the lookout for them as you work through the rest of the book.

- **affirmative consent:** consent given for each sex act each time.
- **coming out:** a social process of recognizing and sharing sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
- **cross-dressing:** an archaic term to describe men who dressed as women or women who dressed as men.
- **Ecological Systems Theory:** a theory that describes the social world as a layered system, in which each layer is a set of social domains that impact the individual. The system moves from the smallest level of the individual to the layer of family, through growing layers until it reaches institutions, society, and even historical context.
- **in the closet:** people who do not know they are LGBTQIA+ or know but do not come out publicly are said to be in the closet or closeted.
- **monogamy:** the practice of having one intimate partner at a time.
- **misogyny:** hatred of, aversion to, or prejudice against women (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

- **polyamory:** the practice of having multiple intimate partners.
- **polyandry:** the practice of one woman having multiple intimate partners at the same time.
- **polygamy:** the practice of one man having multiple intimate partners at the same time.
- **rape:** non-consensual oral, anal, or vaginal penetration.
- **sex workers:** adults who receive money or goods in exchange for consensual sexual services or erotic performances, either regularly or occasionally (Open Society Foundations 2019).
- **sexual assault:** a broad category of non-consensual sexual contact that includes various forms of rape and other illegal sexual contact.
- **sexual scripts:** socially constructed blueprints for sexual expression, sexual orientation, sexual behaviors, and sexual desires that guide our performance of sexuality.
- **sexual violence:** any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by any person, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting (WHO 2022).
- **sexuality:** refers to a person's personal and interpersonal expression of sexual desire, behavior, and identity.
- **social problem:** a social condition or pattern of behavior that has negative consequences for individuals, our social world, or our physical world (Guerrero 2016:4).
- **sodomy:** an archaic legal term to describe oral or anal sex, generally between men.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

1. Discuss sex and sexuality from a sociological perspective.
2. Describe the evolution of the social movement for LGBTQIA+ rights in the U.S.
3. Identify how patriarchal social norms contribute to sexual violence.
4. Apply the social-ecological model to the prevention of sexual violence.

Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction

Open Content, Original

"Chapter Introduction" by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

Figure 3.1. "[Ourbodiesourselves-1973](#)" from Our Bodies, Ourselves is included under fair use.

3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

Sex and sexuality have long been a subject of scientific inquiry. Beginning in the early 1800s, research about human sexuality was conducted by physicians, psychiatrists, and criminologists concerned with questions of public health and deviance from social norms (Kinsey Institute 2022). Binary, biologically determined gender was an unquestioned assumption in early sexual research. Feminine sexual autonomy, same-sex attraction, and transgender and non-binary gender expression, once considered moral problems, were pathologized as mental illness.

Beginning in the mid-1900s, and coinciding with a “sexual revolution” that challenged dominant gender norms, social research began to challenge the idea that deviation from socially constructed sexual norms is neither a moral failing nor a mental illness. Recall from Chapter One that C. Wright Mills (he/him) described the sociological imagination as a way of understanding that behavior, which seems like an individual choice or problem, can be understood as the result of social and cultural influences. As you work through this section, use your sociological imagination to think about how sexual norms are socially constructed and understood.

Early Research: What is Normal?

In the 1930s, the zoologist Alfred Kinsey (he/him) began teaching an interdisciplinary course for married students about human sexuality. His students frequently confided in him about details about their own sexual experiences and then asked a common question, “Am I normal?” Around the same time, he delivered a lecture to a faculty discussion group where he attacked the “widespread ignorance of sexual structure and physiology,” and he argued that waiting to engage in sexual activity until marriage was psychologically harmful. This lecture, along with his students’ earnest disclosures, inspired research that documented the actual lived sexual experiences of research participants. Kinsey’s findings were published in two books, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953), known collectively as the Kinsey Reports (Kinsey Institute 2022).

Kinsey shed new light on the sexual behavior and the physical sexual characteristics of the respondents. For example, Kinsey found that married women in their late teens reported having sex an average of 2.8 times per week; for women at age 30, frequency fell to 2.2; and by age 50, married women reported only having sex once a week. He also found between 10% and 16% of married women aged 26 to 50 were engaged in extramarital sex. Based on his research, Kinsey also estimated that about half of all married men had some extramarital sexual experience at some point in their married lives. Kinsey contributed to and documented changes in sexual norms from the 1930s to the 1980s, including the increased acceptance of sex outside of marriage and increased acceptance of homosexuality. Today, the Kinsey Institute at Indiana University continues to produce research on sex and sexuality.

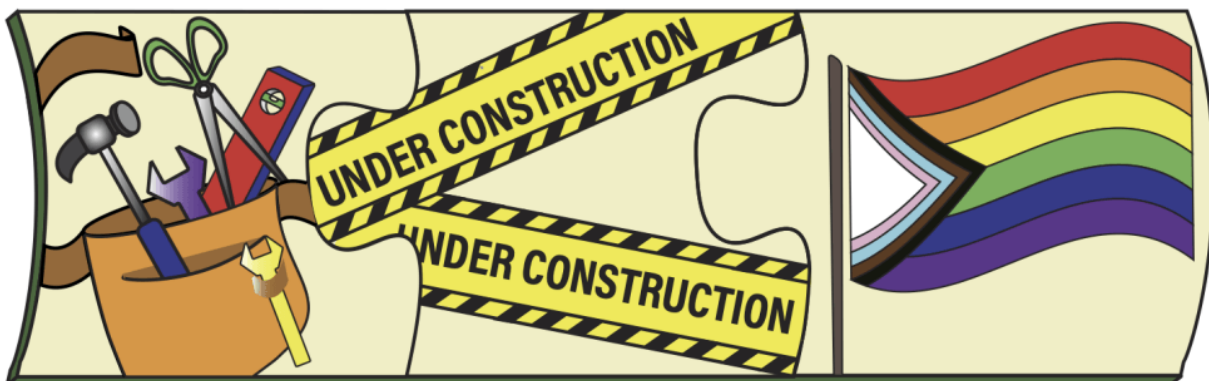


Figure 3.2. Clelia Duel Mosher (1892) surveyed women about their sexual experience decades before Kinsey, but her survey was not published until 1980. Why do you think it took over 60 years for her work to be recognized?

Clelia Duel Mosher (she/her), a medical doctor and professor at Stanford, studied women's sexual health and advocated for a better understanding of menstrual hygiene and against corsets. Decades before Kinsey's well-funded work, Mosher compiled the *Statistical Study Of The Marriage Of Forty-Seven Women*. This first known survey of women's beliefs about and experiences of sex included questions about pleasure, contraception, frequency of sex, and subjective importance of sex (Landale & Guest 1986). Mosher never published the survey, which was forgotten until 1973, and then finally published in 1980. Because her surveys were collected between 1892 and 1920, they offer insight into shifting social understanding of sex, marriage, and feminine pleasure in post-victorian culture (Seidmen 1989).

While neither Mosher nor Kinsey were social scientists, their research methods relied on structured interviews to collect qualitative data (Chapter One) describing individual experiences, understanding, and opinions about sexuality. They are important examples of researchers who engaged a sociological imagination to understand individual experiences within specific social contexts. But how do actual sociologists approach the study of sex and sexuality?

Real But Not True: Sex Outside of Marriage

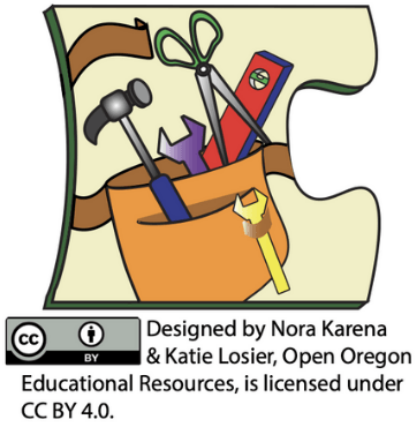


Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Let's consider how what you are learning about sex outside of marriage demonstrates that sexual norms are socially constructed

(not true) and have real-life consequences (real).

The Tools Of Sociology



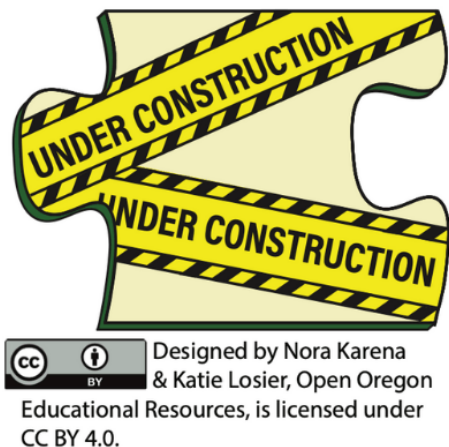
The tools of sociology include:

- Sociological Imagination
- **Research-based Evidence**
- Social Theory

Gender conflict theory analyzes how economic gender inequality supports patriarchal power structures in the workplace and the marketplace.

A feminist theoretical perspective of the gender wage gap helps us see how systems of power like patriarchy create the social conditions that lead to gender-based income inequality.

Socially Constructed - Not True



We can recognize that socially social norms against sex outside of marriage are *not universally true* when we can demonstrate that they:

- **Change over time**
- **Are not the same in all societies**

- **Are imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, or challenged through social interactions.**

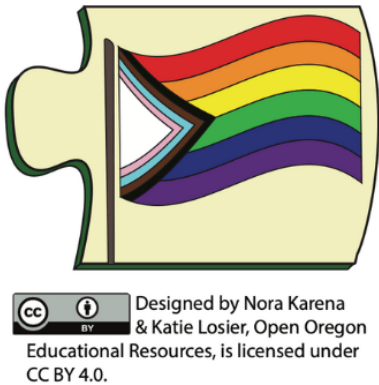
Having identified that social norms against sex outside of marriage do not align with the lived experience of so many people, we can look at how these norms are socially constructed:

- Laws and customs
- Religious teachings
- Literature and Stories
- Popular music and entertainment
- Education
- Family

Sexual norms have changed over time.

- A majority of Americans currently believe that sex before marriage is socially acceptable. This was not true when Kinsey started his research.

Real Consequences



The *real* social consequences of the social norms that stigmatize sex outside of marriage:

- People have believed that they were sexually deviant because their sexual experiences were outside of accepted norms.
- Early social scientists relied on these norms to create scientific theories of deviance that further stigmatized people whose lived experiences did not align with accepted norms.
- Most states have had laws against sex outside of marriage at some point in U.S. History. 16 states still do, although they are rarely enforced.

As you continue to work through this book, be on the lookout for other examples of socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences and for the ways that tools of sociology can be used to reveal them as social constructions that are not universally true, but have real consequences.

Sexual Scripts

One line of sociological inquiry involves the study of how culture is socially created and reproduced in social interactions. You will learn more about social interactionist theories in Chapter Four. For now, let's see how this works with sexual scripts. A script is what actors read or study to guide their behavior and dialog in certain roles. It teaches them what to do and say in order to perform their role. Similarly, **sexual scripts** are socially constructed blueprints for sexual expression, sexual orientation, sexual behaviors, and sexual desires that guide our performance of sexuality.

We are not born with sexual scripts in place. They are socially constructed through a process of sexual socialization, in which

we learn how, when, where, with whom, why, and what motivates us as sexual beings. Sexual scripts, once learned, shape how we answer our biological drives. Many of us learn our sexual scripts passively as we synthesize concepts, images, ideals, and—sometimes—misconceptions.

Sexual scripts carry our shared understandings about sexual behavior and are highly gendered. In other words, men and women have specific parts to play in many commonly understood sexual scripts because sexuality is also a way of constructing gender. For example, the commonly-held belief that men are stronger, courser, more active, and more aggressive while women are weaker, softer, more passive, and more submissive in sexual relationships supports binary sexual scripts about gendered dominance and submission. These scripts rest on an assumption that men and women are opposites. They are encoded in some religious messages, health education, and popular culture.

There are three levels of sexual scripts: cultural, interpersonal, and psychological. Laura Carpenter (she/her), analyzed cultural-level sexual scripts in 244 articles published between 1974 and 1994 in the teen magazine, *Seventeen*. The articles discussed a broad range of controversial sexual topics of interest to young women. Carpenter found that “Sexual scripts in popular media may have profound real-life effects” and that articles favoring traditional sexual scripts “may discourage challenges to the sexual and gender status quo” (Carpenter 1998).

Many sexual scripts that dominate patriarchal cultures depend on commonly held, socially constructed assumptions like “men should be in charge of sex,” “women should not enjoy sex or express their desire for it,” “men are more sexual than women,” “all sex leads to orgasm.” These assumptions can undermine intimacy between sexual partners because people experience sexual desire differently. For example, women who desire sex and are sexually aggressive or men who do not experience sexual attraction or do not have a desire for sex are set up to be shamed. More positive sexual scripts encourage sexual partners to take ownership of their sexual experiences, communicate openly and honestly about their feelings, and learn to meet one another’s desires and needs while ensuring their desires and needs are also met.

LEARN MORE: Racialized Sexual Scripts

Learn more about how sexual scripts are also racialized in this awesome blog from [Black Feminisms \[Website\]](#).

Pleasure, Work, and Power

Have you ever noticed that social norms about sexuality are often dependent on the relationship in which a sex act is performed? A consensual sex act between two people in a committed relationship or two single people is generally considered socially acceptable. However, the same consensual act between more than two people or between a partnered person and a single person is considered less acceptable. When the same sex act is exchanged for money or other goods, it is even less acceptable. Similarly, a significant portion of people in the U.S. still believe that sex between people of the same gender is not acceptable (Brenan 2024). While we often refer to sex as a private issue, it has very public consequences for people who transgress sexual norms and rewards for people who uphold them.

In this section, we will apply our sociological imaginations to orgasms, sex work, and monogamy, three topics related to sexuality, gender, and power. Since sexuality is an aspect of relationships, this section will also touch on various forms of intimacy in the context of different relationships. As you work through this section, look for examples of how gender, sexuality, and power are socially constructed, contested, or enforced.

Orgasms

The orgasm gap is the difference between male-reported orgasms and female-reported orgasms. According to data from the National Survey of Sexual Health and Behavior from 2018, 91% of men reported they had an orgasm at their most recent sexual event. Yet, only 64% of women reported an orgasm at their most recent sexual event, as you see in figure 3.3 (Townes, et. al. 2022). Men of the three different sexual identities are more likely to orgasm and experience more orgasms in heterosexual relationships.

The double standard relates to women’s willing participation in and enjoyment of sexual acts. They should desire sex but not appear *too* willing. Women should also “fulfill” the desires of their male sexual partners with minimal focus on their own pleasures. Sex is for men to enjoy and women to participate in for their partner’s pleasure. The sexual scripts enacted in patriarchal society teach women to focus on pleasing men and men on pleasing themselves.

Women who orgasm more in intimate relations receive more oral sex, have longer sexual encounters, are more satisfied within

the relationship, speak up about what they want, and routinely have sexual encounters that include more elements of intimacy, like kissing, build-up, and manual stimulation (Frederick et al. 2017).

Do people in LGBTQIA+ relationships experience an orgasm gap? Figure 3.3 shows that heterosexual men usually or always orgasm during sex (95%). Gay men (89%), bisexual men (88%), and lesbian women (86%) stated high rates of orgasm while being sexually intimate. Bisexual women and heterosexual women fall short with 66% and 65%, respectively.

Heterosexual Men Are Most Likely and Heterosexual Women Are Least Likely to Orgasm During a Partnered Sexual Encounter

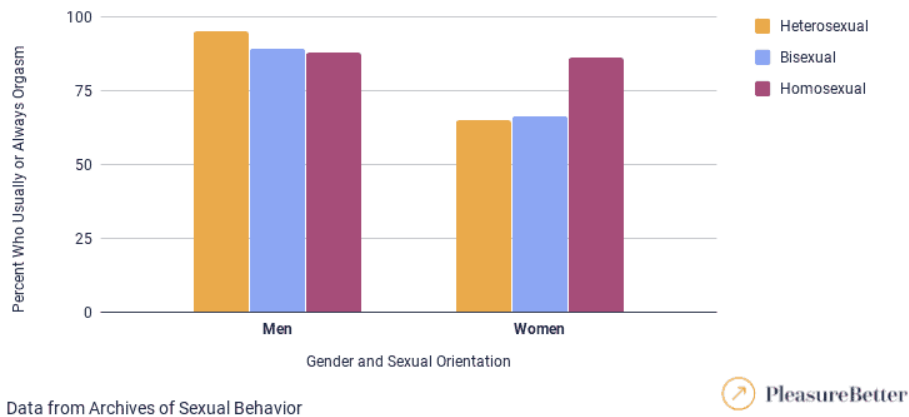


Figure 3.3. Heterosexual Men Are Most Likely, and Heterosexual Women Are Least Likely to Orgasm During a Partnered Sexual Encounter. This graph compares rates of orgasm for people who identify as Heterosexual, Bisexual, and Homosexual. Notice that men and women who identify as homosexual experience orgasms at the same rate. Image description available. [Image description](#).

Sex Work

Sex work, **sex workers**, and their patrons have also been a popular topic of sociological research. **Sex workers** are adults who receive money or goods in exchange for consensual sexual services or erotic performances, either regularly or occasionally (Open Society Foundations 2019). The term “sex worker” is preferred over the more stigmatized term “prostitute” because it acknowledges that sex work is a form of labor that encompasses a range of activities beyond having sex with strangers for cash. Sex work can also include exotic dancing, phone and internet sex, and performing in live or filmed pornography. Sociologists Kari Larum (she/her) and Barb Brents (she/her) have studied sex and sex work from a feminist perspective and identified several subtopics of scholarship about sex work, including “bodily and emotional labor, criminal justice, citizenship, culture, discourse analysis, gender, globalization, (im)migration, organizations, politics, religion, sexuality, and social movements” (Larum & Brents 2016).

Sociologists also consider how the legal and cultural marginalization makes sex workers especially vulnerable to exploitation and forced labor. Larum and Brents identify how bias against sex work contributes to the rise of the “rescue industry,” which generates moral panic by reframing all sex work as “sex trafficking” and all sex workers as either sex traffickers or victims to generate funding for more policing of communities that are vulnerable to exploitation and social services to “rescue” and rehabilitate sex workers.

In contrast, the feminist sociologist Crystal A. Jackson has documented how sex workers organize to create networks of care and resistance. Jackson’s research at the 2010 Desiree Alliance conference, a conference by and for sex workers, identified peer-to-peer skill sharing as a means to build safety and resilience in a hostile and dangerous working environment (Jackson 2019). This peer-based strategy echoes many other social movements led by oppressed people.

Monogamy

In contrast to the lived reality documented by Kinsey and other researchers, social norms surrounding sexuality in the U.S. have traditionally favored heterosexual monogamous sex between married partners over premarital sex, extramarital sex, and sex between people of the same gender. **Monogamy** is the practice of having one intimate partner at a time. Some sociologists

have stressed the importance of regulating sexual behavior to ensure marital cohesion and family stability, arguing that sexual activity in the confines of monogamous marriage serves to intensify the bond between spouses and to ensure that procreation occurs within a stable, legally recognized relationship. As monogamous same-sex intimate partnerships have become normalized, a growing body of evidence shows that positive psychosocial development is not dependent on whether parents are straight, lesbian, or gay, but the quality of parents' relationship with each other is determinative (Wainright et al. 2004).

The sexual revolution of the 60s and 70s saw a shift in social norms around premarital sex that has been attributed to an increase in women's sexual autonomy. A 1983 study of 49 sex manuals published between 1950 and 1980 to determine if recent changes in social gender norms for women have influenced sexual scripts in sex and marriage manuals for heterosexual couples. This research found a clear shift from a model of women's sexuality that emphasizes gender difference and inequality to a model that prioritizes women's sexual autonomy. The study identifies new sexual scripts that reframe a woman's premarital sexual experience, including lesbian and bisexual experiences, as positive (Weinberg et al. 1983). Women empowered to take responsibility for their own sexual pleasure and satisfaction are no longer deviant. They are the norm.

Social norms against sexual infidelity in monogamous marriages have been more constant. A 2023 Gallup Poll (2023) found that only 22% of respondents believed that it is unacceptable for unmarried people to have sex, but 88% believe that it is unacceptable for married people who have sex with someone outside of marriage (Jones 2023). A 2020 study theorized the reason for this may be found in the meaning we attach to sex in a committed partnership, in which sexual fidelity is a marker of trust, and sexual infidelity signals more generalized untrustworthiness (Belleau et al. 2020).

Feminists and queer theorists also explore relationships between sexuality and power. For example, the book *Questioning the Couple Form* explores a historically feminist critique of the cultural dominance of families built on "the romantic love, couple-based form" and documents emerging alternative forms of intimate relationships and family building (Roseneil et al. 2020).

Check out *LEARN MORE: Polyamory, Monogamy and Power* in the box below for an example of how Mimi Schippers (she/her) researches non-monogamy from a sociological perspective in her book, *Polyamory, Monogamy, and American Dreams: The Stories We Tell about Poly Lives and the Cultural Production of Inequality* (2020).

Various forms of polyamory have always existed in human societies. **Polyamory** is the practice of having multiple intimate partners. One form of polyamory includes **polygamy**, the practice of one man having multiple intimate partners at the same time, which is a norm in many cultures around the world. **Polyandry** is the practice of one woman having multiple intimate partners at the same time, which is less common but has been a dominant practice in some societies. Sociologists explore various forms of sexual partnership and the social conditions that favor certain forms.

As polyamory has become more visible, some people have begun describing their sexuality, not only in terms of who they are sexually attracted to, as we will discuss in the next section, but also in terms of their preferred partnership forms, such as being polyamorous or monogamous.

LEARN MORE: Polyamory, Monogamy and Power

Watch [Polyamory, Monogamy, and American Dreams: The Stories We Tell About Poly Lives and the Cultural Production of Inequality \[Streaming Video\]](#) to learn more about how sociologists approach topics like polyamory, monogamy, and power.

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=382#h5p-9>

Licenses and Attributions for Sex and the Sociological Imagination

Open Content, Original

"Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination" by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

"Orgasms" by Heidi Ebsen is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True Puzzle Images” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Sexual Scripts” is adapted from “[5.1: Sexual Scripts](#)” by Garrett Rieck & Justin Lundin, [Introduction to Health](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Heidi Esbensen and Nora Karena.

Figure 3.2. “[Clelia Duel Mosher, 1892](#)” is in the [Public Domain](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Sex worker” definition by Open Society Foundation (2019) is included under fair use.

Figure 3.3. “[Heterosexual Men Are Most Likely and Heterosexual Women Are Least Likely to Orgasm During a Partnered Sexual Encounter](#)” by Kate Williams, [PleasureBetter](#), is included under fair use.

This page titled [3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

3.3: Who Do You Love?

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, early sociologists viewed same-gender sexual attraction and behavior as deviancy from “normal” or “natural” sexual attraction and behavior. But is sexual attraction between people of different genders the only normal or natural form of sexual attraction? Sexual attraction and intimacy between people of the same gender have always existed in human societies, with varying degrees of social acceptance. In non-human animals, more than 1500 species of animals, including many primates, have been documented engaging in same-gender sexual activity and forming even long-lasting same-gender pair bonds (Gómez et al. 2023). Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that same-gender sexual behavior is natural (it is common in the natural world) but that human societies tend to regulate sexual behavior by socially constructing categories of sexual behavior that are acceptable or “normal” and unacceptable, or “deviant.”

Recall from Chapter One that heteronormativity is the social enforcement of heterosexuality, in which there are only two genders, that these genders are opposites, and that any sexual activity between people of the same gender is deviant or unnatural. So then, heteronormativity helps regulate sexual behavior within patriarchal societies. Sexuality is more than sexual behavior, however. Sexuality also includes sexual orientation. **Sexual orientation** refers to emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people; it is often used to signify the relationship between a person’s gender identity and the gender identities to which a person is most attracted (Southern Poverty Law, 2018). In other words, sexual orientation describes who we are sexually attracted to.

This section will engage our sociological imagination to understand the social struggle of people who have resisted heteronormativity and demanded full inclusion in society, including the right to fully embody their sexual orientation. The chart in figure 3.4 identifies many possible sexual orientations and includes words that may have been introduced quite recently. As you read through this section, keep in mind that aspects of the struggle for full inclusion are expressed in the evolving language we use to communicate ideas of sexual orientation, sexual behavior, and identity.

Figure 3.4. An incomplete list of possible sexual orientations. For a complete list of acronyms and definitions of sexual orientations and other gender-related terms, along with guidance on best practices for serving LGBTQIA+ Students, check out [A Glossary Of Terms from the Southern Poverty Law Center \[Website\]](#).

Sexual Orientation	Definition
Asexual	People who do not experience sexual attraction or do not have a desire for sex. Many experience romantic or emotional attractions across the entire spectrum of sexual orientations. Asexuality differs from celibacy, which refers to abstaining from sex. Also, Ace, or Ace Community.
Bisexual	A person emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender, or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree.
Demisexual	Someone who feels sexual attraction only to people with whom they have an emotional bond—often considered to be on the asexual spectrum.
Gay	People (often, but not exclusively, men) whose enduring physical, romantic, or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex or gender identity.
Heterosexuality	A term that describes an enduring physical, romantic, or emotional attraction to people of the opposite sex. Also straight.
Lesbian	Used to describe a woman whose enduring physical, romantic, or emotional attraction is to other women.
Pansexual	Used to describe people who have the potential for emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to people of any gender identity, though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree. The term panromantic may refer to a person who feels these emotional and romantic attractions but identifies as asexual.
Queer	Once a pejorative term, now reclaimed and used by some within academic circles and the LGBTQIA+ community to describe sexual orientations and gender identities that are not exclusively heterosexual or cisgender.
Same-gender loving	A term coined in the early 1990s by activist Cleo Manago, this term was and is used by some members of the black community who feel that terms like Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual (and sometimes the communities therein) are Eurocentric and fail to affirm Black culture, history, and identity.

Gay Liberation

In rigidly patriarchal societies, being identified as homosexual carries serious social and sometimes legal consequences. This was especially true in the post-World War II period (1946 – 1968), identified by historians as a particularly harsh time in the U.S. Even though Kinsey (1948, 1954) estimated that at least 37% of men and 13% of women reported “some form of homosexual experience,” and roughly 10% of the men and 4% of the women who participated in the survey reported “extensive homosexual experience,” laws against sodomy and “cross-dressing” created a hostile and dangerous social climate for people who we now recognize as LGBTQIA+. **Sodomy** is an archaic legal term to describe oral or anal sex, generally between men. **Cross-dressing** is an archaic term to describe men who dressed as women or women who dressed as men. Neither term is commonly used now.

These laws were rigidly enforced in so-called vice raids of the bars and social clubs where gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and trans people gathered to socialize (figure 3.5). This targeted persecution characterized homosexuality and communism as twin threats to the American family and freedom (Strub 2008).



Figure 3.5. The 1969 Stonewall Riots. Protesters clashed with police outside the Stonewall Inn and sparked the riots that marked the beginning of the Gay Rights Movement . Have you heard of Stonewall? Image description available. [Image description](#).

Like feminists of the 1960s and 1970s, many African American gay men and lesbians were engaged in the civil rights movement. They adopted similar tactics to organize and support each other. The writer James Baldwin (he/him) and the civil rights leader Bayard Rustin (he/him), who both identified as gay men, were icons of the civil rights era and active in the early “gay liberation movement.” Baldwin called for Black and White Americans to “like lovers, insist on, or create, the consciousness of the others... that we might to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world” (Baldwin, 1962, 105.). The shift in consciousness he called for included a shift towards full acceptance of LGBTQIA+ people.

Rustin helped organize the 1963 *March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom*, where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous speech, *I Have a Dream*. After the famous Stonewall Riots in 1969, when patrons of the Stonewall Inn in New York City, including trans activists Marsha P. Johnson (she/her) and Sylvia Rivera (she/her), resisted police harassment and sparked a series of demonstrations by gay, lesbian and trans people in the surrounding neighborhoods (figure 3.5). Rustin described the action as a continuation of the civil rights movement and identified four actions that all oppressed people, including LGBTQIA+ people, must engage in: overcome fear, overcome self-blame, overcome self-denial, and engage in political, moral, and psychological action to create “an America where [people] cannot openly manifest hate” (1986).

Many feminists in the civil rights era were weary of lesbians, and for a while, lesbians were excluded from feminist organizing. In 1969, the same year as the Stonewall Riots, Betty Friedan (she/her), author of the *Feminine Mystique* (1963), and the first president of the National Organization for Women (NOW) referred to lesbians as a “lavender menace.” In response, a group of self-described radical lesbian activists, including the writer Rita Mae Brown (she/her, shown in figure 3.6), adopted the name Lavender Menace and organized to confront NOW and secure full inclusion. Chapter Four will more fully describe the intersectional work of Black queer and trans women to define and create a coalition-based approach to mutual liberation



Figure 3.6. Lavender Menace members, from left to right: Lita Lepie, Rita Mae Brown, Karla Jay, Arlene Kisner, Lois Hart, and Martha Shelley. For more information on the history of this group, visit [Lavender Menace Action at Second Congress to Unite Women \[Website\]](#).

In 1979, lesbians, gay men, bisexual people, trans people, and their allies demonstrated political solidarity with the first March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. Two years later, the HIV/AIDS crisis began to kill thousands of gay men, and public health efforts to identify and treat the virus were delayed by a lack of political will. An LGBTQIA+ coalition of advocates, including groups like ACT UP, the Lesbian Avengers, and Parents, Family, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), built a political base of power that helped to change public opinion about LGBTQIA+ people and the political response to HIV/AIDS.

This coalition built a broad political base of LGBTQIA+ people and allies who organized in support of federal and state legislation that increased the penalties for hate crimes committed based on race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, or gender, allowed same-gender couples to adopt children in some states, struck down laws against sodomy, and finally, in 2015, federally recognized marriage between same-gender couples.

So then, in the half-century between Stonewall and the present day, a broad coalitional social movement has worked to fulfill Rustin's call for political, moral, and psychological action to create an America where people cannot openly manifest hate. Of course, the struggle to maintain these gains continues, as we highlight throughout this book.

Now, let's turn our sociological imaginations from public issues to the everyday personal revolutions required to fulfill Rustin's call for LGBTQIA+ individuals to overcome fear, self-blame, and self-denial.

Coming Out

People who identify themselves as LGBTQIA+ face intense social pressures. There are indeed more legal protections for LGBTQIA+ people than ever before, and more people than ever before accept and embrace LGBTQIA+ people in public life. Yet, as we discuss throughout this book, the civil rights of LGBTQIA+ people are still up for debate in state legislatures, schools, religious institutions, and communities. A powerful and well-organized minority of anti-LGBTQIA+ political activists are working hard to maintain heteronormativity in American culture. How do you think these social pressures impact the process of individual identity formation (Chapter 2)?

A unique aspect of identity formation for people who identify as LGBTQIA+ is coming out. **Coming out** is a social process of recognizing and sharing sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Coming out is both private and also very public. Because heterosexuality is the norm to which children are routinely socialized, the process of becoming aware that you are not heterosexual and integrating that awareness with identity can be difficult. For people whose families and communities are deeply invested in heteronormativity, coming out can include a risk of relationship loss and social stigmatization. For people who come out to supportive family, friends, and community, coming out can be an affirming process.

People who do not know they are LGBTQIA+ or know but do not come out publicly are said to be **in the closet** or closeted. Before the HIV/AIDS crisis, it was much more common for people to be out to a small circle of other LGBTQIA+ people but not out to

family, straight friends, or their community. In those days, the closet represented safety. During the early days of the HIV/AIDS Crisis, activists trying to build political will to address the crisis challenged people to come out with the slogan, “silence = death” (figure 3.7). In other words, fear of being known as LGBTQIA+ was preventing people from exercising their political power.



Figure 3.7. Silence = Death Poster. During the early days of the HIV/AIDS crisis, LGBTQIA+ activists realized that the closet was no longer a place of safety. Why did they make this claim?

The first National Coming Out Day was organized on October 11, 1988, to create a safe and affirming social environment for as many people as possible to come out and raise the visibility of LGBTQIA+ people. It worked, too. As more people came out, including those who were respected and powerful in popular culture, public opinion about LGBTQIA+ issues began to change. On a more personal level, people who thought they didn't know anyone who was queer began to realize that they knew and loved LGBTQIA+ people. This awareness made the issues like HIV, workplace discrimination, and hate crimes seem more personal. As Michelle Obama famously observed, “It is harder to hate people close up” (The Late Show 2018). Today, coming out is recognized and celebrated as a right of passage for LGBTQIA+ people, although it is still not a safe process for many people.



Figure 3.8. The National Coming Out Day Poster was created by pop artist Keith Haring, who died from complications of HIV/AIDS in 1990. To learn more about Haring's art and legacy, check out the [Keith Haring Foundation \[Website\]](#).

Has anyone you know ever **come out** to you about being LGBTQIA+? What was it like for you? What do you think it was like for them? According to a 2013 Pew Research survey of people who identify as “lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals,” 27% were younger than ten years old when they “first felt they might not be heterosexual.” 59% of respondents were between 10 and 19, and 11%

were 20 or older (Pew Research Center 2013). The video in figure 3.9 features people who came out as teens. The video in figure 3.10 features a person coming out later in life. As you watch them, notice that Andy said that he knew he was gay for a long time before he came out. The same Pew Research study found that 43% of respondents did not come out to someone else until they were over 20. In other words, there can be a significant time lapse between coming out to self and publicly coming out.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=383#oembed-1>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhkuYGZyp_o

Figure 3.9. Can you identify the private and public aspects of coming out in these [Teen Coming Out Stories \[Streaming Video\]](#)? [Transcript](#).

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=383#oembed-2>

<https://youtu.be/c1GoNOvo2IA>

Figure 3.10. How is [Andy's coming out story \[Streaming Video\]](#) different from the stories in figure 3.9? How is it similar? [Transcript](#).

The public aspect of coming out is not a one-and-done event. Many people describe coming out many times, first to friends, family, and possibly co-workers, and then as disclosing sexual orientation becomes a routine part of establishing a new social relationship. Each disclosure can represent a risk. The social risks associated with coming out can also vary depending on location. For example, people in the western U.S. report much higher rates of acceptance than people in the South and Midwest (Pew Research Center 2013).

Have you ever been to a Pride event? Pride festivals and parades are an extension of the public aspect of coming out that also emerged from the Gay Liberation Movement. These collective coming-out rituals are demonstrations of visibility for LGBTQIA+ people and celebrations of LGBTQIA+ joy, diversity, and solidarity. In this context, pride is not vanity but rather an antidote to the fear, self-blame, and self-denial that Rustin identified.

Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

As you have worked through this section about sexual orientation, have you noticed themes that overlap with gender identity and gender expression? For instance, trans, intersex, and non-binary people have similar coming out experiences to those of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and queer people. This can be even more complex for people with trans and nonbinary gender identities and queer sexual orientation. This section will use the Gender Unicorn (figure 3.11) to bring together the discussion of gender identity from Chapter 2 with the discussion of sexuality in this chapter to see how identity, expression, sex, and attraction work together to produce a diverse rainbow of individual possibilities beyond the binary patriarchal norms of sexuality and gender.

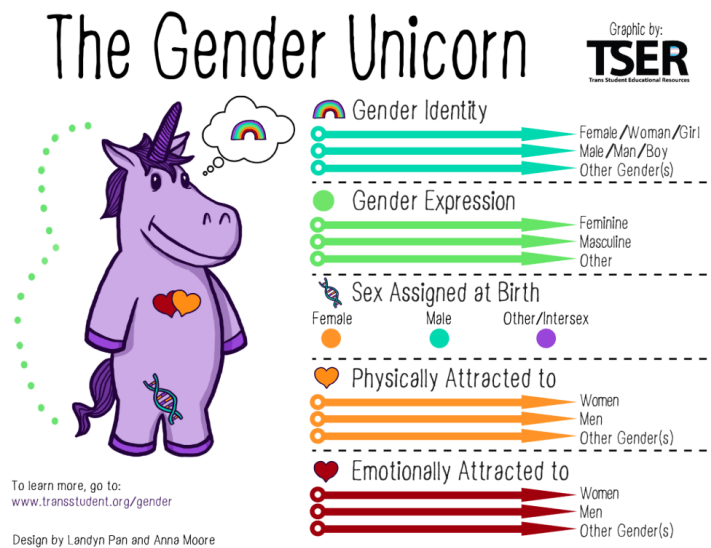


Figure 3.11. Gender Unicorn. This infographic was created to help people understand five aspects of gender and sexual orientation. Check out the activity at the end of this chapter for a chance to work through the infographic for yourself. Image description available. [Image description](#).

Recall from Chapter Two that gender identity is the gender we experience ourselves to be. Everyone has a gender identity, including you. Binary construction of gender restricts gender identity to either female/woman/girl or male/man/boy. A more expansive construction of gender allows for the possibility that female, woman, and girl and male, man, and boy are also not necessarily linked to each other but are just six common gender identities. It also recognizes transgender and nonbinary genders, as well as ethnic and culturally specific third genders like Fa'afafine and Two-Spirit (Chapter One).

Recall also from Chapter Two that gender expression is how our gender identity is expressed outwardly through clothing, personal grooming, self-adornment, physical posture and gestures, and other elements of self-presentation. Here again, the binary construction of gender restricts possible gender expression to be either masculine or feminine. Patriarchal gender norms require gender expression to align with gender identity. More expansive nonbinary constructions of gender identity hold space for nonbinary gender expressions that may blend masculine and feminine, elements of self-presentation, or express no discernible gender at all. Nonpatriarchal gender norms hold space for gender expression that may not align with gender identity and also with queer gender identities, like Bears (figure 3.12). Bears are gender expressions specific to gay men that play with traditional masculinity in the form of abundant facial and body hair, large body sizes, and traditionally masculine clothes. Queer gender expressions can also be racially, ethnic, and culturally specific. Drag is an art form that plays with gender expression and gender identity.



Figure 3.12. Oregon Bears march in Portland Pride Parade. Bears are one of several gay masculine gender expressions. How do you describe your gender expression?

LEARN MORE: Queer Gender Expression

To learn more about lesbian masculinity, watch [Studs and Butches \[Streaming Video\]](#).

The final concept from Chapter Two that we will review here is sex assigned at birth. Recall that sex assigned at birth is the assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on a combination of anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes. While babies born with differences in sexual development, including genetic, hormonal, or anatomical variations, produce atypical sex characteristics, such as chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals, who might otherwise be assigned intersex at birth, have historically been assigned either male or female at birth in patriarchal societies, and subject to medically unnecessary genital surgeries which have been shown to have significant physical and psychological risks as children mature. The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) opposes medically unnecessary genital surgeries performed on intersex children (AAFP 2023).

Physical attraction is the basis for sexual orientation. Binary heteronormativity demands that people be physically attracted to people of the “opposite gender.” Nonbinary sexuality recognizes that there are no opposite genders, that masculinity and femininity exist within both genders, and that physical attraction exists as a broad spectrum of possibilities. Some people are only attracted to people of the same gender, some are only attracted to a specific gender that is different from their own, others are attracted to people of all genders, and still others do not experience physical attraction to anyone.

Emotional attraction as a category is often overlooked, but it is an important aspect of sexual orientation. Sexual and romantic/emotional attraction can be from a variety of factors, including but not limited to gender identity, gender expression/presentation, and sex assigned at birth or other types of attraction related to gender, such as aesthetical or platonic.

The Gender Unicorn can help describe the ways sexual orientation encompasses gender identity, gender expression, sex assigned at birth, physical attraction, and emotional attraction. Check out the *Looking Through the Lens* activity at the end of this chapter to use the Gender Unicorn to explore your own multi-dimensional sexual identity.

Let’s Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=383#h5p-10>

Licenses and Attributions for Who Do You Love?

Open Content, Original

“Who do You Love?” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Who Do You Love? Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

Figure 3.7. [Image](#) is in the [Public Domain](#), courtesy of the [Wellcome Collection](#).

Figure 3.11. “[The Gender Unicorn](#)” by [Trans Student Educational Resources](#) is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 3.12. “[Oregon Bears](#)” by [Another Believer](#) is licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

Figure 3.4. “An incomplete list of possible sexual orientations” draws from “[The Acronym and Beyond: A Glossary of Terms](#)” in [Learning for Justice](#), Southern Poverty Law Center (2018), and is included under fair use. Modifications by Heidi Esbensen and Nora Karena include selecting terms and definitions for table.

Figure 3.5. “[Stonewall riots](#)” by Joseph Ambrosini of the [New York Daily News](#) is included under fair use.

Figure 3.6. “[She's Beautiful When She's Angry](#)” by [Bella Black](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 3.8. “[Logo ncod lg](#)” by [The Human Rights Campaign](#), courtesy of Keith Haring, is included under fair use.

Figure 3.9. “[Teen Coming Out Stories](#)” by [Seventeen](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 3.10. “[Coming Out Stories – Andy](#)” by [Waverly Care](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [3.3: Who Do You Love?](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

Sex crimes are a category of sexual violence. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “**Sexual violence** is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting” (WHO 2022).

Sex crimes in the U.S. are punished by imprisonment and social censure. People who are convicted of sex crimes are required to register on a publicly available database of convicted sex offenders and are barred from working with or living near vulnerable people. In 2022, congress re-authorised the 1994 *Violence Against Women Act* (VAWA) and allocated 700 million dollars to combat gender-based violence, including sexual assault. VAWA funding supports sexual violence response units in local law enforcement agencies, a national network of rape crisis programs that support survivors of sex crimes, as well as prevention programs that aim to reduce the risk of sex crimes. In spite of the strong social sanctions against perpetrators of sex crimes, and the allocation of significant public resources to punishing them, rates of sex crimes have not decreased (see the statistics in the box below).

Select Sexual Violence Statistics from The National Sexual Assault Resource Center (NSARC).

- One in five women and one in seventy-one men will be **raped at some point in their lives**.
- 47% of all transgender people have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lives, and **these rates are even higher for trans People of the Global Majority and people who have done sex work, been homeless, or have (or had) a disability**.
- 46.4% of lesbians, 74.9% of bisexual women, and 43.3% of heterosexual women reported sexual violence other than rape during their lifetimes, while **40.2% of gay men, 47.4% of bisexual men**, and 20.8% of heterosexual men reported sexual violence other than rape during their lifetimes.
- Nearly one in ten women have been **raped by an intimate partner** in her lifetime, including completed forced penetration, attempted forced penetration, or alcohol/drug-facilitated completed penetration.
- Approximately one in forty-five men has been **made to penetrate an intimate partner** during his lifetime.
- In eight out of ten cases of rape, the **victim knew the person** who sexually assaulted them.
- 8% of rapes occur **while the victim is at work**.

It has been 30 years since Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), yet sexual violence is still widespread in our community. What do you think it will take to end sexual violence?

In this section, we will apply our sociological imagination to better understand the relationship between sexual violence and patriarchy. As you work through this section, please practice self-care. Your instructor and the school student services team are available to help if you need support around this challenging topic.

Sexual Violence as a Social Problem



Figure 3.13. Sociologist Dr. Anna Leon-Guerrero. Her definition of a social problem includes both individuals and our social world. Why might this matter?

Recall that the sociological imagination looks for connections between public issues and personal experiences (Chapter One). Many forms of sexual violence are perpetrated by individuals against other individuals in their families or communities. Individuals who commit sexual crimes are punished by state or federal legal systems because these crimes are also considered crimes against society. Sexual violence does individual harm, but it also harms families and communities. Surviving and recovering from sexual violence is a deeply personal process that also requires social support from family, community, mental health and medical professionals, and other survivors.

Because sexual violence impacts both individuals and society, we can say that it is a social problem. Sociology professor and author Anna Leon-Guerrero (she/her) (figure 3.13) defines a **social problem** as “a social condition or pattern of behavior that has negative consequences for individuals, our social world, or our physical world” (Leon-Guerrero, 2019, p. 4).

When you think about the current issues facing our society and our planet, you might name war, addiction, climate change, homelessness, or the global pandemic as social problems. You would be mostly right. However, sociologists need to be more specific than that. Because they are trying to explain what social problems are or how to fix them, they need a much more precise definition. To talk effectively about social problems, we must understand five important dimensions of a social problem:

1. A social problem goes beyond the experience of an individual.
2. A social problem must be addressed interdependently, using both individual agency and collective action.
3. A social problem arises when groups of people experience inequality.
4. A social problem results from a conflict in values.
5. A social problem is socially constructed but real in its consequences.

We have already established the first two of these points, that sexual violence goes beyond the experience of individuals and that sexual violence must be addressed interdependently, using both individual agency and collective action. There is abundant evidence that groups of people experience sexual violence unequally.

While sexual violence happens to people of all genders, sexual orientations, and racial identities, women experience higher rates of sexual violence than men. Transgender people experience higher rates of sexual violence than cisgender people. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people experience higher rates than heterosexual people.

Returning to the statistics from The National Sexual Assault Resource Center, we see that the people most likely to experience sexual violence are trans People of the Global Majority and those who have done sex work, been homeless, or have (or had) a disability (National Sexual Resource Center 2019). But can we claim that sexual violence results from a conflict in values or that it is socially constructed? To answer these questions, let's look at the continuum of sexual violence (figure 3.14).

of sexual violence recover their sense of sexual agency. It is also a powerful way to help young people be less vulnerable to sexual violence.

When a person assumes they have consent, but they do not, they are committing sexual violence. Check out the short video in figure 3.15 that uses the example of tea to describe many of the circumstances where consent is often assumed.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=385#oembed-1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZwrxVavnQ>

Figure 3.15. As you watch [Tea and Constant \[Streaming Video\]](#), consider how normalizing affirmative consent can reduce sexual violence. Can you think of other social norms that contribute to sexual violence? [Transcript](#).

A Social-Ecological Approach to Preventing Sexual Violence

Risk And Protective Factors for Perpetration Of Sexual Violence			
PROTECTIVE FACTORS - Families where caregivers work through conflicts - Emotional health and connectedness - Academic achievement - Empathy and concern for how one's actions affect			
INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS - Alcohol and drug use - Delinquency - Lack of concern for others - Aggressive behaviors and acceptance of violent behaviors - Early sexual initiation - Coercive sexual fantasies - Preference for impersonal sex and sexual-risk taking - Exposure to sexually explicit media - Hostility towards women - Adherence to traditional gender role norms - Hyper-masculinity - Suicidal behavior - Prior sexual victimization or perpetration		COMMUNITY RISK FACTORS - Poverty - Lack of employment opportunities - Lack of institutional support from police and judicial system - General tolerance of sexual violence within the community - Weak community sanctions against sexual violence perpetrators	
RELATIONSHIP RISK FACTORS - Family history of conflict and violence - Childhood history of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse - Emotionally unsupportive family environment - Poor parent-child relationships, particularly with fathers - Association with sexually aggressive, hypermasculine, and delinquent peers - Involvement in a violent or abusive intimate relationship		SOCIETAL RISK FACTORS - Societal norms that support sexual violence - Societal norms that support male superiority and sexual entitlement - Societal norms that maintain women's inferiority and sexual submissiveness - Weak laws and policies related to sexual violence and gender equity - High levels of crime and other forms of violence	

Figure 3.16. Risk and Protective Factors for Perpetration of Sexual Violence. Notice how many social norms are listed as risk factors for committing sexual violence. Image description available. [Image description](#).

In the early days of sexual violence response and prevention, beginning in the 1970s, prevention efforts focused on teaching women how to defend against sexual assault and teaching children about safe touch and unsafe touch. These are both important strategies, but they place all of the responsibility for ending sexual violence on people most vulnerable to being assaulted. In recent years, prevention efforts have shifted to prevention efforts that identify risk and protective factors for sexual violence and then develop programs that reduce risk factors and increase protective factors.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified risk factors that are linked to a greater likelihood of someone committing sexual violence (SV) perpetration and protective factors that may prevent someone from committing sexual violence (figure 3.16). This is not to say that people who experience these factors are destined to commit sexual violence. However, there is an established link between these factors and people who commit sexual violence (CDC n.d.).

Try this thought experiment: After reviewing the risk and protective factors in figure 3.16, imagine a society with fewer risk factors and more protective factors. How would you describe such a community? What would the relationships between people be like? What would the schools and social institutions be like?

For an example of how one community is applying this prevention model, let's look at The New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault. After identifying specific risk factors at nightlife venues, like bars, clubs, and restaurants, they developed OutsmartNYC, which conducts community education workshops at nightlife venues in the city on topics of sexual violence prevention, bystander intervention, recognizing and addressing identity-based harm, conflict resolution, de-escalation techniques. The program also hosts monthly collective meetings for people in the nightlife industry to identify and address risk and protective factors. This kind of programming represents a more holistic response to the entire continuum of sexual violence.

This community-level prevention is based on **Ecological Systems Theory**, which describes the social world as a layered system in which each layer is a set of social domains that impact the individual. The system moves from the smallest level of the individual to the layer of family through growing layers until it reaches institutions, society, and even historical context. If you compare the continuum of sexual violence to the social-ecosystem model in Figure 3.17, you can see that some forms of sexual violence occur at the interpersonal level, and others occur at community, societal, and historical levels.

For example, normalized gender-based violence has its roots in our shared history and exists at the societal level as shared gender norms, like the idea that boys are more naturally more aggressive than girls, at the community level that treats boys and girls differently when they are aggressive, and at the interpersonal level in the form of violence.

Social Ecology of Interdependence

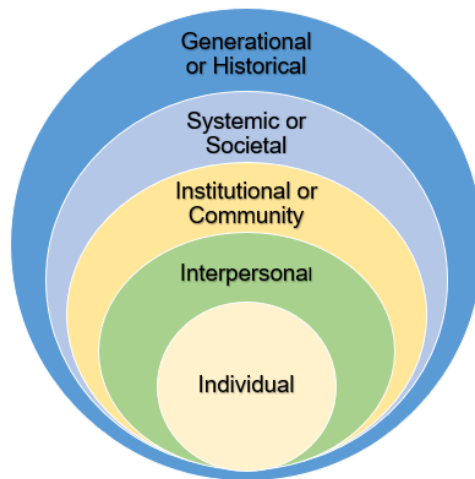


Figure 3.17. Social Ecosystem Model. Social problems occur at every level of this ecosystem. Which levels of the model does the OutsmartNYC program address?

LEARN MORE: Ecological Systems Theory

You can learn more about the development of ecological systems theory by watching [Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems: 5 Forces Impacting Our Lives \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=385#h5p-11>

Looking Through the Lens: The Gender Unicorn

In this activity, we will use continuums of gender expression, gender identity, sex assigned at birth, and sexual orientation to explore the expansive spectrum of human sexualities. Note: You do not have to share the results with anyone unless you want to, but your professor might ask you to confirm that you completed the activity.

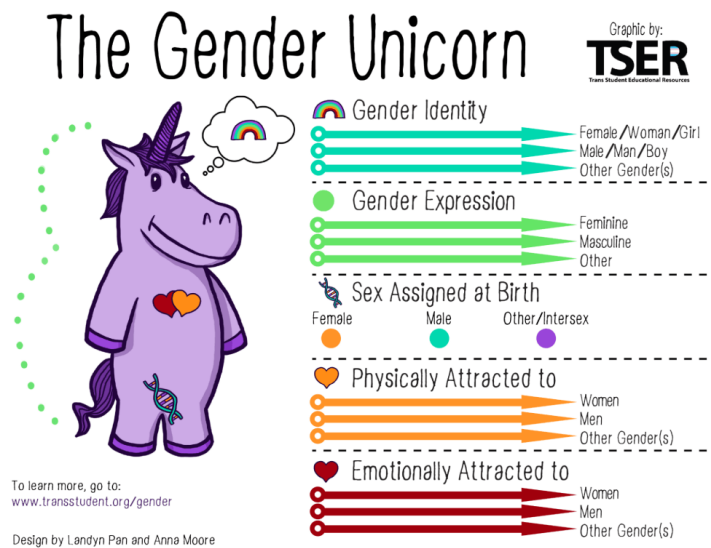


Figure 3.18 Use the Gender Unicorn as your guide for answering these questions. Image description available. [Image description](#).

Step 1:

1. What is your gender identity?
2. Describe your gender expression.
3. What is your sex assigned at birth?
4. Who are you physically attracted to?
5. Who are you emotionally attracted to?

Step 2:

Option 1: Write a short paragraph or more about how this reflexive exercise helps you understand the expansive spectrum of human sexualities?

Option 2: Create a drawing or collage to represent how this reflexive exercise helps you understand the expansive spectrum of human sexualities.

Licenses and Attributions for Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

Open Content, Original

“Sexual Violence and Patriarchy” by Nora Karena and Heidi Ebensen is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Looking Through The Lens: The Gender Unicorn” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

“Sexual Violence and Patriarchy Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Sexual Violence as a Social Problem” is adapted from “What is a social problem?” by Kimberly Puttman in [Inequality and Interdependence: Social Problems and Social Justice](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena including editing and remixing for length and context.

Figure 3.16. “Risk and Protective Factors for Perpetration of Sexual Violence” is adapted by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). It is adapted from [Risk and Protective Factors](#) by the [Centers for Disease Control](#), which is in the [Public Domain](#).

Figure 3.17. “Social Ecosystem Model” by Kimberly Puttman from [Inequality and Interdependence: Social Problems and Social Justice](#), [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 3.18. “The Gender Unicorn” by [Trans Student Educational Resources](#) is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Social problem” definition from Leon-Guerrero (2019) is included under fair use.

“Sexual violence” definition from WHO (2022) is included under fair use.

“Misogyny” definition from Merriam-Webster (n.d.) is included under fair use.

“Select Sexual Violence Statistics from The National Sexual Assault Resource Center” is adapted from “Sexual Violence & Transgender/Non-Binary Communities” and “Statistics About Sexual Violence” by the The National Sexual Assault Resource Center, included under fair use.

Figure 3.13. Photo of [Dr. Anna Leon-Guerrero](#) by Pacific Lutheran University is included with permission.

Figure 3.14. “The Sexual Violence Continuum” by Lydia Guy is included under fair use.

Figure 3.15. “Tea and Consent” by [Thames Valley Police](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

3.5: Conclusion

In this text, you are learning how sociology of gender is concerned with the social aspects of gender and sexuality, including identity formation, interpersonal relationships, social movements, and systems of power. This chapter has introduced you to ways sociologists and other scholars have used the sociological imagination, sociological theory, and social research to understand human sexuality in these contexts. In the coming chapters about gender theories and systems of power, be sure to use your sociological imagination to identify how personal issues of sexuality exist within a complex social ecosystem and how constantly shifting social norms shape our experience and understanding of sex and sexuality.

Review Learning Objectives

Having read this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

1. Discuss sex and sexuality from a sociological perspective.
2. Describe the evolution of the social movement for LGBTQIA+ rights in the U.S.
3. Identify how patriarchal social norms contribute to sexual violence.
4. Apply the social-ecological model to the prevention of sexual violence.

Questions for Discussion

1. How is the sociological perspective of human sexuality different from psychological or biological perspectives?
Answer: The sociological perspective of human sexuality reveals the social aspects of human sexuality, which are different from the cognitive and biological aspects of human sexuality.
2. How has the civil rights movement influenced LGBTQIA+ social movements?
Many LGBTQIA+ people were also engaged in the civil rights movement.
3. How do patriarchal social norms contribute to sexual violence?
Sexual violence is a socially constructed set of individual expressions of power and systems of power based on sexual norms within a patriarchal society.
4. Why does the social-ecological model help us recognize sexual violence?
The social-ecological model describes the layers of our social world where forms of sexual violence exist.

Real But Not True: Check-in

Let's take a moment to reflect on what you've learned in this chapter about socially constructed gender norms.

The Tools Of Sociology



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Tools of Sociology:

What specific examples of the tools of sociology have been discussed in this chapter?

- Sociological Imagination
- Research-based Evidence
- Social Theory

Socially Constructed - Not True

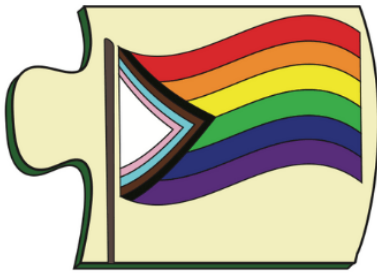


 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Socially Constructed:

- What examples of gender being imposed, enforced, reproduced, challenged, and changed have you discovered in this chapter?

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Real in Consequence: Social Stigma

- What examples of real consequences for violating or conforming to socially constructed gender norms have you discovered in this chapter?

Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion

Open Content, Original

“Conclusion” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True Puzzle Images” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

This page titled [3.5: Conclusion](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

3.6: References

American Association of Family Physicians [AAFP]. (2023). Genital surgeries in intersex children. www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/genital-surgeries.html

Baldwin, James, M. (1962). *The Fire Next Time* by James Baldwin. Vintage. Page 105

Brenan, M. (2024, June 24). Same-Sex relations, Marriage still supported by most in U.S. Gallup News. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/646202/sex-relations-marriage-supported.aspx>

CDC. (2024, April 19). Risk and Protective Factors. Sexual Violence Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/risk-factors/index.html>

Carpenter, L. M. (1998, May). From girls into women: Scripts for sexuality and romance in seventeen magazine, 1974-1994. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 35(2), 158-168. www.jstor.org/stable/3813668

Frederick, D. A., St. John, H. K., Garcia, J. R., & Lloyd, E. A. (2017, February 17). Differences in orgasm frequency among gay, lesbian, bisexual, and heterosexual men and women in a U.S. national sample [Abstract]. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 47(1), 273-288. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-017-0939-z>

Friedan, B. (1963). *The feminine mystique*. Norton.

Gómez, J. M., González-Megías, A., & Verdú, M. (2023, October 3). The evolution of same-sex sexual behaviour in mammals. *Nature Communications*, 14(1), 5719. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-023-41290-x>

Jackson, C. A. (2019). Sex workers unite!: U.S. sex worker support networks in an era of criminalization. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 47(3/4), 169-188. www.jstor.org/stable/26803272

Kinsey, A. C. (1948). *Sexual behavior in the human male*. W. B. Saunders.

Kinsey, A. C. (1954). *Sexual behavior in the human female*. W. B. Saunders.

Kinsey Institute. (2022). 75th anniversary historical review. kinseyinstitute.org/pdf/75th_Anniversary_Historical_Review.pdf

Landale, N. S., & Guest, A. M. (1986). Ideology and Sexuality among Victorian Women. *Social Science History*, 10(2), 147-170. doi.org/10.2307/1170861

Leon-Guerrero, A. (2019). *Social problems: Community, policy and social action* (Sixth Edition). SAGE Publications.

Lerum, K., & Brents, B. G. (2016). Sociological Perspectives on Sex Work and Human Trafficking. *Sociological Perspectives*, 59(1), 17-26. www.jstor.org/stable/26340165

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Misogyny. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved July 13, 2024, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/misogyny>

National Sexual Violence Resource Center [NSVRC]. (2019). Sexual violence & transgender/non-binary communities. www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/Transgender_infographic_508_0.pdf

Open Society Foundation. (2019, April). Clearing Up Some Myths About Sex Work. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/understanding-sex-work-open-society>

Pew Research Center. (2013, June 13). A survey of LGBT Americans: Chapter 3: The coming out experience. [https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2013/06/13/chapter-3-the-coming-out-experience/#:~:text=A%20majority%20\(59%25\)%20say,still%20aren't%20entirely%20sure](https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2013/06/13/chapter-3-the-coming-out-experience/#:~:text=A%20majority%20(59%25)%20say,still%20aren't%20entirely%20sure)

Roseneil, S., Crowhurst, I., Hellesund, T., Santos, A. C., & Stoilova, M. (2020). Questioning the couple-form. In *The Tenacity of the Couple-Norm: Intimate citizenship regimes in a changing Europe*, (pp. 6-14). UCL Press. doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv13xpsd5.6

- Rustin, B. (1986). From Montgomery to Stonewall [Adaptation from a speech]. ControlCenter2.www.rustin.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/1986-From-Montgomery-to-Stonewall.pdf
- Seidman, S. (1989). Sexual attitudes of victorian and post-victorian women: Another look at the Mosher survey. *Journal of American Studies*, 23(1), 68–72. www.jstor.org/stable/27555094
- Schippers, M. (2020). *Polyamory, monogamy, and American dreams: The stories we tell about poly lives and the cultural production of inequality*. Routledge.
- Southern Poverty Law Center. (2018, November 6). The Acronym and Beyond. Learning for Justice. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/best-practices-for-serving-lgbtq-students/lgbtq-terms-definitions-the-acronym-and-beyond>
- Strub, W. (2008). The clearly obscene and the queerly obscene: Heteronormativity and obscenity in cold war los angeles. *American Quarterly*, 60(2), 373–398. www.jstor.org/stable/40068543
- Townes, A., Thorpe, S., Parmer, T., Wright, B., and Herbenick, D. (2022). Partnered sexual behaviors, pleasure, and orgasms at last sexual encounter: Findings from a U.S. probability sample of Black women ages 18 to 92 years. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 47(4), 353–367. doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2021.1878315
- Wainright, J. L., Russell, S. T., & Patterson, C. J. (2004). Psychosocial adjustment, school outcomes, and romantic relationships of adolescents with same-sex parents. *Child Development*, 75(6), 1886–1898. www.jstor.org/stable/3696683
- Weinberg, M. S., Swenson, R. G., & Hammersmith, S. K. (1983). Sexual autonomy and the status of women: Models of female sexuality in U.S. sex manuals from 1950 to 1980. *Social Problems*, 30(3), 312–324. doi.org/10.2307/800356
- World Health Organization [WHO]. (2022). Sexual violence, 941 studies. apps.who.int/violence-info/sexual-violence/

CHAPTER 4: GENDER IN THEORY

- 4.1: Chapter Introduction
- 4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives
- 4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory
- 4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
- 4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap
- 4.6: Conclusion
- 4.7: References

This page titled [Chapter 4: Gender in Theory](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

4.1: Chapter Introduction

Chapter Overview: Women in Sociology

“We have already gathered the empirical facts concerning **the distribution of women among students and faculty of graduate sociology departments**. What we seek is effective and dramatic action: an unbiased policy in the selection of stipend support of students; a concerted commitment to the hiring and promotion of women sociologists to right the imbalance that is represented by the current situation **in which 67 percent of the women graduate students in this country do not have a single woman sociology professor of senior rank** during the course of their graduate training, and when we participate in an association of sociologists in which:

- NO woman will sit on the 1970 council,
- NO woman is included among the associate editors of the American Sociological Review, or the advisory board of the American Journal of Sociology, and
- NO woman sits on the committees on publications and nominations.

We urge [that] every sociology department **give priority to the hiring and promotion of women** faculty until the proportion and rank distribution of women faculty at least **equals the sex ratio** among graduate students with a long-range goal of increasing the proportion of women among graduate students. In working toward such a goal, this must **supplement rather than detract from department efforts to train, hire, and promote black and Third World personnel and students.**”

—Excerpt from the Women’s Caucus Statement and Resolutions American Sociological Association General Business Meeting, September 3, 1970

During the 1968 annual business meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA), sociologist Cynthia Fuchs Epstein (she/her) proposed that the ASA “address discrimination against women.” Her proposal was met with dismissive laughter from the male-dominated assembly. The following year, 200 feminist scholars—students, researchers, and faculty—held an alternate event during the ASA annual meeting to support each other and to draft the Women’s Caucus Statement and Resolutions (excerpted above). Out of this collective action, Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) was organized:

a nonprofit professional feminist organization dedicated to encouraging the development of sociological feminist theory and scholarship; transforming the academy through feminist leadership, career development, and institutional diversity; promoting social justice through local, national, and international activism; and supporting the publication and dissemination of cutting-edge feminist social science. (Sociologists for Women in Society, n.d.)

Feminism is an interdisciplinary approach to issues of equality and equity based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, sex, and sexuality, as understood through social theories and political activism (Eastern Kentucky University, n.d.). Feminist sociologists have pushed for the inclusion of people and perspectives previously excluded from the field, including women and people who identify as LGBTQIA+, people who are disabled, and People of the Global Majority (PGM). Applying the tools of sociology to the study of gender and sexuality, they have pioneered innovative research practices and produced a robust body of research and scholarship to support our evolving, expansive, and inclusive understanding of gender and sexuality.

Recall from Chapter Two that gender is socially constructed and that the social construction of gender is an ongoing process for individuals and societies. To understand how feminist theory has revealed and described the many ways that gender is socially constructed, this chapter sketches out the development of feminist theory across three historical “waves” of feminism.

As you work through the chapter, notice how social theory is a way of making sense of social conditions. It is impossible to separate a theory from current political and economic power structures. Notice also how theories change as activism and organizing shifts power within social science disciplines.

The chapter also introduces you to a diverse group of interdisciplinary scholars, each working from a feminist standpoint within gender and sexuality studies, and to four contemporary theories related to gender: post-structuralism, queer theory, crip theory, and postcolonial studies. The final section demonstrates how each of these theories reveals a different aspect of the gender pay gap introduced in Chapter One.

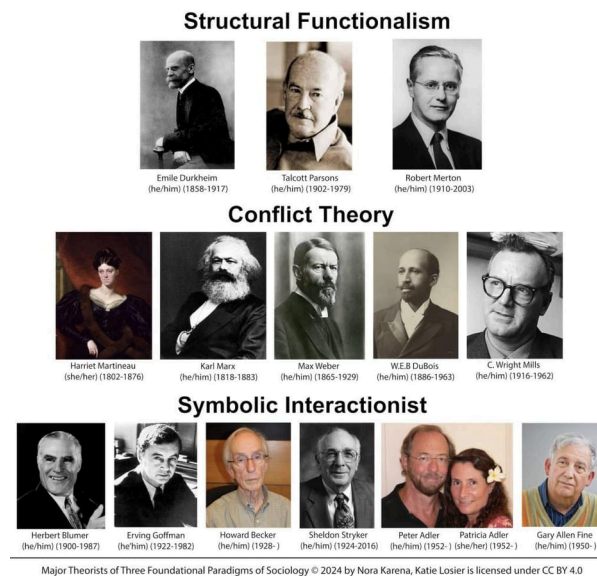


Figure 4.1 Major Theorists. Before the emergence of feminist scholarship, sociology was a field dominated by White men. As you work through this chapter, you will meet many of the feminist sociologists of diverse genders and racial identities who have transformed our collective understanding of gender. Image description available. [Image description.](#)

Key Terms

- **abjection:** a reaction (horror, vomit) to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between subject and object or between self and other (Kristeva, 2010).
- **coalitional politics:** refers to political association with those who have differing identities, around shared experiences of oppression (Taylor, 2017).
- **conflict theory:** is a macro-level theory that proposes conflict is a basic fact of social life, which argues that the institutions of society benefit the powerful.
- **crip theory:** a subfield of sociology that reveals and interrupts the harmful social pressures and social norms of ableism and heteronormativity.
- **embodiment:** refers to the shape of a person's body, the feeling of a person's body, and what a person's body can do (Herbert and Pollatos, 2012).
- **emotional labor:** to describe work that requires managing personal emotions and the emotions of other people (Hochschild, 1983).
- **feminism:** is an interdisciplinary approach to issues of equality and equity based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, sex, and sexuality as understood through social theories and political activism (Eastern Kentucky University, n.d.).
- **identity politics:** which refers to organizing politically around the experiences and needs of people who share a particular identity.
- **macro-sociology:** studies how systems interact with individuals or with other systems.
- **micro-sociology:** is the study of small groups and individual interactions.
- **occupational segregation:** is a form of social stratification in the labor market in which one group is more likely to do certain types of work than other groups. Gender-based occupational segregation describes situations in which women are more likely to do certain jobs and men do others.
- **postcolonial theory:** originated with scholars from former European colonies in the global south. Postcolonial theory explores how colonization disrupts social arrangements, including gender relations of the people who lived in colonized places. Gender-based differences in work and pay for women of the global south are an example of the ongoing results of colonialism.
- **post-structuralism:** de-centers dominant perspectives to decolonize ideas of culture and societal structures.
- **queer theory:** a framework for understanding gender and sexual practices outside of heterosexuality.
- **standpoint theory:** argues that knowledge is socially situated and that the dominant standpoint of social and natural sciences has been based on "rampant sexism and androcentrism (centering men)" (Harding, 1992).
- **structural functionalism:** also called functionalism, a macro-level theory concerned with large-scale processes and large-scale social systems that order, stabilize, and destabilize societies.
- **symbolic interactionist theory:** is a micro-level theory concerned with how meanings are constructed through interactions with others and is associated with the Chicago School of Sociology.

- **transnational feminism:** is a body of theory and activism that highlights the connections between sexism, racism, classism, and imperialism.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

1. Identify three early theoretical perspectives of social inequality.
2. Discuss key theoretical developments that correspond with each wave of feminism.
3. Explain why post-structuralism made it possible to understand gender in new ways.
4. Analyze the gender pay gap using foundational, feminist, poststructural, and post-colonial theories.
5. Use Queer Theory to analyze sexual orientation as a social construct.

Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction

Open Content, Original

“Chapter Introduction” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 4.1. “Major Theorists of Three Foundational Paradigms of Sociology” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Feminism” definition from [Eastern Kentucky University](#) is included under fair use.

4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

During the mid-twentieth century in the United States, three dominant theoretical frameworks, or paradigms, emerged: structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. Each theory describes a way to think about how humans think and behave. As you will see, these frameworks draw on different combinations of the work of the classical theorists while attempting to explain social phenomena. Similar to the classical theorists, mid to late-20th-century American sociologists seldom questioned whose voices they included and whose voices they excluded.

Sociologists use macro-level analysis and micro-level analysis to study different types of social groups and processes. **Micro-sociology** is the study of small groups and individual interactions. **Macro-sociology** studies how systems interact with individuals or with other systems. Figure 4.2 provides an overview of the levels of analysis in sociology, with examples of macro-level and micro-level analysis.

A macro-level research question might be, “How does the criminal justice system reproduce social inequality?” For example, Sarah Pemberton (she/her) examined gender-related policies and related outcomes for prison populations in the British criminal justice system, where comprehensive gender recognition legislation supports self-identification of binary gender categories and concludes that enforcement of these policies “...construct binary sex/gender identities while erasing the existence of transgender and intersex people, and these statistics also construct racialized identities” (Pemberton, 2013).

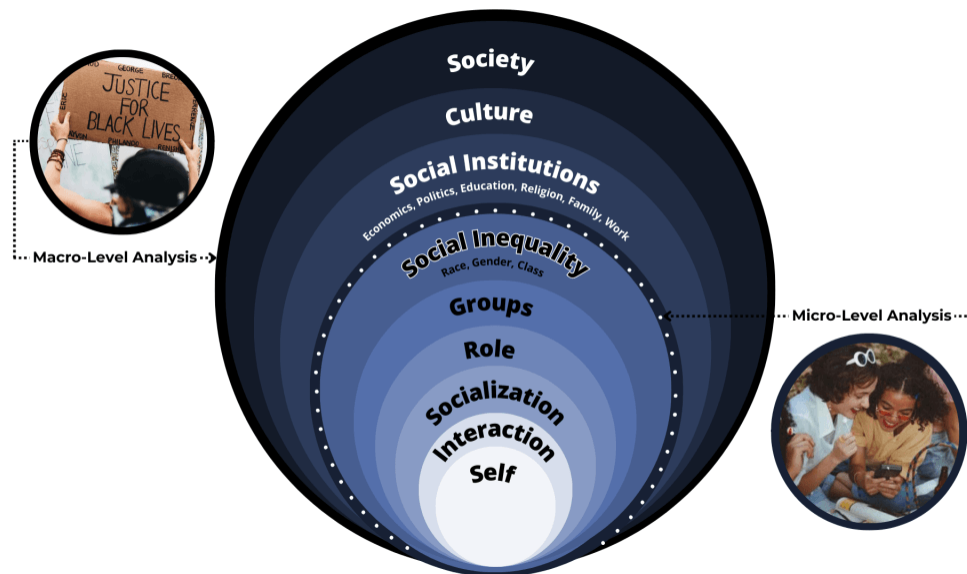


Figure 4.2. Levels of Analysis. Micro- and macro-level analyses are tools that sociologists use to understand our social world. Sometimes, there is an overlap between micro and macro categories, such as social inequality and social institutions. Can you think of an example of micro and macro topics? Image description available. [Image description.](#)

As you work through this section, try imagining that each theoretical perspective is a camera lens that zooms in with micro-level analysis or out with macro-level analysis to frame a topic like how we are socialized, why inequality exists, or the role of families in societies. Please resist the urge to choose one theory over another. Instead, ask yourself, “How does this theoretical framework help me understand specific aspects of social life differently?” and, “What new questions does this bring up for me?”

Structural Functionalism

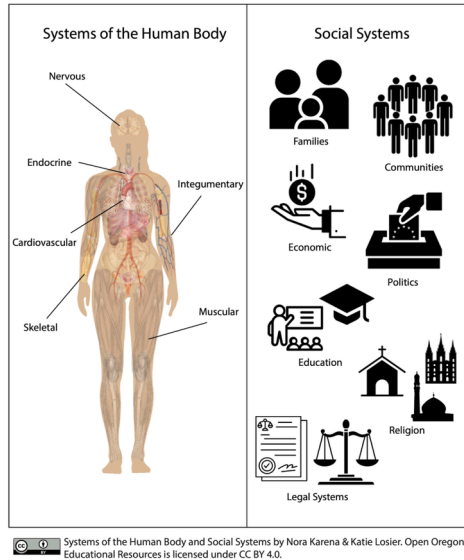


Figure 4.3. The Systems Of The Human Body And Social Systems. Structural functionalists use the analogy of the human body to describe the way social systems and processes determine the stability of societies. Can you think of a dysfunctional social system? How does it impact the overall stability of society? Image description available. [Image description.](#)

One way to apply our sociological imagination to issues of gender is to ask questions about what gender does. Questions like, “*What does gender contribute to society?*” and “*Is the gender binary a requirement for a stable society?*” **Structural functionalism**, also called functionalism, is a macro-level theory concerned with large-scale processes and large-scale social systems that order, stabilize, and destabilize societies. It was the dominant theoretical framework in American sociology from the 1940s into the 1960s and 1970s. From the classical theorists you read about in the previous section, functionalist theorists drew from Emile Durkheim’s (he/him) (1858–1917) work and a rather narrow interpretation of Max Weber’s (he/him) (1865–1929).

Functionalists proposed that society is a stable system made up of interrelated social systems, in the same way that a body is made up of interrelated biological systems (figure 4.3). Within this framework, social integration is important because that is how people come to feel connected within their society. As an example of social integration, think back to Durkheim’s discussion of the different types of solidarity. In modern societies, common rituals and shared values help people feel connected. Based on this framework, it may seem that societies are relatively stable and lack conflict. However, conflict can emerge when different institutions tell us to do different things. This can result in social strain and deviance.

A figurehead of functionalism, Talcott Parsons (he/him) (1902–1979) was concerned with the problem of order. He tended to think through problems and issues in an abstract and, at times, an unclear way. Robert Merton (he/him) (1910–2003), a student of Parsons and the functionalist tradition, broadened the concerns of functionalism by developing a unique blend of his teacher’s abstraction and data. He argued for theories that integrated abstract theorizing and empirical research. He saw exemplars of this in Durkheim’s theory of suicide and Weber’s arguments about the Protestant Ethic (Ritzer & Stepnisky 2022).

Structural functionalism has been heavily criticized within sociology. Some critics argue that functionalists present a rather static view of society that fails to account for social change. Others argue there are logical flaws within the framework. Specifically, critics argue that there is a problem with assuming that everything that persists in society has a function for that society. For example, does poverty or discrimination provide a function for society? Functionalism also has a hard time explaining inequality and, at its worst, may help justify existing inequalities.

Conflict Theory

Karl Marx (he/him) (1818–1883) was a social critic and philosopher from Germany who theorized that history could be divided into a series of distinctive periods or epochs based on the social relations and technologies available at the time. The main driver between epochs was class struggle (masters versus slaves, landlords versus serfs, owners versus workers). In each epoch, a revolutionary class would emerge and overthrow those in control, which would instigate the next epoch.

Conflict theory is a macro-level theory that proposes conflict is a basic fact of social life, which argues that the institutions of society benefit the powerful. It arose in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s against the backdrop of the rise of various social movements. It draws from Karl Marx and to some extent Max Weber and in doing so challenges functionalism. Some well-known conflict theorists include C. Wright Mills (he/him) (1916–1962), Ralf Dahrendorf (he/him) (1929–2009), and Randall Collins (he/him) (1941–).

In this framework, conflict and struggle are basic facts of social life. Groups with antagonistic interests are constantly struggling to maintain or change existing power arrangements. In the classical Marxist formulation, it is a struggle between owners and workers. Beyond class, it could include a struggle to maintain or dismantle masculine dominance and/or white racial dominance.

Gender conflict theory, inspired by Harriet Martineau (she/her) (1802–1876), was an important component of second-wave feminism, which is discussed in the next section. Race conflict theory was developed by W.E.B. Du Bois (he/him) (1886–1963), who researched the consequences of racism by documenting the lived experiences of people who were Black (Du Bois 2015). By taking account of inequalities based on gender, race, or class, conflict theory can help us understand who is benefiting and who is harmed by existing power arrangements.

Rather than seeing institutions as benign, conflict theorists argue the institutions of society promote the interests of the powerful while subverting the interests of the powerless. For example, consider how school funding is distributed. Schools in urban areas receive less financial support compared to their suburban counterparts. Those in suburban schools are given tools to get ahead, while those in urban schools are not (Kozol 2012). As a result, the students who go to well-funded schools have pathways into college and well-paying jobs. Students who attend schools with fewer resources face barriers that can make it hard to get ahead.

Conflict theorists argue these shared values and common rituals are ideologies that deceive people and make people comfortable with their position in society. The American Dream of working hard to get ahead is a dominant value in U.S. culture critiqued by conflict theorists. Conflict theorists argue that the opportunities to get ahead for most people are limited by artificial barriers in most institutions. According to conflict theorists, the mythology of the American Dream justifies the social position of those already who hold the most power in American society (Colomy 2010).



Figure 4.4. Union Members and President Lyndon Johnson. Conflict theory is closely associated with labor unions. How would the U.S. be different if the American Dream were based on collective struggle instead of individual effort?

Conflict theorists claim that social equality cannot emerge from within the institutions but is driven by people organizing and mobilizing together to pressure the institutions of society. Labor unions that organize for better working conditions for working-class women and LGBTQIA+ people are an example of gendered class struggle (figure 4.4). Critics of conflict theory argue that it overemphasizes social change.

Symbolic Interactionist



Figure 4.5. Whose job is housework? Research about housework is a common topic of symbolic interactionist research. Have you ever thought about the social meaning of housework?

We attach meanings to situations, roles, relationships, and things whenever we encounter them. For a symbolic interaction to occur, these meanings have to be shared and agreed upon by the people you are interacting with (figure 4.5). For example, if we attach the meaning of “family member” to someone, we will treat them as a family member or act based on the meaning of family member as we go about interacting with them. How we define family originates from interactions with others, such as parents, siblings, teachers, the media, and elsewhere. As we go about interacting with other people, we may come to modify our interpretations of what it means to be family, especially if the people we are interacting with have more inclusive or exclusive definitions of family.

Symbolic interactionist theory is a micro-level theory concerned with how meanings are constructed through interactions with others and is associated with the Chicago School of Sociology. Herbert Blumer (he/him), who coined the term symbolic interactionism in 1937 described symbolic interactionist theory as follows.

Humans act toward things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to those things. The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with others and society. These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters.
Blumer (2009)

Critics argue that symbolic interactionist theory has a hard time explaining macro-level phenomena. Other critics argue that it tends to downplay the importance of power, privilege, and oppression. Some present-day interactionists have tried to correct these problems by showing how symbolic interactionism can be used to explain power (Athens 2010) and organizational patterns (Hallett & Ventresca 2006). Within sociology, a separate professional association, the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (SSSI), continues to debate symbolic interactionism.

Most contemporary sociology textbooks include feminism as a fourth foundational theoretical framework, but it can also be considered in relationship to functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. Feminism answers functionalism with calls for unjust social structures and unequal systems of power to be dismantled and replaced. Similarly, feminism answers conflict theory with calls for solidarity with people who are marginalized, especially those marginalized because of their gender and sexuality. Finally, feminism responds to symbolic interaction by demonstrating that gender norms are socially constructed in our everyday interactions.

The next section describes the development of feminism as multiple waves of interconnecting activism and scholarship that have expanded what is available to be taught, researched, and known about gender, sexuality, and social equality.

LEARN MORE: Major Theorists

To learn more about structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism, watch [Major Sociological Paradigms: Crash Course Sociology #2 \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Pro Tip: Crash Course Sociology Videos are awesome, but the presenters speak really fast. Review how to Speed up or slow down YouTube videos [Website] if you need to.

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=393#h5p-12>

Licenses and Attributions for Early Theoretical Perspectives

Open Content, Original

Figure 4.2. “Levels of Analysis” by Nora Karena and Mindy Khamvongsa, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 4.3 “The Systems Of The Human Body And Social Systems” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Early Theoretical Perspectives Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Early Theoretical Perspectives” is adapted from “Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology” by Matthew Gougherty, [Introduction to Sociology](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include light edits and remixing for length and context.

“Macro-sociological” and “micro-sociological” definitions are adapted from “Levels of Analysis: Macro Level and Micro Level” by Jennifer Puentes in [Introduction to Sociology](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 4.4 “[ILGWU workers meet Lyndon B. Johnson](#)” by Kheel Center is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).

Figure 4.5. “People Cleaning the House” by Annushka Ahuja is licensed under the Pexels License.

All Rights Reserved Content

“[Major Sociological Paradigms: Crash Course Sociology #2](#)” by [CrashCourse](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory

Return for a moment to Figure 4.1. Recall that the women of SWS protested the lack of women in teaching, research, and leadership within sociology. Why do you think having professors who are women, LGBTQIA+, or People of the Global Majority is important? Can't people learn just as well from white men? Feminist scholars and activists argue that the sexism and racism that made it seem normal to exclude women, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, and PGM from full participation in teaching, research, and leadership also influenced what could be taught, what research questions could be asked, and what counted as legitimate sociological knowledge.

Standpoint theory argues that knowledge is socially situated and that the dominant standpoint of social and natural sciences has been based on “rampant sexism and androcentrism (centering men)” (Harding 1992). Standpoint methodology seeks out and includes the lived experience and perspectives that make up the socially situated knowledge of people who have been marginalized by sexist and androcentric research. For example, transgender black women carry specific knowledge of their own social context, and that knowledge is critical for the research and theory that impacts them to be accurate and truly objective.

Standpoint theory is a foundational feminist theory and methodology developed in the 1970s by the feminist philosopher Sandra Harding (she/her) (figure 4.6) and further developed by feminist researchers in sociology, including Dorothy Smith (she/her) and Patricia Hill Collins (she/her) and in gender studies more broadly.



Figure 4.6. Sandra Harding. Harding introduced standpoint theory to challenge dominant ideas about what counts as legitimate knowledge. What important knowledge do you think might have been missing from the androcentric foundational theories of sociology?

Scholars think of the feminist movement in three historical “waves,” each expanding available knowledge when people previously excluded as knowledge producers demanded full inclusion. The first wave, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was marked by movement activism to end slavery and secure voting rights for women. The second wave, in the mid-20th century, was also tied to the struggle for Black Freedom, and as in the first wave, it was sometimes derailed by false choices between the liberation of women and civil rights for all people. The third wave, from the 1990s to the present day, takes issue with exclusionary feminisms and builds a more intersectional body of theory and more coalitional activism that centers the standpoints of people who are disabled, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, and People of the Global Majority.

First Wave Feminism

The “first wave” of the feminist movement began in the mid-19th century and lasted until the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, which gave women the right to vote (figure 4.7). White middle-class feminists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony primarily focused on women’s suffrage (the right to vote), striking down coverture laws (that give husband ownership of his wife’s property), and gaining access to education and employment. These goals are famously enshrined in the Seneca Falls

Declaration of Sentiments from the first women's rights convention in the United States in 1848.



Figure 4.7. The “first wave” of the feminist movement began in the mid-19th century and lasted until the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, which gave women the right to vote. How would conflict theorists describe the conditions that inspired this social movement?

White middle-class abolitionists often made analogies between slavery and marriage. As abolitionist Antoinette Brown wrote in 1853, “The wife owes service and labor to her husband as much and as absolutely as the slave does to his master” (Brown, cited in Cott, 2000 p. 64). This analogy between marriage and slavery confused the unique experience of the racialized oppression of slavery that Black women faced with a very different type of oppression faced by white women who were legally considered to be subject to their husband’s authority. While white women abolitionists and feminists of the time made important contributions to anti-slavery campaigns, they often failed to understand the uniqueness and severity of slave women’s lives and the complex system of chattel slavery (Davis, 1983).



Figure 4.8. Ida B. Wells-Barnett. Wells was a journalist and researcher who meticulously documented the violent oppression experienced by Black people. How might her standpoint as a Black woman have helped her understand and communicate those experiences differently than a white man?

Despite their marginalization, Black women were passionate and powerful leaders. Ida B. Wells (figure 4.8) (she/her) (1683–1931), who participated in the movement for women’s suffrage, was a founding member of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She was also a journalist and the author of numerous pamphlets and articles exposing the violent lynching of thousands of African Americans. Wells argued that lynching was a systematic attempt to maintain racial inequality

(Wells 1979). Additionally, thousands of Black women were members of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, which was pro-suffrage, but did not receive recognition from the predominantly middle-class, white National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).

Second-Wave Feminism

The emergence of feminist sociology can be traced to this period, and like the larger second-wave feminist movement, was influenced and facilitated by the activist tools provided by the civil rights movement. The actions described in the opening of this chapter are an example of this influence. When the women of the American Sociological Society held a separate caucus, they produced a statement with demands for equality and presented it to the next business meeting, where they applied lessons learned from the movement for civil rights. Feminist sociologists then turned their attention to researching, documenting, and theorizing about the specific lived experiences of women and girls in all the social settings where they were ignored by masculine-dominated social science.

Social movements change according to movement gains or losses, depending on their political and social contexts. Following women's suffrage in 1920, feminist activists channeled their energy into institutionalized legal and political channels to effect changes in labor laws and to attack discrimination against women in the workplace.

Despite the conservative political climate of the 1940s and 1950s, civil rights organizers began to challenge both the de jure segregation of Jim Crow laws and the de facto segregation experienced by African Americans on a daily basis. The landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling of 1954, which made "separate but equal" educational facilities illegal, provided an essential legal basis for activism against the institutionalized racism of Jim Crow laws.

The Black Freedom Movement, of which the Civil Rights Movement was a part, fundamentally changed U.S. society and inspired the second-wave feminist movement and the radical political movements of the New Left (e.g., gay liberationism, black nationalism, socialist and anarchist activism, the environmentalist movement) in the late 1960s. The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), initiated by Ella Baker (figure 4.9), was an important catalyst.



Figure 4.9. Ella Baker. Civil rights leader Ella Baker believed in the power of young people to make a more just society.

Not only did many women involved in the civil rights movement become activists in the second-wave feminist movement, but they also used tactics from the civil rights movement, including marches, caucusing, and non-violent direct action. Feminists in the civil rights movement challenged gender norms that excluded women from politics and restricted them to the domestic sphere (Du Bois & Dumenil 2005).

LEARN MORE: Students in The Civil Rights Movement

To learn more about the work of student organizers in the civil rights era, watch: [Student Civil Rights Activism: Crash Course Black American History #37 \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Although the second-wave feminist movement challenged gendered inequalities and brought women's issues to the forefront of national politics in the late 1960s and 1970s, the movement also reproduced race and sex inequalities. Becky Thompson argues that by the mid and late 1960s, Latina women, African American women, and Asian American women were developing multiracial feminist organizations. These racially specific groups would become important and challenge racism and homophobia within feminist movements (Thompson 2002).

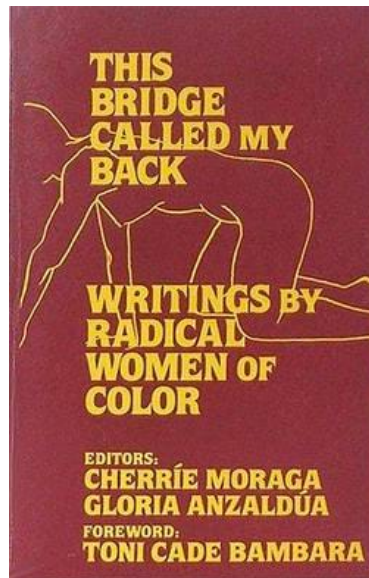


Figure 4.10. This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color. Why is it important to pay attention to the perspectives of people marginalized by systems of power?

In the late 20th century, radical women of the global majority, including some who also identified as LGBTQIA+, wrote powerfully about “the complex confluence of identities-race, class, gender, and sexuality-systemic to women of color oppression and liberation” (Moraga et al., 1981). These scholars, poets, and activists had a profound impact on gender theories. Their work, including *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (figure 4.10), drew from personal experiences of oppression and marginalization in feminist spaces, where they were marginalized as women of color, and in masculine-dominated racial justice spaces, where they were marginalized as women. Those who also identified as LGBTQIA+ and experienced oppression in both feminist and racial justice spaces asserted that their specific knowledge and experience as women of the global majority were critical to the struggle against oppression.

In *Black Feminist Thought*, Patricia Hill Collins describes the specific impacts of racism and sexism on black women. She describes her struggle “to replace the external definitions of my life forwarded by dominant groups with my own self-defined viewpoint” (Hill Collins, 2022). Hill Collins argued that liberatory theory must be centered on the lived experience of those who are marginalized by dominant systems of power. In other words, the necessary knowledge to dismantle systems of power sits with those who are marginalized by those systems.

Third Wave Feminism

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=395#oembed-1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCYCGQmjz70>

Figure 4.11. Freedom Inc. is an example of coalitional politics. Watch “Our Story: Building Black & Hmoob Movement” [Streaming Video] to learn more. Can you think of other coalitions that organize across differences to address shared experiences of oppression? [Transcript](#).

Third-wave feminism is influenced by earlier waves but has expanded to include a multitude of standpoint-specific feminisms developed by Black women, transnational women, women of the Global South, disabled women, and people who are LGBTQIA+. A defining characteristic of the third wave is coalitional politics. **Coalitional politics** refers to political association with those who have differing identities around shared experiences of oppression (Taylor 2017). This is in contrast to **identity politics**, which refers to organizing politically around the experiences and needs of people who share a particular identity. Identity politics is a coin termed in the 1980s and was commonly derided as “the oppression Olympics.” Coalitional politics avoids this by addressing shared interest from identity-specific perspectives. To see coalitional politics in action, watch the video in figure 4.11 about Freedom Inc. in Madison, Wisconsin, which describes itself as “a Black and Southeast Asian non-profit organization that works with low- to no-income communities of color” (Freedom Inc. 2017).

Recall from Chapter Three that, during the early HIV/AIDS Crisis, another example of coalitional politics emerged in solidarity with gay men, who were the first group to be disproportionately impacted by the deadly virus. This movement inspired a significant social shift in social norms about sex and gender.

However, since this movement did not specifically address racial discrimination or the economic conditions of poor people, this social progress unevenly benefited middle-class white people at the expense and continued marginalization of people of the global majority, disabled, trans, single or non-monogamous, or low income. In response, more radical subsets of activists began to explicitly reclaim the derogatory term “queer” to describe their activism and set themselves apart from more mainstream organizing.

People outside the U.S. have also broadened the feminist frameworks for analysis and action. In a world characterized by global capitalism, transnational immigration, and a history of settler-colonialism that still has effects today, **transnational feminism** is a body of theory and activism that highlights the connections between sexism, racism, classism, and imperialism. Transnational feminist theorist Chandra Talpade Mohanty (she/her) (figure 4.12) critiques feminist activism and theory that prioritizes a white, North American standpoint and ignores the needs and political situations of women in the Global South (Mohanty et. al. 1991). Transnational feminists argue that Western feminist projects to “save” women in another region do not liberate these women, since this approach constructs the women as passive victims devoid of agency to save themselves. These “saving” projects are especially problematic when they are accompanied by Western military intervention.



Figure 4.12.Chandra Talpade Mohanty, who argues that U.S. feminism can harm women in the rest of the world if the standpoint of transnational women is excluded.

Third-wave feminism is a vibrant mix of differing activist and theoretical traditions that grapples with multiple points of view and refuses to be pinned down as representing just one group of people or one perspective. Similar to the way queer activists and theorists have insisted that “queer” is and should be open-ended and never set to mean one thing, third-wave feminism’s complexity, nuance, and adaptability become assets in a world marked by rapidly shifting political situations. The third wave’s insistence on coalitional politics as an alternative to identity-based politics is a crucial project in a world that is marked by multiple overlapping inequalities. Now that you’ve surveyed feminist movements and feminist theory from the first wave to the third wave (figure 4.13) let’s take a deeper dive into some contemporary gender theories.

The First Three Waves of Feminism

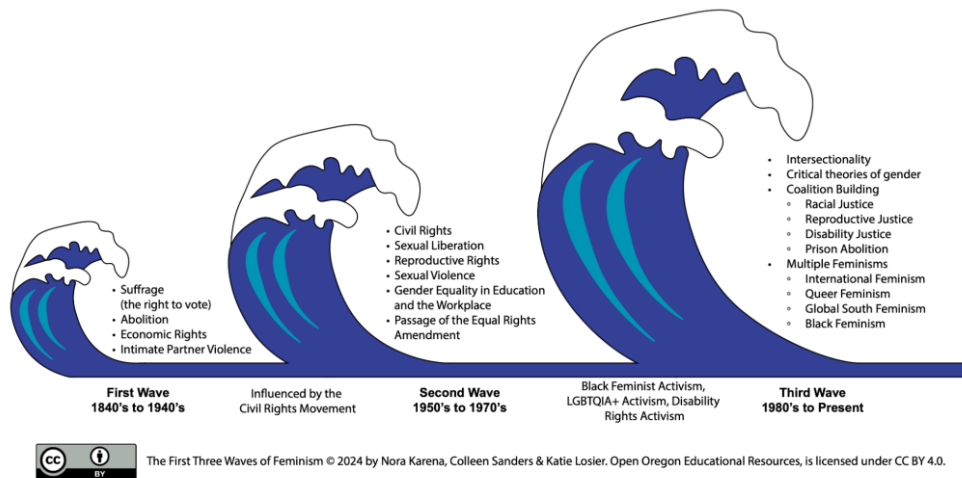


Figure 4.13. Three Waves of Feminism. This image summarizes the major themes of the three waves of feminism. Notice that feminism grows more dynamic and inclusive as it expands to accommodate multiple standpoints. Image description available. [Image description](#).

LEARN MORE: Gender Conflict Theory

Watch [Harriet Martineau & Gender Conflict Theory: Crash Course Sociology #8 \[Streaming Video\]](#) for a quick review of the history of feminism and feminist theory.

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=395#h5p-13>

Licenses and Attributions for Feminist Activism and Theory

Open Content, Original

Figure 4.13. “Three Waves of Feminism” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Feminist Activism and Theory Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Feminist Activism and Theory” is adapted from “[Historical And Contemporary Feminist Social Movements](#)” by Miliann Kang, Donovan Lessard, Laura Heston, and Sonny Nordmarken, [Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include the introductory paragraphs about standpoint theory and minor edits and remixes for length, style, and context.

Figure 4.7. “Votes for Women’ sellers, 1908.” courtesy of [The Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science](#) is in the [Public Domain](#).

Figure. 4.8. “[Mary Garrity – Ida B. Wells-Barnett – Google Art Project – restoration crop](#)” by Adam Cuerden is in the [Public Domain](#).

Figure 4.12. “[Chandra Talpade Mohanty \(2011\)](#)” by Dr. Chandra Mohanty is in the [Public Domain](#), [CC0 1.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Coalitional politics” definition from Taylor (2017) is included under fair use.

“Standpoint theory” definition by Sandra Harding (1992) is included under fair use.

Figure 4.6. Photo © Sandra Harding, UCLA is included with permission.

Figure 4.9. “[Ella Baker 1964](#)” by [The Ella Baker Center for Human Rights](#) is included under fair use.

Figure 4.10. [Image](#) from [Persephone Press](#) is included under fair use.

Figure 4.11. “[Our Story: Building Black and Hmoog Movement](#)” by [Freedom, Inc.](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

“[Harriet Martineau & Gender Conflict Theory: Crash Course Sociology #8](#)” by [CrashCourse](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

“[Student Civil Rights Activism: Crash Course Black American History #37](#)” by [CrashCourse](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives

Second and Third-wave feminists were also influenced by French theorists. In 1949, the French existential philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir (she/her) famously argued in *The Second Sex* that, “one is not born a woman, but becomes a woman.” In other words, our gender identity is not something we are born with, but it is something socially constructed and must be learned in a social context (Chapter Two).

Have you ever heard someone say that someone makes them feel like an object? In language, the subject is the one who does a thing, who has power and agency. The object is the person or thing that something is done to. For example, if a child is petting a cat, the child is the subject who has power, and the cat is the object at the mercy of the child (Figure 4.14). De Beauvoir argued that women have been socially constructed as objectified others in contrast with men, who are “default subjects.” This idea of constructed subjects and objects is another way of understanding power.



Figure 4.14. Subject and Object. In this picture, the child who is petting the cat is the active one. The cat who is being petted is passive. Simone de Beauvoir claimed that gender is constructed so that women are always the passive object of men. Can you think of another example of a subject acting and an object being acted upon?

Another way of thinking about “othering” is to think about how we respond when our understanding of self is challenged. Have you ever been so horrified by something, maybe a smell or sight associated with death or dismemberment, that you vomited? That feeling is called abjection. The French psychoanalyst Julie Kristeva (she/her) defined **abjection** as “Our reaction (horror, vomit) to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between subject and object or between self and other” (Kristiva & Roudiez 2010). For example, when an empowered subject encounters the othered object, which they have classified as “not me,” feelings of horror or abjection can come up.

To understand how this applies to othering, think about hate crimes. Can you see how the abjection response can account for the fact that trans people are four times more likely to be the victims of violent crime (thisisloyal.com, L., 2021)? Even though the impulse behind abjection is natural, in the sense that confronting death can cause a violent physical reaction, an abject response to socially constructed differences is something we learn through socialization. The good news is that it can be unlearned when we learn to see ourselves in others.

These ideas are examples of the philosophical basis for contemporary theories of gender and sexuality that construct each person, no matter their gender identity or sexual orientation, as the subject of their own experience, theorizing belonging as an antidote to othering. As you read, think about what it means to feel like you belong in social settings.

Learn More: Othering and Belonging

To learn more about othering and belonging, watch [John Powell's keynote: The Mechanisms of Othering \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Post Structuralism, Gender, Sexuality and Embodiment

Classic sociological theories, like conflict theory and structural functionalism, pay a lot of attention to the impacts of social constructs on individuals. A common critique of structuralism is its de-emphasis on individual power, or agency, to act within social structure. While there can be no doubt that constructs can place limits on individual agency, people continue to make choices and exercise personal power in response to those constructs. In other words, social structures influence, but do not fully determine, individual agency. Structuralism today is understood by many sociologists as a colonialist mindset that deemphasizes interpretive standpoints of PGM, as well as women, trans, non-binary, and queer people.

Post-structuralism is an intellectual movement that emerged in philosophy and the humanities in the 1960s and 1970s. **Post-structuralism** de-centers dominant perspectives to decolonize ideas of culture and societal structures. Poststructuralism doesn't necessarily refute the importance of social structures; rather, it calls for a more expansive understanding of how social structures work beyond dominant heteropatriarchal-white supremacist, settler-colonialist power. Instead, post-structuralism pays attention to Indigenous knowledge and the knowledge of marginalized groups like people with disabilities, people who are LGBTQIA+ people, and PGM.

In terms of gender, post-structuralism focuses on how gender is constructed, reproduced, enforced, challenged, and transformed in gendered language and gendered ideas of work, as well as how gender is constructed by individual behavior or performance (Tannen 1994, 2017; Butler 1988). More broadly, poststructuralism deconstructs the binary categories of gender (Figure 4.15). You practiced deconstructing these categories in Chapter Two.

The idea of an expansive nonbinary spectrum of gender, and a similar spectrum of sexuality comes from a poststructural perspective. These expansive frameworks are also informed by and responsive to transgender and non-binary understandings of gender and sexuality, as they have existed throughout history, and as they continue to exist in societies around the world, as you learned in Chapter One.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=397#oembed-1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bo7o2LYATDc>

Figure 4.15. Judith Butler. For an example of poststructural gender theory, watch [Judith Butler: Your Behavior Creates Your Gender \[Streaming Video\]](#). [Transcript](#).

Queer Theory

Emerging from third-wave feminism, **queer theory** has been defined as a framework for understanding gender and sexual practices outside of heterosexuality. It challenges the mainstream idea that heterosexual desire is normal for everyone. The theory emphasizes that sexual orientation and gender identity are socially constructed and should be reexamined regularly.

Queer theory does not construct or defend any particular identity, but rather works to actively critique heteronormativity, exposing and breaking down traditional assumptions that sexual and gender identities are presumed to be heterosexual or cisgender (Illinois University Library 2013).



Figure 4.16. Teresa de Lauretis. de Lauretis argued for reclaiming the term queer, which has commonly been considered a pejorative term. How comfortable are you with the term?

Informal use of the term queer theory began with Gloria Anzaldúa and other scholars in the 1990s. The term “queer theory” was first used in publication by Teresa de Lauretis (figure 4.16) (she/her) in her 1991 paper “Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities.” Early queer theorists include Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (she/her), Lauren Berlant (they/them), Judith Butler (they/them), Adrienne Rich, and David Halperin (he/him) (Library, Literatures and Languages n.d.).

Queer theory considers both micro and macro levels. On the macro level, queer theory explores the broader interaction of society, culture, politics, policies, and law as it impacts the queer community. On the micro level, queer theory explores how LGBTQIA+ identities are formed through interactions with intimate groups such as family, friends, and coworkers (Few-Demo et al. 2016).

Queer theory can examine the communities surrounding queer people and the communities they might form specifically because of the oppression they face from society, such as the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, established by queer folks catering to queer folks, and PFLAG (originally an acronym for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), the United States’ first and largest organization uniting parents, families, and allies with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer.

Looking through The Lens: Queer Theory, at the end of this chapter, will give you a chance to think more about queerness.

LEARN MORE: PFLAG

You have the option to learn more about PFLAG’s work [Website] to create “a caring, just, and affirming world for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them.”

Crip Theory and Disability Justice

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=397#oembed-2>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cnUOBYSD1mg>

Figure 4.17. Crip Queer Pride with Daisy Wislar. Watch [Crip Queer Pride with Daisy Wislar \[Streaming Video\]](#) to learn more about Daisy’s Queer Crip Embodiment. Can you identify poststructural ideas about identity in Daisy’s story? [Transcript](#).

An important element of poststructural theories of gender, and specifically of queer theory, is the assertion that there is no wrong way to embody gender. **Embodiment** refers to the shape of a person’s body, how a person feels about their body, and what a person’s body can do. A person who presents as femme is as authentic in her gender as a person who presents as masculine or non-binary. A trans person who has invested time and money to make their body match their true gender, a transitioning person who is on the way toward an embodiment that feels authentic, and a disabled trans person who consciously subverts expected

gender norms are all equally entitled to affirmation and inclusion.

In the spirit of queer pride, disabled people also reclaimed and repurposed a formerly pejorative term, *crip*, to indicate strength, individuality, and interdependence. Crip Theory, like other poststructural theories, demands that society accommodates and affirms the full spectrum of human embodiment. **Crip theory** is a subfield of sociology that reveals and interrupts the harmful social pressures and social norms of ableism and heteronormativity. Crip theory affirms the many individual lived, embodied experiences of disability. In other words, Crip theory claims that there is no wrong way to show up as a human. It also asserts that the normalization of able-bodiedness needs to be dismantled: disabled individuals should not have to carry the majority of the burden of fitting in to simply access basic services or to enjoy aspects of society taken for granted by able-bodied individuals (figure 4.17).

A “critically queer” position refuses to conceal or gloss over the reality of one’s health, ability, or experience for the sake of social norms that don’t benefit the person. Thus, Crip theory is much like queer theory, working to resist normalized oppression and enact progressive change. It is not enough to simply study these phenomena—crip theory resists social norms that privilege able-bodiedness as a prerequisite for full participation in public life (Hitt 2021).

The disability justice movement, which is credited with the demand, “*Nothing about us without us*,” also takes a critical approach to understanding how power is socially constructed in relationship to embodiment. More than 1 in 4 adults in the U.S. lives with a physical, sensory, intellectual, developmental, and mental health disability, or a chronic illness (Pressley & Cokley 2022). The 1990 Americans With Disability Act (ADA) prohibited discrimination based on disability and required employers, governments, and entities providing public goods and services to make *reasonable accommodations* for disabled people. The ADA was an important step towards accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities, but legislation alone can not repair the harm done by a society that privileges able-bodied people.

When a society values independence above all, the existence of people who must rely on the help of another person in order to eat, bathe, dress, relieve themselves, or move through the world, or who rely on technology to communicate, can seem to be intolerable reminders of how fragile our illusion of independence is. Because of this, people whose bodies require interdependence have been shamed and shunned by mainstream society.

In addition to the psychological harms of being excluded from full participation in society, there are serious material harms. Forty-eight percent of all incarcerated women have a disability. People with disabilities earn 74 cents for every dollar that able-bodied people earn, are three times more likely to experience food insecurity, and nearly twice as likely to face housing insecurity. These numbers rise significantly for people who are Latinx or Black and disabled. The disability justice movement is organized around repairing and reducing these harms by “*moving beyond the socialization of ableism*” with tenderness, care, and a bold celebration of living interdependently (Sins Invalid n.d.).

Sociological theories, like post-structuralism, help to explain complex human behaviors, social phenomena, and social structures. In the next section, let’s consider how the theoretical perspectives you’ve been learning about might explain the persistent gender wage gap in the U.S.

LEARN MORE: Disability Justice

To learn more about the alignment between disability justice, crip theory, and third-wave feminism, you can check out [10 Principles of Disability Justice \[Website\]](#).

Let’s Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=397#h5p-14>

Licenses and Attributions for Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives

Open Content, Original

“Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives” by Nora Karena and Dana L. Pertermann is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

“Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Queer Theory” is adapted from “[Queer Theory](#)” in Wikipedia, which is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include revisions and remixing for context, inclusive language, and style.

Figure 4.14. “Subject and Object” by KATRIN BOLOVTSOVA is licensed under the Pexels License.

Figure 4.15. “[Judith Butler: Your Behavior Creates Your Gender](#)” by [Big Think](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 4.16. “Teresa de Lauretis” by Claudia Peppel is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

Figure 4.17. “[Crip Queer Pride with Daisy Wislar](#)” by [Rooted in Rights](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Abjection” definition by Kristeva & Roudiez (2010) is included under fair use.

“Embodiment” definition by Herbert & Pollatos (2024) is included under fair use.

This page titled [4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap

You have seen throughout the chapters of this book that social inequality is a prominent theme in sociology, and gender inequality is a specific concern of the sociology of gender. Let's complete our discussion of theory by using the tools of sociology to examine a persistent indicator of gender inequality, the gender wage gap.

In 2022, the gender wage gap—the difference between the median wages of men and women working full-time year-round—was 16%, which means women working full-time year-round received 84 cents for every dollar paid to men. Compared to white, non-Hispanic men, the wage gaps were 20% for white, non-Hispanic women; 31% for Black women; and 43% for Hispanic women (U.S. Department n.d.). As you work through this section pay attention to how sociologists use both micro and macro-level analysis to describe the individual and social factors that produce the gender wage gap.

Early Theoretical Perspectives

Classic conflict theory does not adequately account for gendered wage inequities. Conflict theorists might analyze how corporations in advanced capitalist societies, like the U.S., exploit workers' labor to maximize profits for owners and shareholders. By paying some workers less than others (and all workers less than the actual value of their labor), those at the top increase their wealth, while lower-wage workers are led to believe they too can join the upper classes if they work hard enough. Of course, the system depends on there always being a larger number of low-wage workers to generate the necessary profits. They might also analyze the unequal ratio of women to higher-paying positions. Gender conflict theory, inspired by feminism theory does, however, analyze how economic gender inequality supports patriarchal power structures in the workplace and the marketplace.

Structural functionalists might look at how values and norms shape societal notions of success in the workforce and how these established values and norms reinforce the division of labor and gender inequality. For functionalists, when gender roles are established, social solidarity increases. When large numbers of women began to enter the workforce starting in World War II due to labor needs, they were paid less. Employers argued that this was a necessary cost-saving measure during wartime. When women collectively began to demand equal pay for equal work, emerging values and norms were reinforced by new labor laws that prohibited gender discrimination in the workplace. These laws do not address the values and norms that drive persistent occupational segregation, which concentrates women in lower-paying categories of work.

Interactionists would likely examine how meaning, in the form of race and gender stereotypes and controlling images (Hill Collins 2022), is produced and negotiated in social interactions and then translated into wage inequality. A woman who displays certain behaviors that are generally understood as appropriate for leadership (i.e., strong, opinionated, concise) might be perceived as bossy or difficult to work with. In contrast, a man with the same behaviors would be perceived as having leadership potential. This type of meaning-making, which is heavily gendered through generational cycles of socialization, contributes to the wage gap at the micro-sociological level.

Feminist Theoretical Perspectives

A feminist theoretical perspective of the gender wage gap helps us see how systems of power like patriarchy *create* the social conditions that lead to gender-based income inequality. According to the Department of Labor, occupational segregation is a long-standing driver of the persistent pay inequities experienced by women in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Labor n.d.).

Occupational segregation is a form of social stratification in the labor market in which one group is more likely to do certain types of work than other groups. Gender-based occupational segregation describes situations in which women are more likely to do certain jobs and men do others.

The jobs women are more likely to hold have been dubbed *pink-collar jobs*. Men have traditionally held well-paying *white-collar jobs* and manual labor or *blue-collar jobs* with a full range of income levels depending on skill and experience, though many women hold these jobs now, as well. Pink-collar jobs are low-wage jobs disproportionately held by women. Pink-collar jobs include childcare, customer service, personal services, and direct social services. A common theme in pink-collar jobs is that, in addition to technical skills and subject matter expertise, they also require emotional labor.

Sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild (figure 4.18) (she/her) introduced the term **emotional labor** to describe work that requires

managing personal emotions and the emotions of other people (1983). For example, food servers risk losing their jobs if they respond to rude and harassing customers with otherwise appropriate anger. It is a routine part of a server's job to both control their emotional reactions and to soothe the emotions of unhappy customers. Any service-based work that involves interacting with the public also involves emotional labor. Even higher-paying, highly skilled *pink-collar* occupations, like administrative assistants, teachers, and nurses, involve emotional labor.



Figure 4.18. Arlie Russell Hochschild coined the term *emotional labor*. Have you ever had a job that required emotional labor? If so, do you think you were fairly compensated for it?

Nail technicians are an example of a pink-collar job that requires a high degree of technical skill and intense emotional labor. While clients may see the technician as their trusted confidant, with whom they share intimate secrets, this relationship is actually an economic one in which the worker is paid not only for the service they perform but also for their personality and listening skills.

Miliann Kang (she/her) has conducted research with immigrant women who work in beauty service work, particularly nail salons. Kang refers to this labor involving both emotional and physical labor as *body labor*. To engage in both emotional and physical labor at work is exhausting. In addition, workers in nail and hair salons work with harsh chemicals that are ultimately toxic to their health and make them more susceptible to cancer than the general population (Kang 2010).

LEARN MORE: Body Labor

To learn more about the routine exploitation of workers who perform emotional labor, check out Milian Kang's presentation about her work: [Miliann Kang – UCSB Intimate Labors Presentation \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Unpaid care work is another category of labor that contributes to the gender wage gap. A study by the National Alliance for Caregiving and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) found that around 43.5 million people provided unpaid care to an adult or child between 2014 and 2015 (AARP 2015). More than 75% of caregivers are women (Institute on Aging n.d.). Economist Nancy Folbre (she/her) (2010) has argued that care work is undervalued both because women are more likely to do it and because it is stereotypically understood as *women's work*.

Gender-based occupational segregation alone does not account for the fact that for every dollar that White men make, Black women make only sixty-four cents. Nor does racism alone account for Black women comprising 25% of the poor people in the U.S., compared to 18% of Black men. To fully account for the economic marginalization of Black women and other women of the global majority, we must take multiple systems of power into account. Black women and immigrant women disproportionately hold lower-paying service jobs in healthcare and other service industries (U.S. Department n.d). Data that includes both race and gender reveals that the wage gap for Black women and immigrant women is driven by both race- and gender-based occupational segregation. In Chapter Five, you will learn how intersectional analysis can reveal complex hierarchies of social stratification.

Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives and the Gender Pay Gap

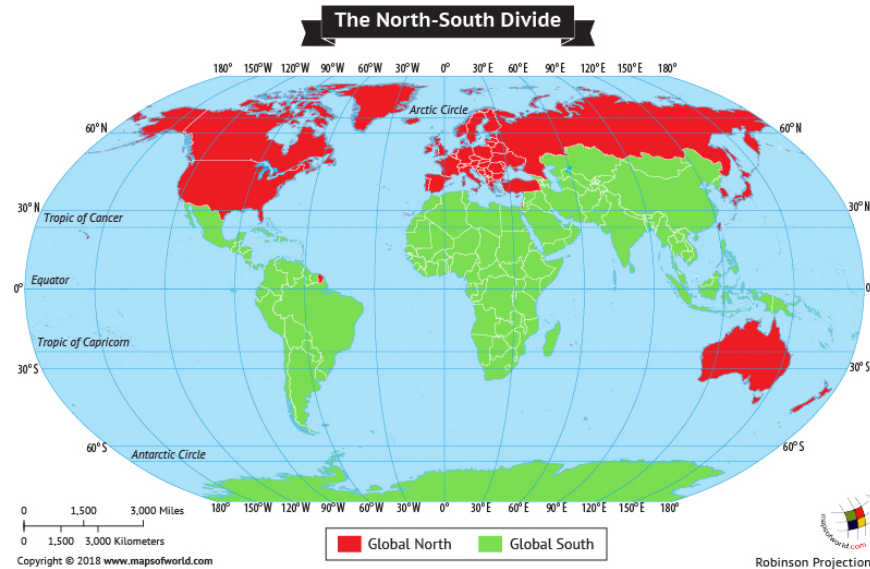


Figure 4.19. Global North and Global South. The term People of the Global Majority (PGM), which we use throughout this book, refers to people who live in or have migrated from the countries of the global south, as indicated by green in this map.

Contemporary theories of gender are concerned with the impact of the global economy in terms of the economic situations of the nations in which they live and also by gender and race. The map in figure 4.19 shows the countries of the global north in red and the countries of the global south in green. Notice that many of the countries of the global south were once colonized by countries in the global south. Contemporary trade relationships between the Global North and the Global South frequently reproduce a political situation similar to colonization in many nations of the Global South. Postcolonial scholars characterize the current global economic system as a form of neocolonialism, or modern-day colonization characterized by the exploitation of a nation's resources and people. Colonialism and neocolonialism are concepts that draw attention to the economic inequalities between historical colonizers and the historically colonized.

Postcolonial theory originated with scholars from former European colonies in the global south. Postcolonial theory explores how colonization disrupts social arrangements, including gender relations of the people who lived in colonized places. Gender-based differences in work and pay for women of the global south are an example of the ongoing results of colonialism.

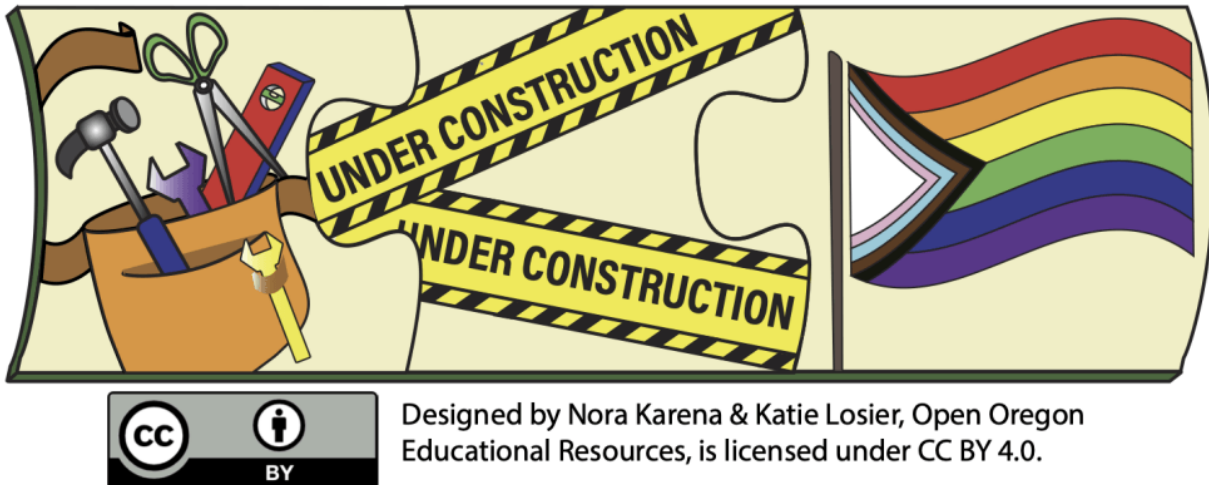
Postcolonial scholarship examines and critiques colonial discourses, depictions of colonized Others, and European scholars' biased representations of those they colonized, which they figure as knowledge. Postcolonial theory reveals how European ideas about people in countries that have been European colonies are shaped by the same derogatory and dehumanizing colonial perspectives of colonized populations that colonizers made up to justify their domination and subjugation of other people and their resources (Said 1995; Spivak 1988).

Postcolonial theoretical approaches, emerging chiefly from the global south, illuminate how the process of colonization disrupted the social arrangements, communities, gender relations, and cultures of the people who lived in colonized places. Among other cultural harms, colonization imposed European racialized conceptualizations of binary gender norms (Quijano 2007; Lugones 2007). Here again, we see the importance of standpoint. In this case, the standpoints of scholars from former colonies challenged the paternalistic social science of the colonizers.

Not only do gendered, racialized, and sexualized differences exist in the U.S. domestic labor market, leading to differences in work and pay, but these differences also impact the globalized labor market. Women of the Global South are disproportionately impacted by global economic policies. Not only are women in Asian and Latin American countries much more likely to work in low-wage factory jobs than men, but women are also much more mobile in terms of immigration (Pessar & Mahler 2003). Migrant women generally work in the pink-collar service sector. Those who are undocumented are especially vulnerable to exploitation in illegal and unregulated markets in nations of the Global North rather than regulated markets of the formal economy.

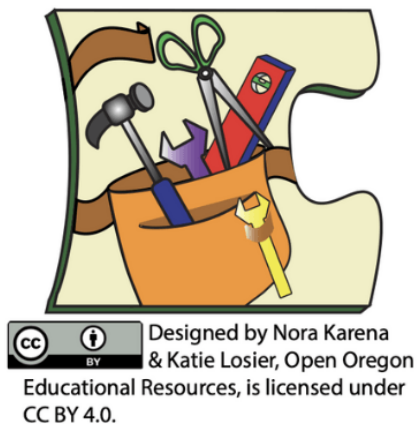
Unjust trade relationships between countries have profound effects on the quality of life of people all over the world. Women bear the brunt of changes in the global marketplace as factory workers in some countries and pink-collar service workers in others.

Real But Not True: The Gender Wage Gap



Let's consider how what you are learning about the Gender Wage Gap demonstrates that binary gender is socially constructed (not true) and has real-life consequences (real).

The Tools Of Sociology



The tools of sociology include:

- Sociological Imagination
- Research-based Evidence
- Social Theory

Gender conflict theory analyzes how economic gender inequality supports patriarchal power structures in the workplace and the marketplace.

A feminist theoretical perspective of the gender wage gap helps us see how systems of power like patriarchy create the social conditions that lead to gender-based income inequality.

Postcolonial theoretical approaches, emerging chiefly from the global south, illuminate how the process of colonization disrupted

the social arrangements, communities, gender relations, and cultures of the people who lived in colonized places. Gender, racialized, leading to gender-based differences in work and pay for women of the Global South.

Socially Constructed - Not True



 Designed by Nora Karena
& Katie Losier, Open Oregon
Educational Resources, is licensed under
CC BY 4.0.

We can recognize that socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to women in the labor force are *not universally true* when we can demonstrate that they:

- Change over time
- Are not the same in all societies
- Are imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, or challenged through social interactions.

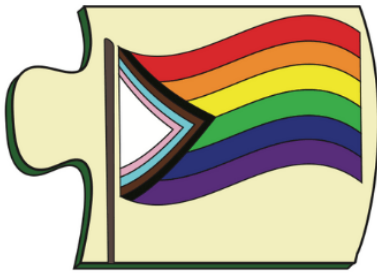
Occupational segregation is a form of social stratification in the labor market in which one group is more likely to do certain types of work than other groups.

Gender-based occupational segregation describes situations in which women are more likely to do certain jobs and men do others.

The jobs women are more likely to hold have been dubbed *pink-collar jobs*. Men have traditionally held well-paying *white-collar jobs* and manual labor or *blue-collar jobs* with a full range of income levels depending on skill and experience, though many women hold these jobs now, as well. Pink-collar jobs are low-wage jobs disproportionately held by women.

Data that includes both race and gender reveals that the wage gap for Black women and immigrant women is driven by both race- and gender-based occupational segregation.

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karna
& Katie Losier, Open Oregon
Educational Resources, is licensed under
CC BY 4.0.

The *real* social consequences of the gender wage gap include

- In 2022, the gender wage gap—the difference between the median wages of men and women working full-time year-round—was 16%, which means women working full-time year-round received 84 cents for every dollar paid to men.
- Compared to white, non-Hispanic men, the wage gaps were 20% for white, non-Hispanic women; 31% for Black women; and 43% for Hispanic women.
- Women in Asian and Latin American countries are much more likely to work in low-wage factory jobs.
- Migrant women are especially vulnerable to exploitation in illegal and unregulated markets in nations of the Global North, rather than regulated markets of the formal economy.

As you continue to work through this book, be on the lookout for other examples of socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences and for the ways that tools of sociology can be used to reveal them as social constructions that are not universally true, but have real consequences.

LEARN MORE: Transnational Mothers

When women migrate, they may be forced to sacrifice care of and contact with their own children in order to earn money caring for wealthier people's children as domestic workers; this situation is known as transnational motherhood (Parreñas, 2001). To learn more about the experience of transnational mothers, watch [Dos Madres: With courage and patience, two migrant mothers share their stories \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=399#h5p-15>

Looking Through the Lens: Queer Theory

In Chapter Three, you used the Gender Unicorn tool to describe your unique gender and sexuality. To demonstrate how flexible our understanding of gender and sexuality can be, this reflexive exercise invites you to use a queer theory lens in order to think about sexual orientation in new ways.

Step 1. Consider this:

Queer theory is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of sexuality studies that challenges the social construct of the gender binary and questions how we have been taught to think about sexual orientation. According to Annamarie Jagose (she/her) (1996),

queer theory focuses on mismatches between sex assigned at birth, gender identity, and sexual orientation, not just division into male/female or homosexual/heterosexual. Queer theory gives us a generous framework to think about the multiplicity of ways people understand and experience sex, gender, and sexuality.

By calling their discipline “queer,” scholars reject the effects of labeling; instead, they embraced the word “queer” and reclaimed it for their own purposes. The perspective highlights the need for a more flexible and fluid conceptualization of sexuality—one that allows for change, negotiation, and freedom. This approach can also be applied to other oppressive binaries in our culture, especially those surrounding gender and race (Black versus White, man versus woman).

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick argued against the dominant definition of sexuality reduced to a single factor: the sex of someone’s desired partner. Sedgwick identified dozens of other ways in which people’s sexualities can be defined, including:

- Differences in the meaning of specific genital acts (identical genital acts can mean very different things to different people).
- Sexuality makes up a large share of the self-perceived identity of some people and a small share of others.
- Some people spend a lot of time thinking about sex, others little.
- Some people like to have a lot of sex, others little or none.
- Some people like spontaneous sexual scenes, others like highly scripted ones, and still others like spontaneous-sounding ones that are nonetheless totally predictable.
- Some people experience their sexuality in terms of gender meanings and gender differences. Others do not (Sedgwick, 1990).

Step 2: For each continuum of sexuality, find the number between one and ten that best describes your relationship with that aspect of sexuality. There are no wrong answers, and you don’t have to share this with anyone else.

1. How do you feel about oral sex?
1 = doesn’t really count as sex, 10 = only with someone I am in a committed intimate relationship with
2. How important is sexuality to your identity?
1 = not at all important, 10 = the most important aspect of my identity
3. How much do you think about sex?
1 = I never think about sex, 10 = I always think about sex
4. How often do you want to have sex?
1 = I never want to have sex, 10 = I want to have sex multiple times a day
5. How spontaneous do you want sex to be?
1 = I only want to have spontaneous sex. 10 = I only want sex to be planned and scripted
6. Does having sex feel like an expression of your gender?
1 = how I have sex has nothing to do with my gender expression, 10 = I feel most affirmed in my gender expression when I have sex

Step Three: Use your responses to answer the following prompts and think about how you might describe your sexuality in ways that don’t include the gender of your sexual partner.

1. Which of these aspects of sexual orientation is most important to you? Least important?
2. How did it feel to think about your sexual orientation in this way?
3. What are you learning from this lesson about the social construction of gender and sexuality?

Licenses and Attributions for Theorizing the Gender Pay Gap

Open Content, Original

“Real But Not True: The Gender Wage Gap” By Noraarena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True Puzzle Images” by Noraarena and Katie Losier are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Theorizing the Gender Pay Gap” is adapted from “[Theoretical Perspectives on Gender](#)” by Sarah Hoiland and Lumen Learning, [Introduction to Sociology](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Heidi Esbensen include adding introductory paragraphs and editing them for relevance.

“Feminist Theoretical Perspectives and the Gender Pay Gap” is adapted from “[Gender and Work in the U.S.](#)” by Miliann Kang, Donovan Lessard, Laura Heston, Sonny Nordmarken in [Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Heidi Esbensen and Nora Karena include edits for length, style, and context.

“Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives and the Gender Pay Gap” is adapted from “[Racialized, Gendered, and Sexualized Labor in the Global Economy](#)” by Miliann Kang, Donovan Lessard, Laura Heston, Sonny Nordmarken, [Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include edits for length, style, and context.

“Looking Through the Lens: Queer Theory” is adapted from “[Sexuality](#)” by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang, [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications include edits by Dana L. Pertermann and questions by Heidi Esbensen.

Figure 4.18. “[Arlie Russel Hochschild](#)” by Paul572 is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Emotional labor” definition by Hochschild (1983) included under fair use.

Figure 4.19. “[Global North v Global South Divide](#)” by mapsofworld.com is included under fair use.

This page titled [4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

4.6: Conclusion

Sociology of gender is a critical approach to sociology that applies lessons learned from both social research and social activism. It provides evidence to support a critique of the dominant culture in terms of power, gender, and sexuality, and it helps us better understand how gender is related to inequality, oppression, and poverty. It refutes the idea that gender and sexuality are biological, binary, fixed, and determinative. The sociology of gender centers on the perspectives and lived experiences of individuals in groups that are marginalized within the dominant culture.

This chapter has sketched out the development of feminist theory across three historical “waves” of feminism, introduced you to some of the many social scientists, historians, philosophers, and poets who have contributed to the larger interdisciplinary project of gender and sexuality studies, and introduced four contemporary theories related to gender: post-structuralism, queer-theory, crip theory, and postcolonialism. In Chapter Five, we will use these theories to take a closer look at the power of gender.

Review Learning Objectives

Now that you have completed this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify three early theoretical perspectives of social inequality.
2. Discuss key theoretical developments that correspond with each wave of feminism.
3. Explain why post-structuralism made it possible to understand gender in new ways.
4. Analyze the gender pay gap using foundational, feminist, poststructural, and post-colonial theories.
5. Use Queer Theory to analyze sexual orientation as a social construct.

Questions For Discussion

1. Summarize the three early sociological theories.

Answer: Structural functionalism, also called functionalism, is a macro-level theory concerned with large-scale processes and large-scale social systems that order, stabilize, and destabilize societies. Conflict theory is a macro-level theory that proposes conflict is a basic fact of social life, which argues that the institutions of society benefit the powerful. Symbolic interactionist theory is a micro-level theory concerned with how meanings are constructed through interactions with others.

2. Summarize the three waves of feminism.

Answer: The “first wave” of the feminist movement began in the mid-19th century and lasted until the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, which gave women the right to vote. The focus of the first wave of feminism focused on securing the right to vote for women, striking down laws that give husbands ownership of their wife’s property, and securing women’s access to education and employment. Second-wave feminism applied principles learned from the civil rights movement to challenge gender norms that excluded women from politics and restricted them to the domestic sphere. A major focus of second-wave feminism was to secure the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. This constitutional amendment still has not passed. Third-wave feminism was influenced by earlier waves but has expanded to include a multitude of standpoint-specific feminisms developed by Black women, transnational women, women of the Global South, disabled women, and people who are LGBTQIA+. A defining characteristic of the third wave is coalitional politics, in which the people with diverse identities build alliances that challenge systems of oppression.

3. How does post-structuralism analyze gender?

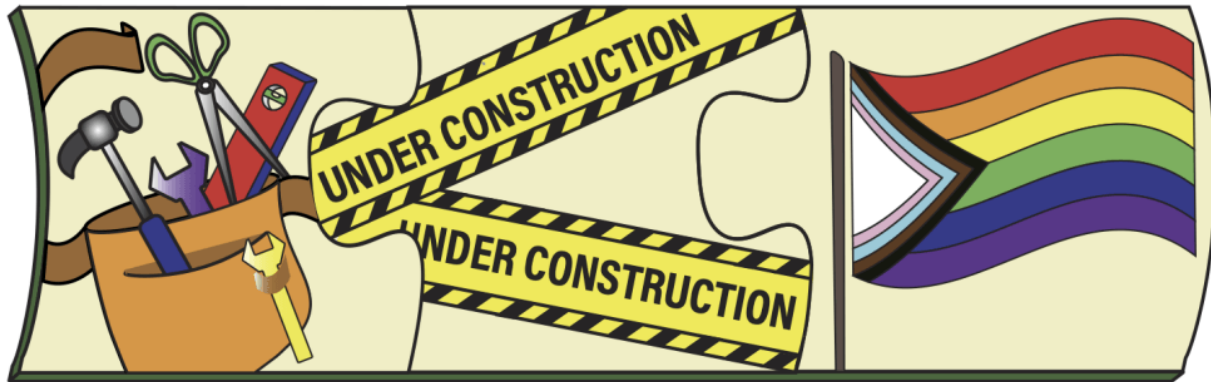
Answer: Post-structuralism focuses on how gender is constructed, reproduced, enforced, challenged, and transformed in gendered language and gendered ideas of work, as well as how gender is constructed by individual behavior or performance. More broadly, poststructuralism deconstructs the binary categories of gender.

4. Compare and contrast how early sociological theories, feminist theories, and contemporary theories analyze the gender wage gap.

Answer: Structural functionalists might look at how values and norms shape societal notions of success in the workforce and how these established values and norms reinforce the division of labor and gender inequality. Interactionists would likely examine how meaning, in the form of race and gender stereotypes and controlling images, is produced and negotiated in social interactions and then translated into wage inequality. Gender conflict theory, inspired by feminism theory, analyzes how economic gender inequality supports patriarchal power structures in the workplace and the marketplace. A feminist theoretical perspective of the gender wage gap helps us see how systems of power like patriarchy *create* the social conditions that lead to gender-based income inequality. Contemporary theories of gender are concerned with the impact of

the global economy in terms of the economic situations of the nations in which they live and also by gender and race.

Real But Not True: Check-in



Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Let's take a moment to reflect on what you've learned in this chapter about socially constructed gender norms.

The Tools Of Sociology



Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Tools of Sociology:

What specific examples of the tools of sociology have been discussed in this chapter?

- Sociological Imagination
- Research-based Evidence
- Social Theory

Socially Constructed - Not True

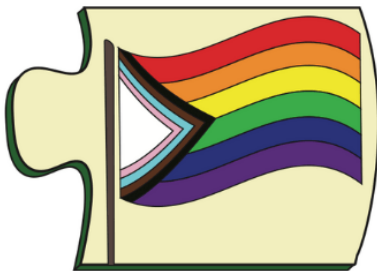


 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Socially Constructed: Sexual Norms

- What examples of gender being imposed, enforced, reproduced, challenged, and changed have you discovered in this chapter?

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Real in Consequence: Social Stigma

- What examples of real consequences for violating or conforming to socially constructed gender norms have you discovered in this chapter?

Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion

Open Content, Original

“Conclusion” by Nora Karena and Dana L. Pertermann is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True: Check-in” By Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True Puzzle Images” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

This page titled [4.6: Conclusion](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

4.7: References

- American Association of Retired Persons [AARP]. (2015, June 4). Caregiving in the United States 2015. <https://www.aarp.org/ppi/info-2015/caregiving-in-the-united-states-2015.html>
- Athens, Lonnie. 2010. "Human Subordination from a Radical Interactionist's Perspective." *Journal of the Theory of Social Behaviour* 40(3): 339-368.
- Butler, J. (1988). *Performative acts and gender constitution: An essay in phenomenology and feminist theory*. Theatre Journal 40(4), 519. DOI: 10.2307/3207893.
- Blumer, H. (2009). *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method* (1. paperback print., renewed). Univ. of California Press.
- Colomy, Paul. 2010. "Three Sociological Perspectives." Pp 30-38 in *Sociological Odyssey: Contemporary Readings in Introductory Sociology*, 3rd edition, edited by P.A. Adler and P. Adler. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Cott, N. F. (2000). *Public vows: A history of marriage and the nation*. Harvard University Press.
- Davis, A. Y. (1983). *Women, Race & Class*. Vintage Books.
- Du Bois, E. C. & Dumenil, L. (2005). *Through women's eyes: An American history with documents*. Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (2015). *The Souls of Black Folk*. A. C. McClurg [Originally published 1903].
- Eastern Kentucky University. *Feminism: What is it?* <https://wgs.eku.edu/what-feminism-0>
- Few-Demo, A. L., Humble, Á. M., Curran M. A. & Lloyd S. A. (2016, March 2). *Queer theory, intersectionality, and LGBT-parent families: Transformative critical pedagogy in family theory* [Abstract]. *Journal of Family Theory & Review* (8), 74-94. doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12127
- Freedom, Inc. (2017). <https://freedom-inc.org/index.php?page=about-us>.
- Folbre, N. (2009). *Greed, lust & gender: A history of economic ideas*. Oxford University Press.
- Hallett, T., & Ventresca, M. J. (2006). *Inhabited Institutions: Social Interactions and Organizational Forms in Gouldner's "Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy."* *Theory and Society*, 35(2), 213-236.
- Harding, S. (1992). *Rethinking standpoint epistemology: What is "strong objectivity?"* *The Centennial Review* 36(3), 437-470. www.jstor-org.emporiastate.idm.oclc.org/stable/23739232
- Hill-Collins, P. (2022). *Black Feminist Thought, 30th Anniversary Edition: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Routledge.
- Hitt, A. (2012, July 13). *Crip theory: Cultural signs of queerness and disability. Accessing Rhetoric: notes on rhetoric, composition, dis/ability & accessibility.* <https://allisonhitt.wordpress.com/2012/07/13/crip-theory-cultural-signs-of-queerness-and-disability/>
- Hochschild, A. R. (1983). *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. University of California Press.
- Institute on Aging. (n.d.). *Aging in America*. <https://www.ioaging.org/aging-in-america/>
- Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer theory: An introduction*. New York University Press.
- Kang, M. (2010). *The managed hand: Race, gender, and the body in beauty service work*. University of California Press.
- Kozol, J. (2012). *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. Crown.
- Kristeva, J., & Roudiez, L. S. (2010). *Powers of horror: An essay on abjection*. Nachdr. Columbia University Press.

- Library, Literatures and Languages. (n.d.) University Library LibGuides: Queer theory: Background. guides.library.illinois.edu/queertheory/background.
- Lugones, M. (2007). Heterosexualism and the colonial/modern gender system. *Hypatia* 22(1), 186–209.
- Gougherty, M. (2024). Class and Conflict: Karl Marx (Germany, 1818–1883) In *Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology in Introduction to Sociology* [unpublished author's manuscript], is licensed under CC BY 4.0.
- Parreñas, R. S. (2001). *Servants of globalization: Women, migration and domestic work*. Stanford University Press.
- Pemberton, Sarah. (2013). Enforcing Gender: The Constitution of Sex and Gender in Prison Regimes. *Signs*. 39. 151-175. [10.1086/670828](https://doi.org/10.1086/670828).
- Pessar, P. R., & Mahler, S. J. (2003). Transnational Migration: Bringing Gender In. *International Migration Review*, 37(3), 812-846. doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2003.tb00159.x
- Pressley, A. & Cokley, R. (2022). There is no justice that neglects disability. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/there_is_no_justice_that_neglects_disability
- Herbert, BM. & Pollatos, O. (2024). The body in the mind: on the relationship between interoception and embodiment. *Top Cogn Sci*. 4:692–704.
- Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and modernity/rationality. *Cultural Studies* 21(2), 168–178.
- Ritzer, G., & Stepnisky, J. (2022). *Contemporary sociological theory and its classical roots: The basics* (Sixth edition). SAGE.
- Said, E. (1995). *Orientalism: Western conceptions of the orient*. Penguin.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 1990. *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Sins Invalid. (n.d.). An unashamed claim to beauty in the face of invisibility. www.sinsinvalid.org/disability-justice-primer#:~:text=The%20Disability%20Justice%20Primer%20offers,and%20access%20suggestions%20for%20events
- Sociologists for Women in Society. (n.d.). Retrieved November 24, 2023, from <https://socwomen.org/about/>
- Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (Eds.). University of Illinois.
- Tannen, D. (1994). *Gender and discourse*. Oxford University.
- Tannen, D. (2017). *You're the only one I can tell: Inside the language of women's friendships*. Ballantine Books.
- This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. (1981). C. Moraga & G. Anzaldúa (Eds.). Persephone.
- Taylor, K.-Y. (Ed.). (2017). *How we get free: Black feminism and the Combahee River Collective*. Haymarket Books.
- Thompson, B. (2002). Multiracial feminism: Recasting the chronology of second wave feminism. *Feminist Studies* 28(2), 337-360.
- Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses*. (1991). In *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. C. Talpade Mohanty, A. Russo, & L. Torres (Eds.). Indiana University.
- U.S. Department of Labor. (n.d.). Department of Labor releases research on continued economic effects of job segregation, pay disparities on Black, Hispanic women. (n.d.). Retrieved July 4, 2024, from www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/wb/wb20240312
- Wells, A. (1979). Conflict Theory and Functionalism: Introductory Sociology Textbooks, 1928-1976. In *Teaching Sociology*, 6(4), 429 [Original text 1893].
- thisisloyal.com, (2021). Gender Identity Disparities in Criminal Victimization. Williams Institute. Retrieved September 21, 2024, from <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/ncvs-trans-victimization/>

This page titled [4.7: References](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

CHAPTER 5: GENDER AND POWER

5.1: Chapter Introduction

5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power

5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power

5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power

5.5: Shifting Power

5.6: Conclusion

5.7: References

This page titled [Chapter 5: Gender and Power](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

5.1: Chapter Introduction

Chapter Overview: Locating Gendered Power

Power in patriarchal societies has traditionally been secured by the violent enforcement of binary gender roles and gender inequality. This violence occurs at multiple levels, including structural, cultural, and interpersonally. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), coercive control of a spouse or romantic partner, is a common way to secure power in intimate relationships within patriarchal societies. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified traditional gender norms and gender inequality, and the social acceptance of interpersonal aggression as societal risk factors for IPV, and states that “Sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence are major public health problems in the United States” (Reamer 2023).

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) has at different times been referred to as wife battering, domestic violence, and spousal abuse, but since people of all genders and sexualities in a variety of intimate relationships experience IPV, the more inclusive and expansive term, “Intimate Partner Violence,” is being widely adopted. However, there is some concern that this language obscures the connection between gender and violence (Bonnet & Whittaker 2015). The Wheel of Power and Control (figure 5.1) describes many of the forms of violence that perpetrators of IPV use to control their intimate partners.

Violence is one way that power is created and maintained in unequal systems of power. As the Wheel of Power and Control demonstrates, violence can take many forms in multiple domains. In this chapter, *The Wheel of Power and Control* is adapted in two different ways to help us understand that gender and other categories of identity are intersectional constructions of power that operate in multiple domains to create and maintain unequal systems of power. We will also consider some specific ways people are marginalized or privileged within those systems. Building on the discussion of patriarchy that we began in Chapter One, this chapter will also introduce four complex systems of power, heteropatriarchy, capitalism, white supremacy, and settler colonialism, that are sustained by gender inequality and explore how resistance to these systems can shift power towards the possibility of more equitable and expansive genders and sexualities.



Figure 5.1 The Wheel of Power and Control is a useful tool for visualizing how physical, sexual, and emotional violence work together to reinforce power and control in intimate relationships. (Note: This image was developed for a program that primarily served women who experienced intimate partner violence, and uses language that assumes that the victim is a woman and the abuser is a man. In truth, victims and abusers can be any gender.) What would a tool to visualize a non-violent intimate relationship look like? Image description available.

[Image description.](#)

LEARN MORE: Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV) can be a challenging topic, especially for people who have experienced it. If you have experienced

IPV, please take time to create safety for yourself as you work through this material. For more research about intimate partner violence, you can explore the [National Domestic Violence Hotline \[Website\]](#).

Key Terms

This section contains a list of foundational key terms from the chapter. After reviewing them here, be on the lookout for them as you work through the rest of the book.

- **capitalism:** a complex competitive economic system of power in which limited resources are subject to private ownership and the accumulation of surplus is rewarded.
- **decolonization:** (multiple interrelated meanings from Cott 2000; Indigenous Corporate Training n.d.)
 - a political process that included a transfer of power back from a colonial government to an Indigenous one. For example, when India became independent from the British Empire in 1947.
 - For those who have benefited from colonization, decolonization has also come to mean a personal divestment of colonial power across structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal domains of power.
 - a cultural process of identifying and challenging cultural domains of colonial power so that pre-colonial ways of being and knowing can be reclaimed, recovered, and reimagined.
- **heteropatriarchy:** (a merging of the words heterosexual and patriarchy) is a system of power in which cisgender and heterosexual men have authority over everyone else. This term emphasizes that discrimination against women and LGBTQIA+ people is derived from the same sexist social principle (Valdes 1996).
- **internalized oppression:** a process of individuals within an oppressed group incorporating and accepting the prejudices of the dominant society (Pheterson 1986).
- **intersectionality:** describes how multiple social locations overlap and influence each other to create complex hierarchies of power and oppression, and that overlapping social identities produce unique inequities that influence the lives of people and groups (Crenshaw 1989).
- **marginalization:** a process of social exclusion in which individuals or groups are pushed to the outside of society by denying them economic and political power (Chandler & Munday 2011).
- **meritocracy:** a hypothetical system of power in which social status is determined by personal effort and merit (Conerly et al. 2021).
- **microaggressions:** are statements that indirectly reference stereotypes to assert the dominance of the aggressor.
- **privilege:** a right or immunity granted as a benefit, advantage, or favor. While privileges can be earned in some systems, privileges can also be unearned and based on social location. For the purpose of describing unequal power arrangements in systems of power we will be referring to those privileges that are “unearned advantages, exclusive to a particular group or social category, and socially conferred by others” (Johnson 2001).
- **settler colonialism:** is an unequal system of power that relies on white supremacy to justify removing established indigenous residents of colonized territory so that the land can be occupied by settlers and its resources used for the benefit of the occupying power.
- **social identity:** consists of the combination of social characteristics, roles, and group memberships with which a person identifies. Social identity can be described as “the sum total of who we think we are in relation to other people and social systems” (Johnson 2014, p. 178).
- **social location:** describes the relationship between social identity and social power.
- **social movements:** purposeful, organized groups that strive to work toward a common social goal.
- **systems of power:** socially constructed beliefs, practices, and cultural norms that produce and normalize power arrangements in social institutions.
- **tokenism:** the practice of making only a superficial or symbolic effort to diversify an organization by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups to give the appearance of equality.
- **The Matrix of Domination:** a theoretical framework developed by Patricia Hill Collins (she/her) to describe how power is socially constructed. Hill Collins identifies four domains of socially constructed power, which arrange power and work together to create systems of power (Hill Collins 1990).
- **White supremacy:** a complex system of racist power that is based on discredited racist enlightenment-era social science and constructed through policies and practices that privileged white people over people of other races, based on the racist ideas that there are meaningful differences between people in different racial categories, that White people are physically and culturally superior, and that they are therefore entitled to dominate other people in other racial categories.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Explain how binary gender is embedded in unequal systems of power.
2. Describe how binary gender norms and unequal systems of power can impact individuals.
3. Describe the role of binary gender norms in the conquest and colonization of the global south.
4. Explain why successful social movements to dismantle unequal systems of power require the leadership of women, people who are LGBTQIA+, and People of the Global Majority.
5. Explain how violence reinforced heteropatriarchal gender norms.

Licenses and Attributions for Chapter Introduction

Open Content, Original

“Chapter Introduction” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

Figure 5.1. “The Wheel of Power and Control” © [Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs](#) is included with permission.

This page titled [5.1: Chapter Introduction](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power



Figure 5.2. Head of the Table. This image of a family praying before a meal captures a daily ritual performed in households around the world. In many patriarchal cultures, this ritual can be a daily reinforcement of the power of the father as the head of a family and can play an important role in producing and normalizing gender-based dominance in society. Can you think of other ways patriarchy is reinforced in our daily lives?

Violence and coercion are not the only ways that binary gender norms and gender inequality are constructed in societies. They can also be constructed in public policy, laws, shared culture, and personal relationships. Violence, binary gender norms, and gender inequality exist because they work to establish and maintain arrangements of power. Why do they work? How do they work? Who do they work for? What other possibilities for creating a stable society might be created? An understanding of systems of power can help us answer these questions.

Systems of power are socially constructed beliefs, practices, and cultural norms that produce and normalize power arrangements in social institutions. For example, recall from Chapter One that patriarchy is a socially constructed system of power that normalizes power arrangements in families according to a gender-based hierarchy in which fathers maintain power over their intimate partners, children, and sometimes unpartnered siblings. In patriarchal societies, this heteronormative, hierarchical family structure is reproduced in religious, educational, and economic institutions to produce and normalize masculine dominance in society (figure 5.2).

This section describes how systems of power are socially constructed, four kinds of power, and how socially constructed intersectional identities determine individual access to power.

Four Domains of Power



Figure 5.3. Crystalline Matrix. A matrix is an interconnected structure that holds together a system or creates an environment. For example, a formation of minerals that produce crystals is one kind of matrix.

The sci-fi film franchise *The Matrix* (Wachowski et al. 1999, 2003, 2003) is a fun action film that explores big ideas about power, gender, and the nature of reality. The series is set in a world where human beings are exploited as sources of power to feed a society of intelligent machines. These human batteries are not aware of their true condition because they are plugged into an artificial reality called “The Matrix.” A matrix is an interconnected structure that holds a system together or creates an environment. The matrix in the film is the artificially generated shared reality that humans experience. Another kind of matrix is the base of minerals from which crystals grow (figure 5.3). This idea of a matrix can also help us describe how systems of power are socially constructed.

The Matrix of Domination (figure 5.4) is a theoretical framework developed by Patricia Hill Collins (she/her) to describe how power is socially constructed. Hill Collins identifies four domains of socially constructed power, which arrange power and work together to create systems of power.

In *Black Feminist Thought*, Collins theorized that gender and other categories of identity exist within a complex Matrix of Domination, held together by four kinds of power, which Collins calls domains of power: structural power, disciplinary power, cultural or hegemonic power, and interpersonal power. Each domain is constructed by specific sources of power. For example, the structural domain of power is constructed with formal and informal organizational and institutional policies, laws, procedures, organizing principles, and leadership structures (Hill; Collins 1990).

Figure 5.4. *The Matrix of Domination* describes four kinds of power and how they are constructed. As you work through the rest of this chapter, try and identify examples of each kind of power.

DOMAINS OF POWER	SOURCES OF POWER
Structural – The power to rule	Formal and informal organizational and institutional policies, laws, procedures, organizing principles, and leadership structures
Disciplinary – the power to punish and reward	Formal and informal organizational and institutional methods of policing and enforcement, disciplinary policies and procedures, and social structures
Hegemonic (Cultural) – the power to influence	Commonly held ideas, knowledge, values, customs, religion, folklore, social norms, art, literature, entertainment, popular and social media
Interpersonal – the power of self-determination	Social location (identity-based privilege and marginalization) Social status, internalized oppression, individual knowledge, lived experience, connectedness, autonomy, self-efficacy

To better understand the domains and sources of power that maintain a Matrix of Domination, let's return to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). Have you ever wondered why survivors of IPV have a hard time getting away from their abusers? Have you ever

known a survivor who couldn't escape? Or did it take them a long time to be able to escape? A common question asked of people who are abused by an intimate partner is, "*Why don't you just leave?*" Advocates and allies of survivors argue that this is the wrong question. Instead, we can ask, *Why does an abusive person continue to harm their intimate partner?* Or *What are the structural and social barriers that keep someone from feeling like they can leave?*

The reasons that abusive people can continue to abuse their partners can be identified as sources of power across the four domains of the matrix of domination). As we work our way through each domain, we will use the experiences of survivors of IPV to illustrate how power is constructed. We will also see how changes in each domain, in the form of changing policies, laws, culture, and interpersonal power, have changed some of the social norms around IPV and how much more remains to be changed.

Structural power is the power to rule. It is socially constructed with formal and informal institutional policies, laws, organizing principles, and leadership structures. Governments, religious institutions, business entities, and educational institutions are sites of structural power.

A long history of structural power has empowered people to use violence to control their intimate partners. Laws that explicitly grant men the right to hit their wives existed in Ancient Rome, in English Common Law, and in state and local laws in the U.S. These laws also have a long history of being contested. In 1882, Maryland was the first state to outlaw the practice. The first federal legislation that addressed IPV was the 1994 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) (You learned about VAWA in Chapter Three). VAWA provides federal funding to states for legal and social services for survivors.

Yet despite VAWA and other legal prohibitions against IPV, many formal and informal social structures continue to keep survivors trapped in abusive relationships, including laws and policies that disadvantage single parents (i.e., lack of childcare, workplace policies that do not flex to meet the needs of people fleeing violence or single parents more generally). Permissive gun laws that allow abusers to keep firearms are another example of socially constructed power that normalizes IPV.

Disciplinary power is the power to punish and reward. It includes formal and informal methods of policing and enforcement, disciplinary policies and procedures, and social sanctions like shunning. Disciplinary power enforces existing power structures and regulates who has access to power. In addition to law enforcement and the legal system, disciplinary power is held by teachers, parents, and managers.

More than 60% of all arrests for interpersonal violence are IPV arrests, and only a third of all IPV arrests result in a prosecution (Communicating with Prisoners Collective, n.d.). An unintended consequence has been that victims also get arrested in high numbers, and in cases where police are uncertain about who committed the assault, they will arrest both people (Hirschel 2008; Dichter 2013).

Cultural power, also called hegemony, is the power to influence and persuade. Hegemony is the influence or the authority that one dominant social group holds over others. It is created and reinforced by a society's commonly held ideas, knowledge, values, morals, customs, religion, folklore, social norms, art, literature, entertainment, popular media, and social media that work together to convince people to either buy into or resist existing power structures. Cultural power is also deeply embedded in our shared cultural history.

We have already identified some of the ways cultural power is socially constructed to normalize IPV, like rigid gender norms and the shared acceptance of aggression as a reasonable way to control people. Like structural power, cultural power can normalize IPV or make it a problem.

Interpersonal power refers to our sense of power or agency to control our lives and the power dynamics between individuals. Interpersonal power is constructed by social location (we will cover this in the next section), individual knowledge, personal biases, lived experience, and motivation. Our sense of personal motivation to change is impacted by our sense of connectedness, autonomy, self-efficacy, and personal agency (Deci and Ryan 1985).

Classically recognized expressions of IPV, like bullying, gaslighting, isolation, threats, and physical violence, all chip away at a survivor's connectedness, autonomy, and self-efficacy. IPV and coercive control are effective because, over time, victims become isolated, and their sense of personal power begins to erode. Peer support groups are helpful for survivors to overcome isolation by finding support from other survivors, learning to recognize coercive power dynamics, and reconnecting with their sense of autonomy and personal power (Tutty et al. 2006).

Individuals can support survivors by helping them create interpersonal safety. This can include listening to and believing survivors, helping them develop a safety plan, and helping them locate material resources and social support. Even if someone doesn't feel like they can get away yet, planning to do so in the future can help people prioritize safety and begin to find their power.

LEARN MORE: Safety Planning for IPV

To learn more about how to help people who are at risk for IPV, check out this [interactive safety planning tool \[Website\]](#).

Social Identity + Privilege or Marginalization = Social Location

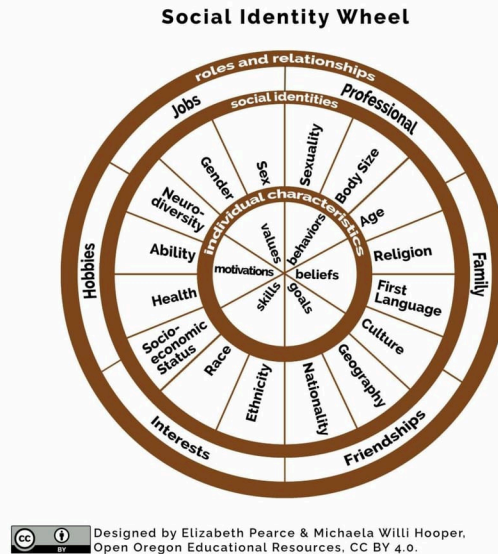


Figure 5.5. The Social Identity Wheel includes individual characteristics, social identities, and roles and relationships. How do you describe your social identities? Image description available. [Image description](#).

How do you describe yourself? How do others describe you? Are you a working class feminine-presenting white cisgender lesbian student who loves skateboarding and country music? Or are you a middle-class Jewish transgender man with autism who manages a restaurant and collects old tools? Maybe you are a straight white cisgender man whose ancestors immigrated to the Oregon Coast from Sweden four generations ago and who hosts a weekly classic rock radio show and is passionate about social justice.

Each of us has a unique, complex personal identity. We also share individual aspects of our identity with other people, such as feminine-presenting people, people with autism, or people passionate about social justice. While our identities are individual and specific, each of the ways we describe ourselves that can be shared with others is also a social category or social identity (Figure 5.5).

Social identity consists of the combination of social characteristics, roles, and group memberships with which a person identifies. Social identity can be described as “the sum total of who we think we are in relation to other people and social systems” (Johnson 2014, p. 178). Our social identity includes:

- *Social characteristics:* These can be biologically determined and socially constructed and include sex, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, age, sexuality, nationality, first language, or religion, among other characteristics.
- *Roles:* These indicate the behaviors and patterns an individual utilizes, such as a parent, partner, sibling, employee, employer, etc., which may change over time.
- *Group memberships:* These are often related to social characteristics (e.g., a place of worship) and roles (e.g., a moms’ group), but could be more specialized as well, such as being a twin, a singer in a choir, or part of an emotional support group.

In unequal systems of power, some social identities, like lovers of country music or collectors of old tools, are relatively neutral. In contrast, others are consequential and associated with privilege or marginalization within a social system. We can tell when social identity determines power within a social system by identifying social inequalities. For example, 68% of LGBTQIA+ report feeling unsafe at school because of their gender identity or sexual orientation (GLSEN 2022). We know that gender identity and sexual orientation have a profound effect on how students experience school. Because we also know that bullying and peer victimization negatively impact educational outcomes (Ladd et. al. 2017), we can say that gender identity and sexual orientation are social identities that can determine whether people are privileged or marginalized in a social system.

Privilege is a right or immunity granted as a benefit, advantage, or favor. While privileges can be earned in some systems, privileges can also be unearned and based on social location. To describe unequal power arrangements in systems of power, we will be referring to those privileges that are “unearned advantages, exclusive to a particular group or social category, and socially conferred by others” (Johnson 2001). The opposite of unearned social privilege is **marginalization**, a process of social exclusion in which individuals or groups are pushed to the outside of society by denying them economic and political power (Chandler & Munday 2011).

Have you ever felt marginalized in a social setting? In general, people who are privileged in a social setting have an advantage that comes from an unspoken knowing that they belong and that they can be successful if they give their best effort. On the other hand, people who are marginalized in a social setting may feel like they have to prove their right to be there at all. It is common for people who have been marginalized to feel like the social environment was not created for them. Like social inequality, the existence of privilege and marginalization can be demonstrated in inequitable outcome disparities, such as 78% of LGBTQIA+ students reporting that they have avoided school functions or extracurricular activities (78.8%) because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (GLSEN 2021).

Many people find it challenging to reconcile the idea that power is unfairly distributed in the U.S. with the idea that we are a “land of opportunity,” where each person has a shot at success no matter how they identify, and privilege must be earned by hard work and determination. But if privileges are deserved because they are earned, does that mean people who are marginalized who are marginalized deserve that status? And how do we account for people who hold privileged status because of the success of their parents, grandparents, or even distant ancestors?

This idea of a system of equal opportunities for success or failure is based on meritocracy. **Meritocracy** is a hypothetical system of power in which social status is determined by personal effort and merit. The concept of meritocracy is an ideal because no society has ever existed where social standing was based entirely on merit. Rather, multiple factors influence social standing, including processes like socialization and the realities of inequality within economic systems.

While a meritocracy has never existed, sociologists see aspects of meritocracies in modern societies when they study the role of academic and job performance and the systems in place for evaluating and rewarding achievement in these areas. Still, a true meritocracy can be hard to achieve when it exists within a larger system of unequal power arrangements.

It can be harder to see our privilege than it is to see our marginalization. This is because we are socialized not to see it. That, too, is a privilege (Johnson 2001). Because we value the idea of meritocracy, we are also socialized to feel guilty about having unearned privilege, especially as we begin to understand the harms experienced by people who are marginalized by the same systems of power that privilege us.

Those feelings of guilt are tricky because they can reinforce unequal systems of power by keeping us from acknowledging our unearned privilege. Discovering that we benefit from unearned privilege is nothing to be ashamed of, and it doesn't mean we haven't worked hard to earn other privileges. We don't have to feel guilty. Instead, we can use our knowledge and power to be in solidarity with people who are marginalized to construct a more equitable and just system of power.

LEARN MORE: Privilege

Learn more about how unearned privilege works to sustain unequal systems of power in these books:

Privilege, power, and difference. Allan G. Johnson. (2001).

White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for White People to Talk about Racism. Robin J. DiAngelo. (2018).

And in this TED Talk from Peggy McIntosh: “[How Studying Privilege Systems Can Strengthen Compassion](#)” [Streaming Video].

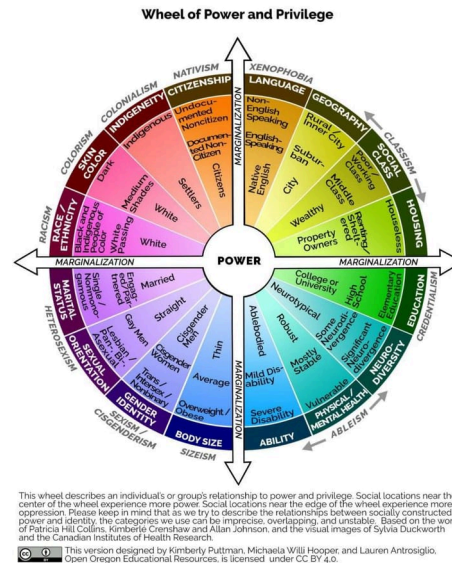


Figure 5.6. The Wheel of Power and Privilege uses social locations to demonstrate that sexuality is one of many aspects of identity that predetermine how people are marginalized or empowered by systems of power in the U.S. What aspects of your social identity are marginalized or privileged? Image description available. [Image description.](#)

Aspects of social identity, like race, gender, or sexuality that are either privileged or marginalized in social systems determine our social location. **Social location** describes the relationship between social identity and social power. The Wheel of Power and Privilege (figure 5.6) uses social locations to demonstrate that gender identity and sexuality are two of many aspects of identity that are constructed to identify who is privileged or marginalized by systems of power in the U.S.

To read the Wheel of Power and Privilege, start with the word *power* at the center of the circle. Each socially constructed category of identity listed outside of the wheel determines how identity connects to power to produce marginalization or privilege within that system. People with characteristics near the center of the circle, such as White, non-disabled, property owners, have more privilege and, therefore, access to more social power. People in the center are also known as people in the dominant group. Non-dominant or marginalized groups are located toward the outside of the wheel. People in marginalized groups have less access to power.

Since all of us have multiple identities, we each navigate multiple systems of power with specific experiences of privilege and marginalization. In the next section, we will consider how multiple forms of privileges and marginalization can work together to situate people within complex social hierarchies (Hill; Collins 1990).

Intersectionality: Complex Hierarchies of Privilege and Marginalization

Social identity and social location are not just about who you are—they influence how much power you have in society. As we will see in this section, intersectionality is about more than describing diversity. Intersectionality is about power, which translates to wealth, health, and opportunity. Intersectionality shows us that socially constructed identities are also social constructions of power, which are organized into complex social hierarchies of power and domination.

Intersectionality describes how multiple social locations overlap and influence each other to create complex hierarchies of power and oppression and that overlapping social identities produce unique inequities that influence the lives of people and groups (Crenshaw 2015).

The term intersectionality was coined in 1989 by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (she/her) to describe how race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ability, and other aspects of social location are experienced simultaneously and how meanings of different social locations influence one another. Intersecting marginalization becomes its specific category, which we can only understand when we look at how cisgenderism, classism, and racism work together to make transgender people who are Black more vulnerable to sexual violence, poverty, and homelessness. Transgender people who are Black also report encountering barriers to seeking help legal, medical, and social services (United States Transgender Survey 2017). You can hear the actress Laverne Cox, who identifies as transgender and Black, share her intersectional analysis in figure 5.7.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=407#oembed-1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-6ExSIoGU0>

Figure 5.7. To hear actress Laverne Cox, a Black Transgender Woman, describe intersectionality, watch [Laverne Cox on Issues facing the Transgender Community \[Streaming Video\]](#). Can you think of other examples of intersectional marginalization? [Transcript](#).

With intersectionality, Crenshaw exposed how gender and race have been historically divided into separate fields of study. Because of this division, “race” ends up referring to the experiences of men of color, the universal racial subject. Meanwhile, in studies of “gender,” White women are perceived as the universal female subject. However, we know that Black women have different experiences of discrimination and oppression than Black men or White women (Figure 5.8). Crenshaw writes, *“Intersectionality is...a way of thinking about identity and its relationship to power. Originally articulated on behalf of Black women, the term brought to light the invisibility of many constituents within groups that claim them as members but often fail to represent them”* (Crenshaw 2015).

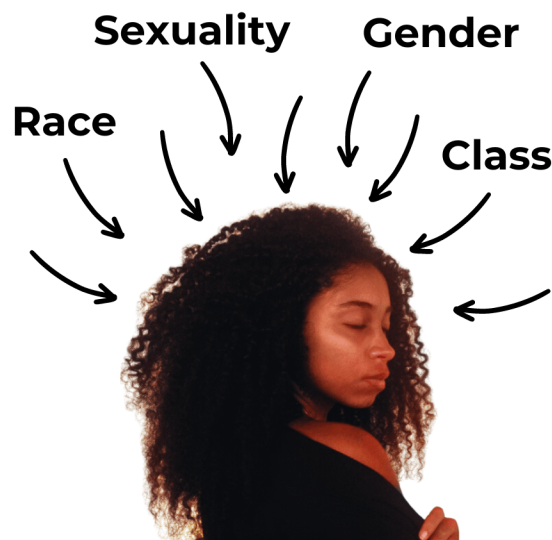


Figure 5.8. Intersectionality identifies the cumulative impacts of intersecting systems of power, which work together to create unique categories of privilege and marginalization for individuals and communities within unequal systems of power.

To better understand how your intersectional positionality shapes your experience of power, take another look at both the Wheel of Power and Privilege (figure 5.6) and the Matrix of Domination (figure 5.4). When you consider your intersecting social locations, can you identify some domains of power where you experience privilege or marginalization? Returning to the intersectional notion of coalitional politics from Chapter Four, how can you support, advocate for, or build solidarity with people who are marginalized where you are privileged (Oluo 2018)?

In the next section, we turn our attention to how intersectional systems of power impact individuals and how individuals respond to them.

Learn More: Intersectionality

To learn more about Kimberlé Crenshaw's work to develop a legal framework based on intersectionality, check out her 2017 TED Talk, in which she applies intersectionality to police violence against Black Women: [The urgency of intersectionality \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

Licenses and Attributions for Gender in Unequal Systems of Power

Open Content, Original

“Gender in Unequal Systems of Power” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 5.8. “Intersectionality Graphic” by Mindy Khamvongsa, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Gender in Unequal Systems of Power Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

“Meritocracy” definition by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, and Asha Lal Tamang from “[9.1 What is Social Stratification](#)”, [Introduction to Sociology 3e](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

The third paragraph of “Intersectionality: Complex Hierarchies of Privilege and Marginalization” is adapted from “Unpacking Oppression, Intersecting Justice: Acting Intersectionally” by Kimberly Puttman, “[Inequality and Interdependence: Social Problems and Social Justice](#)”, which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 5.3. “[White and brown stone fragment photo](#)” by J Yeo is licensed under the [Unsplash License](#).

Figure 5.5. “The Social Identity Wheel” by Elizabeth Pearce and Michaela Willi Hooper, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 5.6. “The Wheel of Power and Privilege” by Kimberly Puttman, Michaela Willi Hooper, and Lauren Antrosiglio, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Intersectionality” definition Crenshaw (1989) is included under fair use.

“Marginalization” definition by Chandler & Munday (2011) is included under fair use.

“Matrix of Domination” definition by Hill Collins (1990) is included under fair use.

“Privilege” definition by Johnson (2001) is included under fair use.

“Social identity” definition Johnson (2014) is included under fair use.

Figure 5.2. “[Thanksgiving grace 1942](#)” by Marjory Collins for the Farm Security Administration—Office of War Information Photograph Collection (Library of Congress) is in the [Public Domain](#).

Figure 5.4. “The Matrix of Domination” is adapted from Hill Collins (1990) by Nora Karena, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), and is included under fair use.

Figure 5.7. “[LAVERNE COX on Issues facing the Transgender Community | Bent Lens | In Conversation](#)” by TIFF Originals is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power

The previous section described how gender and other social locations are socially constructed within four domains of power: structural power, disciplinary power, cultural or hegemonic power, and interpersonal power. This section focuses on three ways that gender can be privileged or marginalized in the interpersonal domain of power: tokenism, microaggressions, and internalized oppression. As you explore these concepts, keep in mind that each of the four domains of power work together within an interconnected matrix of domination. Look for ways that these interpersonal forms of privilege and marginalization are also reinforced by structural, disciplinary, and cultural power.

Tokenism

Have you ever felt isolated and marginalized as the only person of your race, gender, disability status, ethnicity, or lived experience in a group? Conversely, have you ever been a part of a diverse group of people and felt accepted, valued, and normal? What conditions do you think make a difference between feeling included or isolated? When social groups or organizations increase gender representation without addressing oppressive systems of power embedded in their organizational structure and culture, the people recruited to diversify those organizations can experience harmful tokenism.

Tokenism is the practice of making only a superficial or symbolic effort to diversify an organization by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups to give the appearance of equality. In other words, tokenism attempts diversity without equitable representation or full inclusion. Fiona Byarugaba (she/her) describes tokenism as liking the idea of diverse voices but not being ready to listen to diverse ideas that people bring to the table (Byarugaba 2021).

Rosabeth Kanter (she/her) defined tokenism in her study on gender in the workplace, *Men and women of the corporation*. As women began moving into leadership positions traditionally held by men, they experienced specific challenges in male-dominated workplaces. Because women were few, they were *more visible* than men, and they experienced *increased performance pressure, increased attention to perceived gender differences*, and an *expectation to live up to gender stereotypes*. Kanter found extra emotional labor (Chapter Four) was required from women and that some responded by routinely doing more than required, while others tried not to attract much attention. Both responses put women on an unequal footing with the men they worked with.

Similarly, navigating the constant attention to gender differences also led some women to lean into the stereotypes by presenting as hyper-feminized. Whether women in token positions responded to stereotyping by either correcting, quietly accepting, or trying to live up to them (self-distortion), Kanter (2010) found that a constant need to respond impacted both personal well-being and job performance (figure 5.9). The work of dealing with the pressures of tokenism robs tokenized people of energy to do their actual work.

Kanter also theorized that the pressures of tokenism are significantly reduced when a previously excluded population represents more than 15% of the workforce. In other words, when women make up more than 15% of positions previously only held by men, they are less likely to be tokenized. This research has been the basis of affirmative action policies.

Figure 5.9. Impacts of Tokenism. This figure describes common responses to the pressures of increased visibility that people in token positions experience. Can you find an example of tokenism in popular culture, such as movies or TV shows?

IMPACT	EXAMPLE	COMMON RESPONSES
Performance Pressures	- Public Performance - Extension of Consequences - Attention to Token's Discrepant Characteristics - Fear of Retaliation	- Overachievement - Attempts to Limit Visibility
Exaggeration of Difference	- Exaggeration of Dominant Culture Interruptions as Reminders of "Difference" - Informal Isolation Loyalty Tests	- Accept the Isolation - Become Insiders

IMPACT	EXAMPLE	COMMON RESPONSES
Predefined Identity Roles	- Stereotypical expectations - Stereotypical expectations about appearance - Expecting people who are transgender and Nonbinary “pass”	- Accepting - Correcting - Self-distortion

Microaggressions

The pressures of tokenism that Kanter described can also show up as verbal harassment, misgendering, talking over people, or otherwise demonstrating a lack of confidence in their competency. These everyday slights, or microaggressions, at school, work, and other social settings have specific impacts on LGBTQIA+ people, who frequently find themselves to be the only LGBTQIA+ person in their social setting. An analysis of 4500 respondents who identified as LGBTQIA+ found that two-thirds reported being the only LGBTQIA+ person in their workplace. One-third of all respondents experienced microaggressions, and that number rises to 80% for respondents who identified as transgender women (Jacobson et al. 2021).

Microaggressions are statements that indirectly reference stereotypes to assert the dominance of the aggressor. Harvard University psychiatrist Chester M. Pierce (he/him) coined the term in 1970 to describe racial insults and dismissals, which he regularly witnessed people who are White direct towards people who are Black (DiAngelis 2009). Watch the video, *How Microaggressions are like Mosquito Bites* (figure 5.10), to learn how passing comments are a form of harassment.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=409#oembed-1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDd3bzA7450>

Figure 5.10. Watch the 2-minute video [How Microaggressions are Like Mosquito Bites \[Streaming Video\]](#). How many of these microaggressions have you either witnessed, experienced, or even perpetuated? [Transcript](#).

Eventually, the use term microaggression expanded to include casual harassment of any socially marginalized group, including LGBTQIA+ people, people living in poverty, and disabled individuals. Psychologist Derald Wing Sue (he/him) defines microaggressions as “brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership” (Sue 2021).

People making these comments may position themselves as well-intentioned and unaware of the potential impact of their words (van Dam 2021), but good intentions can be called into question by the defensive posture assumed when people are made aware of the harmful stereotype they have just referenced. A person with truly good intentions may be recognized by the humility they exhibit when their “blind spot” is pointed out.

Sue and Lisa Spanierman (she/her) developed a list of categories describing microaggressions that can help us understand how they appear in our interactions. As you read the summary below in Figure 5.11, think of other examples that may apply to each category.

Figure 5.11. Common Microaggressions. Can you think of other examples that may apply to each category?

Example	Microaggression Category	Definition
“I didn’t think he was American with a name like that.”	Alien in one’s land	When people who look or are named differently from the dominant (White) culture are assumed to be foreign nationals
From a White shopper to an Asian clerk: “You can add all that up in your heart, right?”	Ascription of intelligence	Assigning intelligence to a person of color based on their race

Example	Microaggression Category	Definition
Homosexual men and transgender women have long been associated with pedophilia, particularly if they want to teach younger children in public schools, though there is no evidence linking homosexuality to pedophilia.	Assumption of criminality	Assuming that people of a specific race, gender, or sexuality are more prone to criminality
From a White patient to a Latinx doctor, “You and I have a lot in common; you are not like other Latin people.”	Color blindness	Making statements that indicate that a White person does not want to or need to acknowledge race and/or background.
A straight person announces, “This is Travis, he’s gay,” to let everyone know that they aren’t homophobic, whether Travis wanted that to be known or not.	Denial of individual bigotry	A statement made when bias is denied.
A White school counselor suggests something is wrong with a Korean student because she avoids making eye contact.	Pathologizing cultural values or communication styles	The notion that values and communication styles of the dominant culture are ideal.
A White receptionist fails to acknowledge or ignores a transgender woman until they approach the desk to ask a question.	Second-class citizens	Give preferential treatment to individuals in privileged groups.
A person who, when asked to use they/them pronouns, asserts that they can’t bring themselves to use a plural pronoun to refer to an individual.	Misgendering	Refusing to use a person’s stated pronouns or name.

The effects of microaggressions are real. They have been compared to *death by a thousand cuts* because these everyday slights affect the victim’s mental health and create a toxic environment at school, work, and even within our circles. If left unchecked, they can be normalized, and the types of offenses and actions can become more severe (Sue 2010).

Intersectional experiences of microaggressions in the workplace reveal a gendered and racialized “hierarchy of belonging” in the workplace (Alfrey et al. 2016). For example, sociologists France Winddance Twine (she/her) and Lauren Alfrey (she/her) interviewed tech workers with a broad range of racial and gender identities and found that women who identified as either White or Asian and who presented as genderqueer, experienced less verbal harassment, and were generally perceived as more competent than women who presented as conventionally feminine. Black women in the study who presented as gender fluid did report the same benefits of distancing themselves from traditional femininity as their more racially privileged counterparts.

Learn More: Microaggressions

To learn more about how bystanders can interrupt microaggressions, check out [how bystanders can shut down microaggressions \[Website\]](#) published by the American Psychological Association.

Internalized Oppression

The true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations that we seek to escape, but that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within us. – Audre Lorde

Many unequal systems of power rely on strict adherence to gender norms, racial categories, and socio-economic class (Lugones 2016). Within these systems, a combination of rewards and punishments serves to maintain compliance with these social norms. Rewards for compliance include access to resources and positive social reinforcement. The combination of socially constructed rewards and punishments that reinforce control in systems of power can produce an internalized or learned sense of who is superior and who is inferior within the social hierarchy.

For example, within a sexist system of power, masculine people who experience the rewards of compliance and avoid the punishments of noncompliance with social norms learn to think of themselves as naturally superior to feminine people. This sense of superiority is also reinforced for them across the four domains of power (structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal).

Conversely, feminine people within this system also internalize ideas of feminine inferiority and masculine superiority and can come to accept socially constructed masculine dominance as natural.

This learned sense of inferiority is called internalized oppression. **Internalized oppression** is a process of individuals within an oppressed group incorporating and accepting the prejudices of the dominant society (Pheterson 1986). The Black lesbian poet Audre Lorde (she/her) described internalized oppression as “*that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within us*” (Lorde 2007).

Internalized oppression also operates intersectionality. For example, a White, cisgender, femme-presenting queer woman may internalize inferiority around both her femininity and her sexual identity. This may make her feel ashamed and make it hard to assert herself in her public roles. At the same time, she may also have internalized racial and cisgender superiority. If this person set out to address her internalized oppression by consciously learning new ideas about her worth and the inherent value of all feminine-presenting queer women, but did not address her internalized racial and cisgender superiority, she is at risk of harming transgender and nonbinary people and PGM.

For people empowered or marginalized by unequal systems of power, the path to freedom from oppression requires addressing internalized oppressions across all domains of power and learning new ways to be in relationships that are more equitable and free of violence. The final section of this chapter will explore how collective efforts to shift power begin by centering the lived experience of people most impacted by oppressive systems of power. First, let’s widen our lens from individuals to global systems of power. As we work through the next section, look for the specific domains of power in which entire populations of people have been either marginalized or privileged and how some of the most marginalized people are leading efforts to subvert global systems of unequal power.

Let’s Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=409#h5p-17>

Licenses and Attributions for Individuals Within Gender-based Systems of Power

Open Content, Original

“Individuals Within Gender-Based Systems of Power” by Nora Karena and Dana L. Perterman is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 5.9. “Kanter’s Impacts of Tokenism” is adapted from *Men and Women of the Corporation* by Kanter (2010). Modifications by Nora Karena include and are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Internalized oppression” definition by Pheterson (1986) is included under fair use.

Figure 5.10. “How microaggressions are like mosquito bites • Same Difference” by Fusion Comedy is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 5.11. “Examples of Microaggressions” is adapted from “*Microaggressions*” by Christine McWebb, Sandra López-Rocha, and Elisabeth Arévalo-Guerrero in *Advancing Intercultural Competence for Global Learners*, which is licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include editing for a U.S. audience.

This page titled [5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power



Figure 5.12. Dr. Sylvia Tamale is a Ugandan scholar who is resisting the rise of anti-gay legislation and authoritarianism in African nations. As you learn about her work, consider the similarities between the homophobic rhetoric and policies she is battling with similar rhetoric and policies in the U.S.

In 2023, ten pieces of legislation were introduced in Oregon that, if passed, would have negatively impacted LGBTQIA+ people, including making menstrual products harder to access for transgender and nonbinary students, requiring parental consent before using materials that included representation of LGBTQIA+ people (an example of so-called “Don’t say gay laws”), restrict access to gender-affirming care for transgender youth, and discriminate against transgender athletes (Trans Legislation Tracker 2024). None of these bills passed in Oregon, but of the more than 500 anti-LGBTQIA+ bills introduced in state legislatures in 2023, 85 of them passed in 23 states (Choi 2024). As of January 2024, over 400 similar bills have been introduced in 37 states (Trans Legislation Tracker 2024).

This recent rise in anti-LGBTIA+ legislation in the U.S. is related to a similar trend worldwide. Dr. Sylvia Tamale (she/her) is a multidisciplinary scholar who was the first woman to serve as the Dean of Law at Makerere University Law School and the founder of the Law, Gender and Sexuality Research Project (Tamale n.d.) (figure 5.12). She has been an outspoken critic of the increase in homophobic rhetoric and policies in Uganda and other African Nations and claims that a “*power elite rewritten the history of African sexualities, obliterating same-sex relations to bolster their control over the political and social context.*” She also names American Evangelicalism as a driver of these homophobic narratives and the policies they inspired (Tamale n.d.).

Tamale challenges an emerging narrative that credits increasing global tolerance for queer sexualities with colonialism and Western cultural dominance. Her work names this distortion of African history by demonstrating a robust precolonial “*handprint of homosexuality*” in African history, which includes examples of tolerance for a variety of sexual and domestic relationships, including marriage between same-sex couples.

This section will consider two complex intersecting unequal systems of power, Capitalist Heteropatriarchy and White Supremacist Settler Colonialism. We will consider how these systems of power have impacted people in formerly colonized countries in terms of traditional genders, gender expressions, and sexualities.

Learn More: Africa

To learn more about the rich variation of genders, gender expression, and sexualities in precolonial African cultures, check out [The “Deviant” African Genders That Colonialism Condemned \[Website\]](#) by Mohammed Elnaiem [\[Website\]](#) (he/him).

To learn more about feminism on the African Continent, watch [Know Your African Feminists \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Capitalist Heteropatriarchy

The U.S. economic system functions by privileging a minority of people to profit from privatizing resources that are extracted, commodified, and sold at a profit while the majority of workers sell their labor. **Capitalism** is a complex, competitive economic system of power in which limited resources are subject to private ownership, and the accumulation of surplus is rewarded. In other words, capitalism is the use of land, labor, and capital wealth, in the form of money or other assets, to create profit (Zimbalist et al. 1988). Winning in a capitalist system requires someone to lose. Capitalism produces a class-based unequal system of power in which some classes of people are empowered to win at the expense of others who are marginalized.

Recall from Chapter One that patriarchy is a gender-based system of power. A patriarchal society is one where characteristics associated with masculinity signify more power and status than those associated with femininity. In patriarchal societies, gender differences produce gender inequality, with the father or eldest male being head of the family and descent (or who you're related to) traced through the male line. Within patriarchal systems, women are collectively excluded from full participation in political and economic life. Those attributes seen as feminine are undervalued. Patriarchal relations structure both the private and public spheres, with men making the important decisions or "*holding the reins of power*" in both domestic and public life (Nash 2009).

Patriarchy also closely links gender and sexuality so that genders are considered to be opposite from each other, and a person's gender identity must correlate with sexual attraction to a gender that is opposite. This leaves little room for genders or sexualities that don't fit firmly into a binary category. In patriarchal societies, same-gender attraction is marginalized or outright forbidden because sex is socially constructed as a "natural" expression of masculine dominance and feminine submission.

Patriarchal societies tend to marginalize people whose gender presentation differs from their assigned gender and to exclude transgender and nonbinary from full participation in society. **Heteropatriarchy** (a merging of the words heterosexual and patriarchy) is a system of power in which cisgender and heterosexual men have authority over everyone else. This term emphasizes that discrimination against women and LGBTQIA+ people is derived from the same sexist social principle (Valdes 1996).

The gender wage gap, introduced in Chapter One, demonstrates how capitalism, a class-based system of power, and heteropatriarchy, a system of power based on gender and sexuality, work together on a global scale to produce intersectional wealth inequality based on class, gender, and sexuality. Feminist scholarship links heteropatriarchy and capitalism, demonstrating how heteropatriarchal relations operate across and between many systems in ways that reinforce a complex system in which cisgender heterosexual (cishet) men win at the expense of everyone else (Acker 1989; Mohanty 2013).

Some capitalists argue that capitalist economies are rational, unbiased, and self-regulating. Yet the current global capitalist system has been and remains empowered by white supremacy and settler colonialism (Nguyen 2020). Under this system, people themselves become capital and are treated not as fellow humans but as assets for profit.

White Supremacy and Settler Colonialism

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=411#oembed-1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWVWy7aGtGw>

Figure 5.13. Watch [Video captures neo-Nazis interrupting drag reading hour \[Streaming Video\]](#). Why do you think Neo-nazi might have a problem with drag? [Transcript](#).

As feminist activism has challenged masculine dominance, new opportunities in politics, economics, and popular culture have emerged for women and people who identify as LGBTQIA+. While many people of all genders welcome this social change, some people argue that feminism is unfair to men. This is similar to the argument that white people are treated unfairly when antiracist progress creates more opportunities for people of the global majority. Both of these types of grievance over lost dominance have become a prominent theme in many extremist ideologies (Díaz & Valji 2019). Here in the U.S., the link between aggrieved masculinity and the politics of White Nationalism is illustrated in actions like protesting drag queen story hour (figure 5.13).

Drag Queen Story Hour events are intended to be celebrations of literacy and inclusion. Parents who take their children to these events value the opportunity to teach their children about gender expression and to hear an uplifting story. These otherwise joyful events have become sites of violence and intimidation, where children, their families, and the drag queens are harassed by neo-nazis and other anti-LGBTQIA+ protesters.

The advocacy organization GLAAD (formerly the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) documented 161 incidents of demonstrations and threats targeting drag events between early 2022 and spring 2023 (GLAAD 2023). Moral panic in response to changing cultural norms around gender and sexuality has emboldened violence and empowered legislation to ban or severely restrict drag entertainment.

Neo-nazi groups, Ku Klux Klan, and other groups, including right-wing para-military organizations like The Patriot Front and the Proud Boys, represent the White Nationalist political movement in the U.S. White Nationalism is an international political movement built on White Supremacy, Christian political identity, capitalism, heteropatriarchy, and authoritarianism. The Third Reich in Germany during Hitler's reign (1933–1944), Apartheid South Africa (1948–1991), and the U.S. during the years when slavery was legal (1776–1863), and during the Jim Crow era (1883–1965), when racial segregation and discrimination were legal, are examples of white nationalist nation-states.

White supremacy is a complex system of racist power that is based on discredited racist enlightenment-era social science (Chapter One) and constructed through policies and practices that privileged White people over people of other races, based on the racist ideas that that there are meaningful differences between people in different racial categories, that White people are physically and culturally superior, and that they are therefore entitled to dominate other people in other racial categories. White supremacy, which, like other unequal systems of power, is based on domination. In the same way that sexism is based on the domination of women and People who are LGBTQIA+, racism is based on the domination of people who are not White. It is ideologically aligned with heteropatriarchy, capitalism, and settler colonialism.



Figure 5.14. The White Supremacy Iceberg. This figure demonstrates how some expressions of White Supremacy, like hate crimes and racial slurs, are overt, but examples of covert racism are discriminatory policies, mass incarceration, and White privilege. Can you think of other examples of overt and covert White Supremacy? Image description available. [Image description.](#)

Restricting our definition of white supremacy to its most extreme aspects puts us at risk of not seeing the everyday violence of white supremacy (figure 5.14). Many people associate white supremacy with extreme violence carried out by members of the Ku Klux Klan and other White nationalist organizations. However, White Supremacy is more than the violent political movements it inspires. It is present wherever a racialized hierarchy privileges people who are White over People of the Global Majority. Like all systems of power, it operates across all four domains of power (figure 5.15). While the interpersonal aspects of White Supremacy are most visible in the form of hate groups and bigots, it can be most powerful in structural, cultural, and disciplinary domains.

Figure 5.15. The Matrix Of Domination And White Supremacy. This chart identifies how overt and covert forms of White Supremacy from the White Supremacy Iceberg (figure 5.14) operate across the domains of power. Can you identify others?

DOMAINS OF POWER	SOURCES OF POWER
Structural – The power to rule	Discriminatory hiring practices, Discriminatory lending policies, English-only initiatives...
Disciplinary – the power to punish and reward	Mass incarceration, racial profiling, anti-immigration policies...

DOMAINS OF POWER	SOURCES OF POWER
Hegemonic (Cultural) – the power to influence	Racist mascots, Eurocentric curriculum, Cultural appropriation...
Interpersonal – the power of self-determination	Racist jokes and slurs, not believing the experience of people of the global majority, Hate Crimes...

Because they are complex, White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, Heteropatriarchy, and Capitalism also include multiple systems of power that intersect with racism. Returning to the Wheel of Power and Privilege (figure 5.6), we can understand that white supremacy is constructed by multiple intersecting systems of power, including sexism, nativism, xenophobia, and heterosexism. For many scholars of White Supremacy, the long-term goal of challenging White Supremacy is directly tied up with the project of dismantling the capitalist market system (Lugones 2016). Can you imagine what a system of power might look like if it benefits everyone without resorting to exploitation, domination, or conformity to false binaries?

Like capitalism and white supremacy, settler colonization is also achieved in social, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal domains. **Settler colonialism** is an unequal system of power that relies on white supremacy to justify removing established indigenous residents of colonized territory so that the land can be occupied by settlers and its resources used for the benefit of the occupying power.

The European colonization of the Americas was a violent process that resulted in the death of 90% of the pre-conquest Indigenous population, the transformation of the land and natural resources previously held by Indigenous societies into private property held by European settlers, and securing territorial control for colonizing empires. As settlers created their European settler colonization, it also compelled surviving Indigenous people in the Americas to assimilate into the dominant White Supremacist culture. Can you think of examples of Settler Colonialism from Oregon's history?



Figure 5.16. Maria Lugones challenged her students to understand and interrupt the impacts of settler colonialism. How does the historic legacy of settler colonialism impact your family today?

Maria Lugones (she/her) was an Argentine feminist philosopher who explored White Supremacy, gender, and decolonization (figure 5.16). She theorized that gender and the “correct” performance of gender were used as a tool of colonialism that marginalized Indigenous people by narrowly defining a *proper person*. She also suggested that descendants of settlers can participate in decolonization by understanding and addressing the ways we are implicated in the legacy of settler colonialism.

Decolonization has multiple interrelated meanings. It began as a description of a political process that included a transfer of power back from a colonial government to an indigenous one. For example, India became independent from the British Empire in 1947. For those who have benefited from colonization, decolonization has also come to mean a personal divestment of colonial power across structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal domains of power. This can mean letting go of internalized ideas of superiority, recognizing broken treaties and agreements, and, in some cases, actually compensating the descendants of colonized people for stolen resources or giving them their land back. For example, in 2021, the trustees of the North Coast Land

Conservancy returned 18 acres to the Clatsop-Nehalem People at the mouth of the Neacoxie River, just north of Seaside, Oregon (figure 5.17).

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=411#oembed-2>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKNnpSm3g90>

Figure 5.17. Clatsop-Nehalem tribes' return of ancestral land [Streaming Video]. The descendants of the Clatsop-Nehalem People persuaded the trustees of a land trust in Clatsop County to return valuable land at the mouth of the Neacoxie River in Seaside, Oregon. [Transcript](#).

Decolonization also refers to a cultural process of identifying and challenging cultural domains of colonial power so that pre-colonial ways of being and knowing can be reclaimed, recovered, and reimagined. In the Americas, descendants of colonized people are engaged in conscious efforts to recover precolonial ways of healing, food production, and governance, as well as recovering language, art, religion, and ways of relating to each other and the environment.

Social scientist Lucas Ballestin (he/him) describes the dominant gender binary as a colonial object (Ballestin 2018) or as a specific left-over of the institution of colonialism and the consolidation of power and social control in Europe in the 18th century. In the next section, we will see how indigenous people are decolonizing gender and sexuality by reclaiming and recovering traditional genders and sexualities.

Impacts on Indigenous Genders and Sexualities

Many societies have defined norms around sexuality and gender expression that also allow for specific cultural spaces that accommodate multiple genders and sexualities. Many religious systems, including pre-Christian European religions, recognize deities that are gender fluid and or gender expansive. People who embody these characteristics are recognized within their cultures as reflections of aspects of the deities or of the cosmos itself and, as such, are essential to society.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=411#oembed-3>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8O-BwZi7QQ>

Figure 5.18. Zapotec Muxes play an important role in the cultural life of their community. Watch [Comunidad muxe de Oaxaca](#) [Streaming Video] to see examples of Muxes participating in community celebrations. [Transcript](#).

Muxes (pronounced MU-shays) are a recognized third gender among the Zapotec people in Oaxaca, Mexico. Like many third genders, Muxes play an important role in the cultural life of their community. They preserve and celebrate traditional dress, language, and ceremonial traditions. Muxes are often skilled artists and entertainers and are generally beloved within their communities.

While the rigid gender binary of heteropatriarchy has been widely adopted in Mexico, the Muxes provide a cultural reminder of a pre-colonial matriarchal identity that includes an acceptance of gender fluidity, priests who dressed in women's clothes, and non-binary, genderfluid deities. Muxes are not just keepers of the past. They also embody a vibrant vision of decolonization and Indigenous empowerment (figure 5.18).



Figure 5.19. A group of Hijras posing for a picture. Hijras are an important part of Hindu culture and have been instrumental in helping normalize the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people in contemporary Indian society.

Hijras (pronounced HIJ-ruhs) have been widely referenced in Hindu literature dating back to the 4th century B.C. and have maintained a constant, sometimes marginalized presence in Hindu society. Hijras experienced extreme persecution under the British Empire. Despite this marginalization, Hijras continue to play important roles in Hindu religious ceremonies, including the blessing of marriages and births. Hijra ashrams operate as religious orders and as refuges of relative safety where people assigned male at birth can embody an expansive third gender (Nanda 1998).

In contemporary India, Hijras, along with gay men and lesbians, are still subject to violence and persecution. However, because of their visibility and activism, Hijras are successfully challenging rigid gender norms (figure 5.19). In 2014, the Supreme Court in India responded to Hijras' activism by creating a legal designation of the third gender. This designation also extended to include other transgender, non-binary, and intersex people. Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh also recognize a third gender. The activism has not stopped with this win. The colonial-era law prohibiting sex between people of the same gender was struck down in 2018 (India court legalizes 2018). However, same-sex marriage has yet to be legalized.



Figure 5.20 Two Spirit People. We'wha (left), Osh-Tisch (center), and Dahteste (right) were important members of their respective Indigenous communities.

Two-spirit. The Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwa) term *niizh manidoowag* translates to English as “of two spirits” and traditionally refers to a gender-expansive identity encompassing both male and female qualities or a third gender since their emergence in

contemporary Indigenous culture in the 1990s (Montiel 2021). Many transgender, non-binary, and same-sex-loving Indigenous people of North America have embraced the identification of Two-spirit. As with Hijra and Muxe identities, this contemporary iteration of a traditional third gender reaches back to more expansive pre-conquest cultural formations of gender and sexuality and also references the spiritual implications of gender and sexuality (figure 5.20).

The contemporary usage of Two Spirit also highlights the importance of language preservation in recovering pre-conquest culture and ingenious ways of being (Smithers and Runner 2022). There are also many other culturally specific genders and sexual identities names that indigenous people have used to describe themselves, including *Nadleehee* (“one who changes/who is at war”), *Tasta-ee-iniw* (“a person in between”), and *Napêhkân* (“one who acts/lives as a man”) (BigEagle 2023). Non-indigenous people should refrain from assuming that someone identifies as Two-spirit or any other identity and always refer to people in the way they ask.

Muxes, Hijras, and Two-spirit people, along with many other third-gender, fourth-gender, transgender, non-binary, and same-sex-loving people in previously colonized societies, are reclaiming and reimagining traditional cultural norms around gender and sexuality. Their communities are sites of collective cultural resistance in the face of historic oppression. Within their communities, they are keepers of a vital connection to pre-conquest culture and evidence that expansive constructions of gender and sexuality are possible. They also point us toward more equitable and inclusive systems of power outside of White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, Heteropatriarchy, and Capitalism.

Ultimately, whether individuals within an unequal system of power conform to gender norms or subvert them, unequal systems of power continue to operate until they are dismantled by collective action. The final section of this chapter explores how coalitions of marginalized people can shift the balance of power toward justice and equality.

Learn More: Decolonizing Gender

Learn more about [Two-Spirit People \[Website\]](#).

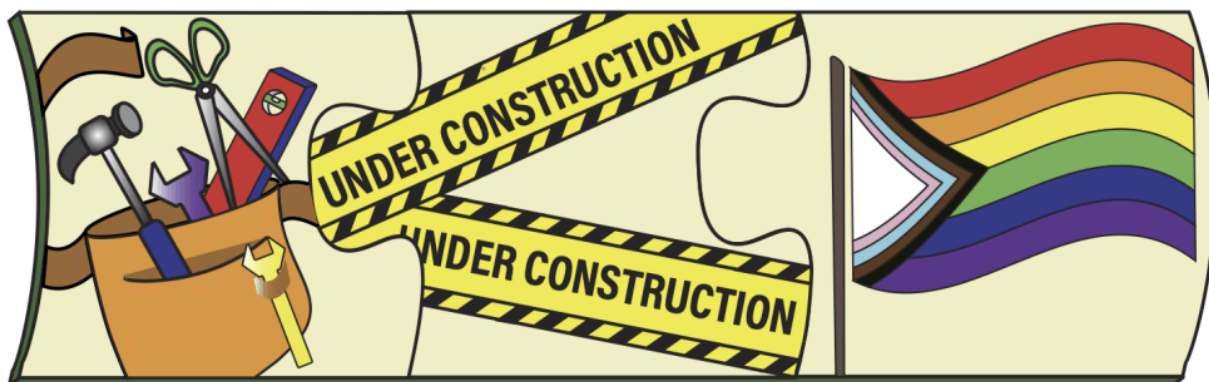
Learn more about Muxe: [Third Gender: An Entrancing Look at Mexico's Muxes \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Learn more about Hijras: [Being Laxmi: 'I belong to the hijra, the oldest transgender community' \[Streaming Video\]](#)

Learn more about [Indigenous genders and sexualities \[Website\]](#).

Learn more about decolonizing gender: [Decolonizing Queerness: Celebrating the Power of My Babaylanic Voice \[Streaming Video\]](#).

Real But Not True: Binary Gender



Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Let's consider how what you are learning about Indigenous Genders and Sexualities demonstrates that binary gender is socially constructed (not true) and has real-life consequences (real).

The Tools Of Sociology



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

The tools of sociology include:

- **Sociological Imagination**
- **Research-based Evidence**
- **Social Theory**

The European colonization of the Americas was a violent process that resulted in the death of 90% of the pre-conquest Indigenous population, the transformation of the land and natural resources previously held by Indigenous societies into private property held by European settlers, and securing territorial control for colonizing empires. This conquest replaced matriarchal cultural practices and nonbinary gender norms with heteropatriarchy, a system of power in which cisgender and heterosexual men have authority over everyone else.

Socially Constructed - Not True



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

We can recognize that socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences are *not universally true* when we can demonstrate that they:

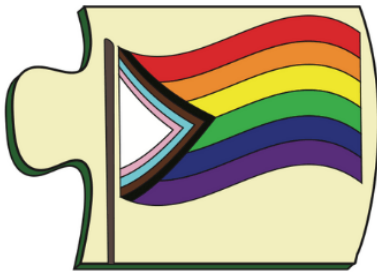
- **Change over time**

- **Are not the same in all societies**
- **Are imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, or challenged through social interactions.**

There are a multitude of examples of nonbinary gender constraints.

- Many societies have defined norms around sexuality and gender expression that also allow for specific cultural spaces that accommodate multiple genders and sexualities. Many religious systems, including pre-Christian European religions, recognize deities that are gender fluid and or gender expansive. People who embody these characteristics are recognized within their cultures as reflections of aspects of the deities or of the cosmos itself and, as such, are essential to society.
- Muxes, Hijras, and Two-spirit people, along with many other third-gender, fourth-gender, transgender, non-binary, and same-sex-loving people in previously colonized societies, are reclaiming and reimagining traditional cultural norms around gender and sexuality. Their communities are sites of collective cultural resistance in the face of historic oppression. Within their communities, they are keepers of a vital connection to pre-conquest culture and evidence that expansive constructions of gender and sexuality are possible. They also point us toward more equitable and inclusive systems of power outside of White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, Heteropatriarchy, and Capitalism.

Real Consequences



 Designed by Noraarena
& Katie Losier, Open Oregon
Educational Resources, is licensed under
CC BY 4.0.

The *real* social consequences of binary gender:

- Intimate partner violence, binary gender norms, and gender inequality exist because they work to establish and maintain heteropatriarchal arrangements of power.
- Heteropatriarchal societies tend to marginalize people whose gender presentation differs from their assigned gender and exclude transgender and nonbinary from full participation in society.

As you continue to work through this book, be on the lookout for other examples of socially constructed meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences and for the ways that tools of sociology can be used to reveal them as social constructions that are not universally true, but have real consequences.

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=411#h5p-18>

Licenses and Attributions for Gender in Global Systems of Power

Open Content, Original

“Gender in Global Systems of Power” by Dana L. Perterman and Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True: Binary Gender” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 5.14. “The White Supremacy Iceberg” by Nora Karena and Mindy Khamvongsa, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True Puzzle Images” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

“Gender in Global Systems of Power Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

Figure 5.12. “[Professor Sylvia Tamale speaking at the Africa Feminist Forum, East Africa Gathering- September 2022 in Kampala, Uganda](#)” by Sunshine Fionah Komusana is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

Figure 5.20. [Photo](#) of We'wha, Osh-Tisch, Dahteste by John K. Hillers (Image Courtesy of: Smithsonian Institute/John H. Fouch/ F.A. Rinehart, Image Courtesy of Omaha Public Library) is in the [Public Domain](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

“Heteropatriarchy” definition by Valdes (1996) is included under fair use.

Figure 5.13. “[Video captures neo-Nazis interrupting drag reading hour](#)” by [CNN](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 5.15. The Matrix Of Domination And White Supremacy is adapted from the work of Patricia Hill Collins (1990) by Nora Karena and is included under fair use.

Figure 5.16. Photo of Maria Lugones is included under fair use.

Figure 5.17. “[Clatsop-Nehalem Tribes’ Return of Ancestral Land](#)” by [Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 5.18. “[Comunidad muxe de Oaxaca](#)” by [NotimexTV](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

Figure 5.19. “[A group of Hijra in Bangladesh](#)” by USAID – USAID Bangladesh is in the [Public Domain](#).

“[Being Laxmi: I belong to the hijra, the oldest transgender community](#)” by [The Guardian](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

“[Third Gender: An Entrancing Look at Mexico’s Muxes](#)” by [National Geographic](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

“[Know Your African Feminists: Dr Sylvia Tamale](#)” by [African Feminist Forum](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

“[Decolonizing Queerness: Celebrating the Power of My Babaylanic Voice, John Ray Hontanar, TEDxUPV](#)” by [TEDx Talks](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

5.5: Shifting Power

“Power concedes nothing without a demand.”- Frederick Douglass, 1857 [Website]

Recall from our earlier discussion about intimate partner violence that a survivor-led social movement, sometimes called the “Battered Women’s Movement,” successfully changed how communities respond to IPV by introducing, not only new laws but new ways of thinking about IPV, like the Wheel of Power and Control (figure 5.1). With all this success, why is IPV still a serious social problem? Why are so many people still trapped in violent relationships? New laws and new ideas about violence in relationships are important steps towards ending IPV, but as long as unequal systems of power exist that rely on violence to enforce heteronormative gender norms, as do White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, Heteropatriarchy, and Capitalism, IPV will be with us.

So far, this chapter has explored how gender works to create power within unequal systems of power. In this section, we will learn about the drivers of social change. We will pay special attention to coalitional social movements that build collective power to bring about social change.

Social Change

All societies change in response to changing conditions. New technology, changes in population, changes in the environment, and changes to social institutions, like governments and religions, are common drivers of social change. For example, changing technology during the industrial revolutions of previous centuries and the current cyber-revolution have radically transformed the way people work, our educational systems, our family structures, our communities, and our relationship to the earth and its resources.

Sociologists study social change from a variety of perspectives. Karl Marx, for example, was concerned with theorizing about the conditions necessary for a large-scale social change from capitalist to socialist economies. His theories form the foundation of conflict theory, covered in Chapter Four. Recall that conflict theory identifies social inequality as a driver of social change. Sociologists who study gender look at relationships between social change and gender roles, gender identities, and gender inequality.

Changes in gender roles during and after World War Two is a rich case study for understanding how gender roles can change. During the war, the majority of people serving in the U.S. military were men. During the war, women’s participation in the workforce increased by 50% because the essential jobs that middle-class men vacated were taken up by middle-class women (Rose 2018). With this came a significant increase in women’s incomes. As women began to take over the jobs traditionally considered the domain of men, it was no longer a social taboo for middle-class women to work outside the home and earn money.

This change in gender roles was only temporary, however, and masculine social dominance was maintained after the war, as women were laid off from those jobs, and many had no choice but to return to unpaid labor caring for their husbands and children (figure 5.21). It was not until the women’s movement and second-wave feminism of the 1960s and 1970s, which took inspiration from civil rights movements that middle-class women began to seriously challenge heteropatriarchal systems of power in the workplace.

YouTube Video

This interactive element is not available in this format. Visit the link or scan the QR code to access it online.

[View this YouTube Video online](#)



Figure 5.21. Watch [Cultural Shift: Women’s Roles in the 1950s \[Streaming Video\]](#) to learn more about how gender roles changed in response to the changing social conditions brought on by World War Two. Can you think of other times when changing social conditions impacted gender roles? [Transcript](#).

Similarly, changes in medical technology and changing understanding of gender identity have led to increased access to gender-affirming medical care. There are currently more than 1.5 million people in the U.S. who identify as transgender (HRC n.d.), and most respondents in a study by the *Williams Center* believe that the U.S. is becoming more tolerant of transgender gender people and that the U.S. should “do more to protect transgender people” (Taylor 2017). At the same time, political reaction to this change has created a significant increase in anti-transgender rhetoric and legislation.

Profound social changes can happen when social conditions change, like new technologies, environmental changes, or wars. Social change can also be created by social movements, like the civil rights and women’s movements in the mid-20th century.

Social Movements

Donald Trump was elected in 2016 on a platform of proposed policy initiatives that included overturning *Roe v. Wade* and rolling back civil rights. In response, more than 470,000 people participated in the Women’s March in Washington, D.C. (figure 5.22). This demonstration was one of more than 640 demonstrations globally in January 2017, including a gathering of 100,000 people in Portland, Oregon (Britannica, T. Information 2024).



Figure 5.22. The 2017 Women’s March in Washington, D.C., was one of more than 640 global protests after the inauguration of Donald Trump, but was it a social movement?

The U.S. marches were organized by a broad coalition of political organizations. These events were powerful demonstrations of passion and political will around human rights, gender equality, and environmental justice, as well as important base-building opportunities for social justice leaders. While the march was called a social movement, it was actually more of a demonstration of the collective power of multiple institutionalized social movements.

Social movements are purposeful, organized groups that strive to work toward a common social goal. Movements can happen locally, at the state and national level, and around the world. Let’s look at examples of social movements, from local to global. Sociologists study the lifecycle of social movements—how they emerge, grow, and, in some cases, die out. Blumer (1969) and Tilly (1978) outlined a four-stage process, as shown in figure 5.23.

The Four Stages of Social Movements



Figure 5.23. The Four Stages of Social Movements: *Emergence*, *Coalescence*, *Institutionalization* and *Decline*. Can you think of an example of each of these stages? Image description available. [Image description](#).

In the *emergence stage*, people become aware of an issue, and leaders emerge. This is followed by the *coalescence stage* when people join together and organize to publicize the issue and raise awareness. In the *institutionalization stage*, the movement no longer requires grassroots volunteerism: it is an established organization, typically with a paid staff. When the movement successfully brings about the change it sought, or when people fall away and adopt a new movement, the movement falls into the *decline stage*.

As the example of shifting gender norms during war demonstrates, systems of power can be remarkably resilient in the face of social change. In that case, gender norms temporarily shifted to accommodate changing social conditions, but the unequal systems of power in which those norms continued to operate.

Throughout history, we can identify progress towards more inclusive, expansive, and equitable systems of power met with successful attempts to maintain existing oppressive systems. As soon as reproductive freedom was granted to pregnant people by the Supreme Court in 1973, people empowered by the gendered system of power that restricted pregnant people's reproductive autonomy doubled down in their efforts to see the ruling overturned. In 2023, masculine dominance over pregnant people was restored when a pregnant person's constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy was struck down, even though most people in the U.S. believe that the choice to terminate a pregnancy should be legal in most cases (Hartig 2022).

Reactionary social movements, like the anti-abortion movement, try to block social change or reverse social changes that have already been achieved. The recent anti-transgender backlash, which includes banning books with gay and transgender characters, attempts to shut down or restrict drag performances, and an avalanche of anti-transgender legislation, can be considered a reactionary movement whose goal is to block the social changes and maintain heteropatriarchal dominance.

De-centering heteropatriarchy

"The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." – Audre Lorde, 1984



Figure 5.24. *Scene at the Signing of the Constitution of the United States*, by Howard Chandler Christy (1940). The “Founding Fathers” set out to create a “more perfect union.” How would the U.S. be different if women, including black and indigenous women, participated in the constitutional congress?

Imagine a room full of wealthy white cisgender men sitting in a circle trying to “solve” White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, Heteropatriarchy, and Capitalism by themselves. Given what you are learning about how unequal systems of power work, how would they go about dismantling their own dominance and power? How would they measure the success of these efforts? What new system of power would they construct? What would motivate them to even consider such a project?

Now imagine a circle of People of the Global Majority that includes queer, transgender, and non-binary people with the same goal. How different would their strategies be? How would they measure success? How might they reimagine power and build collective power for a more just world? How different might these approaches be? Who do you think might be more successful?

The truth is that the colonial U.S. was an effort by white men to create a more just society (figure 5.24). However, because African Americans, Indigenous Americans, and women of all races were deliberately excluded from full inclusion in the inalienable rights granted to “*all men*,” and because the humanity of LGBTIA+ people was left unaffirmed, the founding fathers freed themselves from the control of the British Empire, but reproduced heteropatriarchal, white supremacist, settler colonialist, capitalists systems of power, and so missed the mark of “*liberty and justice for all*.” Contrast that incomplete revolution with the ongoing struggle for civil rights in the U.S.

Aldon Morris (he/him) researches the origins, nature, patterns, and outcomes of global movements that have successfully resisted and overthrown systems of oppression and injustice. Morris argues that the mobilization of the Black community’s internal resources, knowledge, power, and skill were critical drivers of both the 20th-century civil rights movement and the 21st-century Movement for Black Lives.

In both cases, specific systems of domination were identified by members of oppressed communities, who also planned and executed direct action and achieved change in the form of both public policy and public sentiment. These community-based approaches center the collective agency and lived expertise of people marginalized within existing oppressive systems, and create a new political base for powerful collective action (Morris 2021).

The intersectionality of Black feminism and the coalitional sensibilities of other third-wave feminisms (Chapter Four) have also produced powerful movements for social change in the 21st century. For example, the prison abolition movement, which gained national attention during the 2020 protests for Black Lives, was the result of decades of coalitional organizing led by women and queer people of the global majority, whose communities have been most impacted by state violence, in the form of drug wars and racist policing in under-resourced communities.

So what, then, is the role of people empowered by systems of power in revolutionary movements for intersectional gender equality and gender expansiveness? For some, it can start with getting comfortable with being uncomfortable with what we learn about our socialization. It can also include clarifying our motivations and asking why we are willing to work toward dismantling a system of power that privileges us and finding ways to use our privilege, access, and resources to shift the balance of power in favor of

marginalized people.

For all of us, dismantling unequal systems of power requires honoring the specific knowledge of people who are marginalized by unequal systems of power and taking our lead from them in movements to shift power toward a more just society.

LEARN MORE: Prison Abolition

Prison Abolition. For an introduction to the ideas behind the social movement to abolish prisons, watch [Visions of Abolition \[Streaming Video\]](#). Can you imagine alternatives to prisons?

Let's Review

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/socgender1e/?p=413#h5p-19>

Looking Through the Lens: The Matrix of Power and Intimate Partner Violence

In this activity, we're going to use the Matrix of Power to examine Intimate Partner Violence and understand how violence operates in multiple domains to reinforce gender in unequal systems of power.

Step One.

Reflect on what you've learned about violence and power as you read this:

Have you ever heard someone ask why victims of abuse have a hard time getting away from their abusers? A common question asked of people who are abused by an intimate partner is, "*Why don't you just leave?*"

Advocates and allies of survivors of intimate partner violence argue that this is the wrong question. Instead, we can ask, *Why does an abusive person continue to harm their intimate partner? or What are the structural and social barriers that keep someone from feeling like they can leave?* The conditions that keep people from leaving abusive relationships are complex and can include a lack of physical and social resources, shame, and fear of harm to themselves, their children, pets, family, or treasured possessions.

Cultural norms about gender and violence can also be a barrier to freedom for people in abusive relationships. For example, heteropatriarchal religious traditions require that wives be submissive to their husbands. Additionally, it is acceptable in some heteropatriarchal societies for husbands to use physical and/or emotional violence to control their wives and for parents to use the same to control their children.

Many survivors of IPV report that in order to survive, they spend great effort trying to avoid punishment by complying with their abuser's demands. Finally, we can't overlook the soul-crushing demotivation that can come from experiencing a repeating cycle of alternating violence and affection at the hands of an intimate partner (National Domestic Violence Hotline n.d.). This complex set of rewards and punishments operates across multiple domains of power to maintain an abuser's power and control over their victims.

Step Two.

(Note: This activity uses they/them pronouns for the victim because anyone can be abused—however, many of these activities are enabled by masculine privilege, and men who are abused are often viewed as feminized.)

Instructions: Use the Matrix of Domination (Figure 5.4) to determine which domain of power applies to each example of intimate partner violence from the Wheel of Power and Control (Figure 5.1) Choose the number that corresponds to the domain of power that best matches the example of intimate partner violence.

Key:

1 = Structural – The power to rule

2 = Disciplinary – the power to punish and reward

3 = Hegemonic (Cultural) – the power to influence

4 = Interpersonal – the power of self-determination

Examples of intimate partner violence:

1 2 3 4 Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to do physical harm

1 2 3 4 Threatening to leave

1 2 3 4 Threatening to commit suicide

1 2 3 4 Threatening to report them to Child and Family Services

1 2 3 4 Threatening to report them to the police

1 2 3 4 Forcing them to drop charges

1 2 3 4 Making them do illegal things

1 2 3 4 Preventing them from getting or keeping a job

1 2 3 4 Giving them an allowance

1 2 3 4 Taking their money

1 2 3 4 Hiding Money

1 2 3 4 Making them afraid by using looks, actions, gestures

1 2 3 4 Destroying personal property

1 2 3 4 Abusing pets

1 2 3 4 Displaying weapons

1 2 3 4 Put downs in public

1 2 3 4 Belittle them in private

1 2 3 4 Making them think they are crazy (gaslighting)

1 2 3 4 Humiliating them in public,

1 2 3 4 Making them feel guilty for wanting to leave

1 2 3 4 Treating them like a servant

1 2 3 4 Making all the big decisions

1 2 3 4 Using religious observance to justify abuse

1 2 3 4 Policing gender roles

1 2 3 4 Tell them they are a bad parent if they leave

1 2 3 4 Using the children to relay messages

1 2 3 4 Threatening to take the children away

1 2 3 4 Monitoring what social interactions (i.e., phone and internet usage)

1 2 3 4 Limiting and controlling their social interactions

1 2 3 4 Use jealousy to justify violence

1 2 3 4 Minimize the abuse

1 2 3 4 Say they caused the abuse

Step Three.

Write a brief paragraph or two reflecting on what you have learned about how gender norms are reinforced by IPV and why it is so hard for people to leave abusive relationships.

Licenses and Attributions for Shifting Power

Open Content, Original

“Shifting Power” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Social Movements” is adapted from “The Sociology of Social Movements” by Kimberly Puttman in [Inequality and Interdependence: Social Problems and Social Justice, Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), and is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#). Modifications by Nora Karena include editing for length and context.

“Looking Through The Lens: Systems of Power and Intimate Partner Violence” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Shifting Power Question Set” was created by ChatGPT and is not subject to copyright. Edits for relevance, alignment, and meaningful answer feedback by Colleen Sanders are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Open Content, Shared Previously

Figure 5.22. “[Women’s March in Washington DC, USA, 2017](#)” by Mobilus in Mobili is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#).

Figure 5.23. “The Four Stages of Social Movements” by Kimberly Puttman is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Figure 5.24. “[Scene at the Signing of the Constitution of the United States](#)” by Howard Chandler Christy is in the [Public Domain](#).

All Rights Reserved Content

Figure 5.21. “[Culture Shift: Women’s roles in the 1950s](#)” by NBC News Learn is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

“[Visions of Abolition: Bonus Footage – Extended Introduction](#)” by [VisionsofAbolition](#) is licensed under the [Standard YouTube License](#).

This page titled [5.5: Shifting Power](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

5.6: Conclusion

“The future of our earth may depend upon the ability of all women to identify and develop new definitions of power and new patterns of relating across difference.” – Audre Lorde, 1984

In this chapter, we have explored the relationships between gender and power to answer the question, why does gender inequality exist? We began considering how gendered systems of power are dependent on gender inequality and learned a basic formula for the construction of systems of power: policies that create inequity + ideas that justify inequity = inequitable systems that benefit one group and marginalize others. Then, we considered how the global legacies of capitalism, heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, and settler colonialism produce and sustain gender inequality around the world. We also looked at how gendered systems of power impact individuals, and finally, we saw how individuals impacted by gendered systems of power can build power for revolutionary social change.

Review Learning Objectives

Now that you have completed this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Explain how binary gender is embedded in unequal systems of power.
2. Describe how binary gender norms and unequal systems of power can impact individuals.
3. Describe the role of binary gender norms in the conquest and colonization of the global south.
4. Explain why successful social movements to dismantle unequal systems of power require the leadership of women, people who are LGBTQIA+, and People of the Global Majority.
5. Explain how violence reinforced heteropatriarchal gender norms.

Questions For Discussion

1. Why is an intersectional analysis of unequal systems of power necessary?
Answer: Intersectionality identifies the cumulative impact of intersecting systems of power, which work together to create unique categories of privilege and/or marginalization for individuals and communities within unequal systems of power.
2. What are three ways that, based on three examples, gender can be privileged or marginalized in the interpersonal domain of power?
Answer: Three examples of how gender can be privileged or marginalized in the interpersonal domain of power tokenism, microaggressions, and internalized oppression.
3. How can people who have benefited from settler colonialism participate in decolonization?
Answer: For those who have benefited from colonization, decolonization can mean a personal divestment of colonial power across structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal domains of power.
4. Why are social movements led by transgender and non-binary people and PGM critical to dismantling unequal systems of power?
Answer: Dismantling unequal systems of power requires honoring the specific knowledge of people who are marginalized by unequal systems of power and taking our lead from them in movements to shift power toward a more just society.

Real But Not True: Check-in

Let's take a moment to reflect on what you've learned in this chapter about socially constructed gender.

The Tools Of Sociology



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Tools of Sociology:

What specific examples of the tools of sociology have been discussed in this chapter?

- Sociological Imagination
- Research-based Evidence
- Social Theory

Socially Constructed - Not True

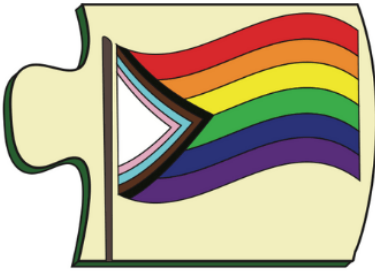


 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Socially Constructed: Sexual Norms

- What examples of gender being imposed, enforced, reproduced, challenged, and changed have you discovered in this chapter?

Real Consequences



 Designed by Nora Karena & Katie Losier, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Real in Consequence: Social Stigma

- What examples of real consequences for violating or conforming to socially constructed gender have you discovered in this chapter?

Licenses and Attributions for Conclusion

Open Content, Original

“Conclusion” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real but Not True: Check-in” by Nora Karena is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“Real But Not True Puzzle Images” by Nora Karena and Katie Losier are licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

This page titled [5.6: Conclusion](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

5.7: References

- Acker, J. (1989). The problem with patriarchy. *Sociology*, 23(2), 235-240. www.jstor.org/stable/42853922
- Alfrey, L., & Winddance Twine, F. (2016, December 5). Gender-fluid geek girls: Negotiating inequality regimes in the tech industry. *Gender and Society*, 31(1), 28-50.
- Ballestín, L. (2018, July 26). Gender as colonial object: The spread of western gender categories through European colonization. *The New School*. <https://publicseminar.org/2018/07/gender-as-colonial-object/>
- BigEagle, L. (2023, September 21). Beyond two-spirit: Indigenous people look to revive traditional LGBTQ terms. *CBC/Radio-Canada [CBC]*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/indigenous-lgbtq-words-1.6953445>
- Bonnet, F., & Whittaker, V. (2015). Intimate partner violence, gender, and criminalisation: An overview of American debates. *Revue Française de Sociologie (English Edition)*, 56(2), 264-287.
- Britannica, T. Information Architects of Encyclopaedia (2024, August 9). Women's March. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved November 19, 2023, from www.britannica.com/facts/Womens-March-2017
- Byarugaba, F. (2021, February 15). Tokenism: A double-sided coin. <https://www.thoughtworks.com/en-us/insights/blog/tokenism-double-sided-coin>
- Blumer, H. (1969). Collective behavior. In A. M. Lee (Ed.), *Principles of Sociology* (pp. 67-121). Barnes and Noble.
- Chandler, D., & Munday, R. (2011). *A dictionary of media and communication*. Oxford University Press.
- Choi, A. (2024, January 22). Record number of anti-LGBTQ bills were introduced in 2023 [Review of bills in the U.S.]. <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.cnn.com/politics/anti-lgbtq-plus-state-bill-rights-dg/index.html&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1723229370228685&usg=AOvVaw2NEIeVetUbiVKV-7ZPZ1nN>
- Communicating with Prisoners Collective [CWPC]. (n.d.). Arrests for domestic violence in the U.S. [Ortext]. <https://www.acrosswalls.org/statistics/arrests-domestic-violence/>
- Cott, N. F. (2000). *Public vows: A history of marriage and the nation*. Harvard University Press.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1(8). <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf>
- Crenshaw, K. (2015, September 24). Why intersectionality can't wait. *The Washington Post*. www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-theory/wp/2015/09/24/why-intersectionality-cant-wait/
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York, NY: Plenum.
- Díaz, P. C., & Valji, N. (2019). Symbiosis of misogyny and violent extremism: New understandings and policy implications. *Journal of International Affairs*, 72(2), 37-56.
- DiAngelis, T. (2009.). Unmasking racial microaggressions. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2009/02/microaggression>
- Dichter, M. E. (2013): They arrested me—And I was the victim: Women's experiences with getting arrested in the context of domestic violence. *Women & Criminal Justice*, 23(2), 81-98
- Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network [GLSEN]. (2021). The 2021 National School Climate Survey, Executive Summary. https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/NSCS-2021-Executive_Summary-EN.pdf
- Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation [GLAAD]. (2023, April 25). UPDATED report: Drag events faced more than 160 protests and significant threats since early 2022. glaad.org/anti-drag-report/

- Hartig, H. (2022, June 13). About six-in-ten Americans say abortion should be legal in all or most cases. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/06/13/about-six-in-ten-americans-say-abortion-should-be-legal-in-all-or-most-cases-2/>
- Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) (2022) The 2021 national school climate survey executive summary. https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/NSCS-2021-Executive_Summary-EN.pdf
- Hill Collins, P. (1990). Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment. Routledge.
- Hirschel, D. (2008). Domestic violence cases: What research shows about arrest and dual arrest rates. <https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/media/document/222679.pdf>
- Human Rights Campaign (HRC). (n.d.). Map: Attacks on gender affirming care by state. How many adults and youth identify as transgender in the united states? <https://www.hrc.org/resources/attacks-on-gender-affirming-care-by-state-map>
- India court legalises gay sex in landmark ruling. (2018, September 6). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-45429664>
- Indigenous Corporate Training (n.d.). A brief definition of decolonization and indigenization. <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/a-brief-definition-of-decolonization-and-indigenization> [Quote is attributed to Tuhiwai Smith, 2012 in this website].
- Jacobson, R., Williams, M., & Wong, J. (2021). Active allyship: Do your LGBTQ+ employees feel supported and included? www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/active-allyship-do-your-lgbtq-plus-employees-feel-supported-and-included
- Johnson, A. G. (2001). Privilege, power, and difference, Third Edition. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Johnson, A. G. (2014). The forest and the trees: Sociology as life, practice and promise, Third Edition. Temple University Press.
- Kanter, R. M. (2010). Men and women of the corporation (Nachdr.). Basic Books.
- Ladd, G. W., Ettekal, I., & Kochenderfer-Ladd, B. (2017). Peer victimization trajectories from kindergarten through high school: Differential pathways for children's school engagement and achievement? Journal of Educational Psychology, 109(6), p. 826–841. [dx.doi.org/10.1037/edu0000177](https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000177)
- Lorde, A. (1984). Age, race, class, and sex: Women redefining difference [Excerpt]. https://www.amistadresource.org/documents/document_09_03_030_lorde.pdf
- Lorde, A., & Clarke, C. (2007). The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House. In Sister outsider: Essays and speeches (pp. 110-114) [Revised edition]. Crossing Press. (Original work published 1964)
- Lugones, M. (2008). The Coloniality of Gender. On the De-Colonial (II): Gender and Decoloniality | CENTER FOR GLOBAL STUDIES AND THE HUMANITIES, Volume 2, Dossier 2 (Originally published as 'The Coloniality of Gender' in the webzine Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise). globalstudies.trinity.duke.edu/sites/globalstudies.trinity.duke.edu/files/file-attachments/v2d2_Lugones.pdf
- Mohanty, C. T. (2013). Transnational feminist crossings: On neoliberalism and radical critique. Signs, 38(4), 967-991. doi.org/10.1086/669576
- Montiel, A. (2021, June 23). LGBTQIA+ pride and two-spirit people. www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/national-museum-american-indian/2021/06/23/lgbtqia-pride-and-two-spirit-people/
- Morris, A. (2021, July 13). From Civil Rights to Black Lives Matter. Scientific American. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/from-civil-rights-to-black-lives-matter/>
- Nash, C. J. 2009. "Patriarchy." Pp. 102–7 in International Encyclopedia of Human Geography, edited by R. Kitchin and N. Thrift. Elsevier.
- National Domestic Violence Hotline. (n.d.). Why people stay, It's not as easy as simply walking away. <https://www.thehotline.org/support-others/why-people-stay-in-an-abusive-relationship/>

- Nguyen, C. (2020) The relationship between white supremacy and capitalism: A socioeconomic study on embeddedness in the market and society [Abstract]. Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal [SUURJ] 4, Article 6. <https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/suurj/vol4/iss1/6>
- Oluo, I. (2018). So You Want to Talk About Race, First Edition). Seal Press.
- Pheterson, G. (1986). Alliances between women: Overcoming internalized oppression and internalized domination. Signs, 12(1), 146–160. www.jstor.org/stable/3174362
- Reamer, A. (2023). National intimate partner & sexual violence survey (NISVS) – CDC invites comments to OMB (by 3/20). American Economic Association. <https://www.aeaweb.org/forum/3541/national-intimate-partner-sexual-violence-invites-comments>
- Rose, E. K. (2018). The rise and fall of female labor force participation during World War II in the United States. The Journal of Economic History, 78(3), 673–711. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022050718000323>
- Smithers, G. D., & Runner, R. E. H. (2022). Reclaiming two-spirits: Sexuality, spiritual renewal & sovereignty in native america. Beacon Press.
- Sue, D. W. (2021). Microaggressions: Death by a Thousand Cuts. Scientific American. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/microaggressions-death-by-a-thousand-cuts/#:~:text=Critics%20of%20microaggression%20theory%20believe>
- Tamale, S. (n.d.). Amandala! Vanguard Edition, My story, Your inspiration. Institute for African Women in Law. www.africanwomeninlaw.com/amandala/sylvia-tamale%2C-ph.d
- Taylor, K. (Ed.). (2017). How we get free: Black feminism and the Combahee River Collective. Haymarket Books.
- Tilly, C. (1978). From Mobilization to Revolution. Newbery Award Records.
- Trans Legislation Tracker. (2024). <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://translegislation.com/bills/2023/OR&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1723229370228829&usg=AOvVaw39cg7vwU1u8RHToh3Tz4m1>
- Tutty, L., Ogden, C., & Wyllie, K. (2006, April). An evaluation of peer support services for abused women's peer support model, Final report. https://www.google.com/url?q=https://nursing.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/13/An%2520evaluation%2520of%2520the%2520Peer%2520Support%2520Services%2520peer%2520model.pdf&sa=D&source=COwT_qPfAhq35sJ
- US Trans Survey. (2017). US Trans Survey. Retrieved September 21, 2024, from <https://ustranssurvey.org/>
- Valdes, F. (1996). Unpacking hetero-patriarchy: Tracing the conflation of sex, gender & sexual orientation to its origins. Yale Journal of Law & the Humanities, 8(1), 161-211. core.ac.uk/download/pdf/72833279.pdf
- van Dam, E. (2021). Unpacking “Microaggression” – It’s about impact, Not intent. Institute for Inclusive Leadership. <https://www.inclusiveleadership.com/research-insights/unpacking-microaggression-its-about-impact-not-intent/>
- Wachowski, Lily & Wachowski, Lana [Directors]. (1999). The Matrix [Film]. Village Roadshow Pictures, Warner Bros. Entertainment.
- Wachowski, Lily & Wachowski, Lana [Directors]. (2003). The Matrix Revolutions [Film]. Village Roadshow Pictures, Warner Bros. Entertainment.
- Wachowski, Lily & Wachowski, Lana [Directors]. (2003). The Matrix Reloaded [Film]. Village Roadshow Pictures, Warner Bros. Entertainment.
- Zimbalist, A., Sherman, H. J., & Brown, S. (1988, October). Comparing economic systems: A political-economic approach. Harcourt College Publishing.

INDEX

A

AARP
4.7: References

activism
1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?
4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory
Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

agency
4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives

**American Association of Family Physi-
cians**
3.6: References

American Psychiatric Association
2.7: References

American Time Use Survey
1.7: References

animals
2.3: Sexual Differentiation

antisocial behavior
2.7: References

asexuality
3.3: Who Do You Love?

B

bisexual
3.6: References

bisexuality
3.3: Who Do You Love?

C

capitalism
1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power
5.5: Shifting Power
5.6: Conclusion

caregiving
4.7: References

Chapter
Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept
Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

chapter introduction
Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

chromosomes
2.3: Sexual Differentiation

cisgender
2.5: Gender Expression

civil rights
5.5: Shifting Power

class
4.7: References

coming out
3.3: Who Do You Love?

community education
3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

conclusion
Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept
Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct
Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

conclusions
Chapter 5: Gender and Power

conflict theory
4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

consent
3.1: Chapter Introduction
3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

Contemporary
Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

critical sociology
1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power

cultural context
1.6: Conclusion

cultural norms
2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social
Institution
5.1: Chapter Introduction
5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power

culture
1.2: What Is Sociology?

D

decolonization
5.6: Conclusion

discrimination
1.1: Chapter Introduction
1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?
3.5: Conclusion
5.7: References

diversity
5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems
of Power

E

education
1.7: References

emotional labor
4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap

equality
5.7: References

F

family
1.7: References

family theory
4.7: References

Female Athletes
2.7: References

femininity
2.5: Gender Expression

feminism
4.1: Chapter Introduction
4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory
4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power
5.7: References

feminist
Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

feminist methodology
4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory

feminist theory

1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
1.7: References
3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination
4.1: Chapter Introduction
4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory
4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap
4.6: Conclusion
4.7: References

fertilization
2.3: Sexual Differentiation

G

gay
3.6: References

gay rights
3.3: Who Do You Love?

gender
1.1: Chapter Introduction
1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power
1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?
1.6: Conclusion
1.7: References
2.1: Chapter Introduction
2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social
Institution
2.5: Gender Expression
2.6: Conclusion
3.1: Chapter Introduction
3.5: Conclusion
4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
4.6: Conclusion
4.7: References
5.1: Chapter Introduction
5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems
of Power
5.6: Conclusion
5.7: References
Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept
Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct
Chapter 4: Gender in Theory
Chapter 5: Gender and Power

Gender and Power
2.7: References

Gender and Society
2.7: References

gender conflict theory
4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

gender dysphoria
2.1: Chapter Introduction

gender equality
2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social
Institution

gender equity
2.1: Chapter Introduction
4.1: Chapter Introduction

gender expression
1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
2.1: Chapter Introduction
2.5: Gender Expression
2.6: Conclusion
Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

gender identity

- 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
- 2.1: Chapter Introduction
- 2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution
- 2.3: Sexual Differentiation
- 2.4: Constructing Identity
- 2.5: Gender Expression
- 2.6: Conclusion
- 3.3: Who Do You Love?
- 5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power

gender inequality

- 1.1: Chapter Introduction
- 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
- 1.7: References
- 4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap
- 5.6: Conclusion

gender norms

- 1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?
- 2.5: Gender Expression
- 3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination
- 4.6: Conclusion

gender pay gap

- 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
- 4.6: Conclusion

gender roles

- 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
- 2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution
- 2.4: Constructing Identity
- 4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap
- 5.5: Shifting Power

gender socialization

- 2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution
- 2.6: Conclusion

gender stratification

- 2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution

gender studies

- 1.2: What Is Sociology?
- 4.1: Chapter Introduction

global gender inequality

- 2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution

global systems

- Chapter 5: Gender and Power

H

hegemonic masculinity

- 2.7: References

heterosexual

- 3.6: References

historical context

- 3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

homophobia

- 5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power

I

identity

- 2.4: Constructing Identity
- 3.5: Conclusion
- 4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
- Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

identity formation

- 1.1: Chapter Introduction
- 2.1: Chapter Introduction

in vitro fertilization

- 2.3: Sexual Differentiation

inclusion

- 3.3: Who Do You Love?
- 5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power

individuals

- Chapter 5: Gender and Power

inequality

- 1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?

internalized oppression

- 5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power

interpersonal violence

- 3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

intersectionality

- 1.1: Chapter Introduction
- 1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power
- 1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?
- 2.5: Gender Expression
- 4.1: Chapter Introduction
- 4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory
- 4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
- 4.7: References
- 5.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
- 5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power
- 5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power
- 5.6: Conclusion
- 5.7: References

intersex

- 2.3: Sexual Differentiation

intersex children

- 3.6: References

intimate partner violence

- 5.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.5: Shifting Power

introduction

- Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept
- Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

L

lesbian

- 3.6: References

LGBTQ

- 5.7: References

LGBTQIA

- 3.3: Who Do You Love?
- 3.5: Conclusion
- 4.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power

LGBTQIA+

- 1.1: Chapter Introduction
- 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender
- 3.1: Chapter Introduction
- 4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives

love

- Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

M

mammals

- 2.3: Sexual Differentiation

marginalization

- 5.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
- 5.6: Conclusion

marginalized communities

- 1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power

marginalized groups

- 4.6: Conclusion

masculinity

- 2.5: Gender Expression

microaggressions

- 5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power

migration

- 4.7: References

misogyny

- 3.1: Chapter Introduction

motherhood penalty

- 1.7: References

N

nonbinary

- 2.1: Chapter Introduction
- 2.4: Constructing Identity

O

occupational segregation

- 4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap

P

patriarchy

- 1.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
- 5.7: References
- Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

patterns of behavior

- 1.6: Conclusion

pay equity

- 1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?

personal identity

- 2.4: Constructing Identity

perspectives

- Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

power

- 1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power
- 3.5: Conclusion
- 5.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
- 5.6: Conclusion
- Chapter 5: Gender and Power

prevention strategies

- 3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

privilege

- 5.1: Chapter Introduction
- 5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
- 5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power
- 5.6: Conclusion

process

- Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

prosocial behavior

- 2.7: References

Q

queer theory

- 4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives
- 4.6: Conclusion

R

race

- 4.7: References

race conflict theory

- 4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

racial inequality

5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power

racial justice

4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory

racism

1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power

references

Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept

Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

Chapter 5: Gender and Power

relationships

1.2: What Is Sociology?

reproduction

2.3: Sexual Differentiation

reproductive rights

5.5: Shifting Power

reproductive technologies

2.3: Sexual Differentiation

S

sex

3.1: Chapter Introduction

3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

sex crimes

3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

sexism

1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power

sexual assault

3.1: Chapter Introduction

3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

sexual autonomy

3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

3.6: References

sexual behavior

3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

3.3: Who Do You Love?

3.6: References

sexual differentiation

2.3: Sexual Differentiation

Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

sexual harassment

3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

sexual health

3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

sexual orientation

3.1: Chapter Introduction

3.3: Who Do You Love?

sexual violence

1.1: Chapter Introduction

1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?

3.1: Chapter Introduction

3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

3.5: Conclusion

3.6: References

Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

sexuality

3.1: Chapter Introduction

3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

3.5: Conclusion

4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives

Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

shifting power

Chapter 5: Gender and Power

social activism

2.6: Conclusion

social behavior

1.2: What Is Sociology?

social change

1.2: What Is Sociology?

5.5: Shifting Power

social construction

2.1: Chapter Introduction

5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power

social construction of culture

2.6: Conclusion

social constructs

3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination

4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives

4.6: Conclusion

social inequalities

1.6: Conclusion

social inequality

4.1: Chapter Introduction

4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap

4.6: Conclusion

5.1: Chapter Introduction

5.5: Shifting Power

social institution

2.6: Conclusion

Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

social institutions

1.2: What Is Sociology?

social interaction

2.4: Constructing Identity

social interactions

1.2: What Is Sociology?

social justice

2.1: Chapter Introduction

3.3: Who Do You Love?

4.1: Chapter Introduction

5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power

5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power

5.7: References

social movements

1.1: Chapter Introduction

3.5: Conclusion

4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory

5.5: Shifting Power

5.6: Conclusion

social norms

3.1: Chapter Introduction

social research

1.7: References

social sciences

Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept

social stratification

2.6: Conclusion

social structures

1.6: Conclusion

Social Theory

1.6: Conclusion

3.5: Conclusion

4.6: Conclusion

socialization

1.2: What Is Sociology?

1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?

1.6: Conclusion

2.1: Chapter Introduction

2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution

2.4: Constructing Identity

2.5: Gender Expression

societal constructs

4.7: References

sociological concepts

1.2: What Is Sociology?

sociological imagination

4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

sociological perspective

2.6: Conclusion

sociology

1.1: Chapter Introduction

1.2: What Is Sociology?

1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power

1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender

1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender?

1.6: Conclusion

1.7: References

2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution

2.4: Constructing Identity

2.6: Conclusion

3.5: Conclusion

4.1: Chapter Introduction

4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory

4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap

4.6: Conclusion

5.7: References

Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept

standpoint theory

4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory

structural functionalism

4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

structural violence

5.1: Chapter Introduction

study

Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept

survivors

3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy

symbolic interactionism

4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

systemic inequality

5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power

systems of power

1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power

1.6: Conclusion

5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power

Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept

T

testosterone

2.7: References

Theoretical

Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

theoretical frameworks

4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives

theory

Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

tokenism

5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power

transgender

2.4: Constructing Identity

2.5: Gender Expression

2.7: References

transgender rights

5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power

5.5: Shifting Power

U

unequal systems

Chapter 5: Gender and Power

V

violence

5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power
5.7: References

W

Wage

Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

wage gap

4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap

white supremacy

5.6: Conclusion

women in sociology

4.1: Chapter Introduction

women's movement

5.5: Shifting Power

women's studies

1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender

women's suffrage

4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory

GLOSSARY

A

abjection | a reaction (horror, vomit) to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between subject and object or between self and other (Kristeva, 2010).

affirmative consent | consent given for each sex act each time.

agents of socialization | social institutions that create and maintain normative expectations for behavior.

C

capitalism | a complex competitive economic system of power in which limited resources are subject to private ownership and the accumulation of surplus is rewarded.

cisgender | describes people who identify as the same gender they were assigned at birth.

coalitional politics | refers to political association with those who have differing identities, around shared experiences of oppression (Taylor, 2017).

coming out | a social process of recognizing and sharing sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

conflict theory | is a macro-level theory that proposes conflict is a basic fact of social life, which argues that the institutions of society benefit the powerful.

crip theory | a subfield of sociology that reveals and interrupts the harmful social pressures and social norms of ableism and heteronormativity.

cross-dressing | an archaic term to describe men who dressed as women or women who dressed as men.

culture | a group's shared practices, values, beliefs, and norms. Culture encompasses a group's way of life, from daily routines and everyday interactions to the most essential aspects of group members' lives. It includes everything produced by a society, including social rules.

D

deadnaming | the harmful practice of continuing to call trans people by the name associated with the gender they were assigned at birth rather than the name they ask you to call them. It is closely related to misgendering.

decolonization | (multiple interrelated meanings) (1) A political process that included a transfer of power back from a colonial government to an indigenous one. For example, when India became independent from the British Empire in 1947. (2) For those who have benefited from colonization, decolonization has also come to mean a personal divestment of colonial power across structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal domains of power. (3) A cultural process of identifying and challenging cultural domains of colonial power so that pre-colonial ways of being and knowing can be reclaimed, recovered, and reimagined.

differences in sexual development (DSD) | describes genetic, hormonal, or anatomical variations that produce atypical sex characteristics, including variations in chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals.

E

Ecological Systems Theory | a theory that describes the social world as a layered system, in which each layer is a set of social domains that impact the individual. The system moves from the smallest level of the individual to the layer of family, through growing layers until it reaches institutions, society, and even historical context.

embodiment | refers to the shape of a person's body, the feeling of a person's body, and what a person's body can do (Herbert and Pollatos, 2012)

emotional labor | to describe work that requires managing personal emotions and the emotions of other people (Hochschild, 1983)

emphasized femininity | expressions of femininity that emphasize women's subordination by accommodating the interests and desires of men

F

feminine apologetic | the expectation that women learn to balance their interest in "masculine" activities and traits with feminine gender expression.

feminism | is an interdisciplinary approach to issues of equality and equity based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, sex, and sexuality as understood through social theories and political activism (Eastern Kentucky University, n.d.)

G

gender | the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences (Adapted from Conerly et.al. 2021a).

gender binary | a limited system of gender classification in which gender can only be masculine or feminine. This way of thinking about gender is specific to certain cultures and is not culturally, historically, or biologically universal.

gender dysphoria | a marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and their assigned gender (APA 2022).

gender expression | the way our gender identity is expressed outwardly through clothing, personal grooming, self-adornment, physical posture and gestures, and other elements of self-presentation.

gender identity | the gender we experience ourselves to be.

gender inequality | the unequal distribution of power and resources based on gender.

gender policing | imposing or enforcing normative gender expressions on someone who is perceived to be not adequately performing those gender norms via their appearance or behavior, based on their sex assigned at birth.

gender socialization | the process by which people learn the norms, stereotypes, roles, and scripts related to gender through direct instruction or by exposure and internalization.

genderqueer | an umbrella term that covers gender identity and expression that falls outside the binary/non-normative labels.

H

hegemonic masculinity | the masculine ideal commonly viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity and any form of femininity (Connell 1987; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005).

heteronormativity | the social enforcement of heterosexuality, in which there are only two genders, that these genders are opposites, and that any sexual activity between people of the same gender is deviant or unnatural.

heteropatriarchy | (a merging of the words heterosexual and patriarchy) is a system of power in which cisgender and heterosexual men have authority over everyone else. This term emphasizes that discrimination against women and LGBTQIA+ people is derived from the same sexist social principle (Valdes, 1996).

I

identity formation | a process of coming to understand ourselves and differentiate ourselves in relation to our social world.

identity politics | which refers to organizing politically around the experiences and needs of people who share a particular identity.

in the closet | people who do not know they are LGBTQIA+ or know but do not come out publicly are said to be in the closet or closeted.

internalized oppression | a process of individuals within an oppressed group incorporating and accepting the prejudices of the dominant society (Pheterson, 1986).

intersectionality | describes how multiple social locations overlap and influence each other to create complex hierarchies of power and oppression, and that overlapping social identities produce unique inequities that influence the lives of people and groups (Crenshaw, 1989).

intersex | people with differences in sexual development (DSD) sometimes identify as intersex.

L

LGBTQIA+ | an acronym that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual, Plus a continuously expanding spectrum of gender identities and sexual orientations.

M

macro-sociology | studies how systems interact with individuals or with other systems.

marginalization | a process of social exclusion in which individuals or groups are pushed to the outside of society by denying them economic and political power (Chandler & Munday, 2011).

The Matrix of Domination | a theoretical framework developed by Patricia Hill Collins (she/her) to describe how power is socially constructed. Hill Collins identifies four domains of socially constructed power, which arrange power and work together to create systems of power (Hill Collins, 1990).

meritocracy | a hypothetical system of power in which social status is determined by personal effort and merit. (Conerly, et al. 2021).

micro-sociology | is the study of small groups and individual interactions.

microaggressions | are statements that indirectly reference stereotypes to assert the dominance of the aggressor.

misgendering | the harmful practice of referring to people by a gender other than their stated gender identity (Kapusta 2016).

misogyny | hatred of, aversion to, or prejudice against women (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

monogamy | the practice of having one intimate partner at a time.

N

nonbinary | refers to gender identities beyond binary identifications of man or woman/masculine or feminine.

O

occupational segregation | is a form of social stratification in the labor market in which one group is more likely to do certain types of work than other groups. Gender-based occupational segregation describes situations in which women are more likely to do certain jobs and men do others.

P

patriarchy | literally the rule of fathers. A patriarchal society is one where characteristics associated with masculinity signify more power and status than those associated with femininity.

peer review | a process in which researchers evaluate one another's work to assess the validity and quality of proposed or completed research.

People of the Global Majority (PGM) | an emerging term that refers to people who identify as Asian, Black, African, Indigenous, Latinx, and other racial and ethnic groups who are not White (Campbell-Stephens 2020).

polyamory | the practice of having multiple intimate partners.

polyandry | the practice of one woman having multiple intimate partners at the same time.

polygamy | the practice of one man having multiple intimate partners at the same time.

post-structuralism | de-centers dominant perspectives to decolonize ideas of culture and societal structures.

postcolonial theory | originated with scholars from former European colonies in the global south whose global south. Postcolonial theory explores how colonization disrupts social arrangements, including gender relations of the people who lived in colonized places. Gender-based differences in work and pay for women of the global south are an example of the ongoing results of colonialism.

privilege | a right or immunity granted as a benefit, advantage, or favor. While privileges can be earned in some systems, privileges can also be unearned and based on social location. For the purpose of describing unequal power arrangements in systems of power we will be referring to those privileges that are “unearned advantages, exclusive to a particular group or social category, and socially conferred by others” (Johnson, 2001).

Q

queer theory | a framework for understanding gender and sexual practices outside of heterosexuality.

R

rape | non-consensual oral, anal, or vaginal penetration.

reflexivity | a practice of self-reflection to examine how personal biases, feelings, reactions, and motives influence research.

research | a systematic approach that involves asking questions, identifying possible answers to your question, collecting, and evaluating evidence—not always in that order—before drawing logical, testable conclusions based on the best available evidence.

S

settler colonialism | is an unequal system of power that relies on white supremacy to justify removing established indigenous residents of colonized territory so that the land can be occupied by settlers and its resources used for the benefit of the occupying power.

sex assigned at birth | the assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on a combination of anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes.

sex workers | adults who receive money or goods in exchange for consensual sexual services or erotic performances, either regularly or occasionally (Open Society Foundations 2019).

sexual assault | a broad category of non-consensual sexual contact that includes various forms of rape and other illegal sexual contact.

sexual orientation | emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people; often used to signify the relationship between a person's gender identity and the gender identities to which a person is most attracted (Learning for Justice 2018).

sexual scripts | socially constructed blueprints for sexual expression, sexual orientation, sexual behaviors, and sexual desires that guide our performance of sexuality.

sexual violence | any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by any person, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting (WHO 2022).

sexuality | refers to a person's personal and interpersonal expression of sexual desire, behavior, and identity.

sexually dimorphic traits | variations within a species, including secondary sex characteristics, that indicate sexual differences but are not necessarily related to reproduction.

social construct | shared meaning that is created, accepted, and reproduced by social interactions between people within a society.

social identity | consists of the combination of social characteristics, roles, and group memberships with which a person identifies. Social identity can be described as "the sum total of who we think we are in relation to other people and social systems" (Johnson, 2014, p. 178).

social institution | a large-scale social arrangement that is stable and predictable, created and maintained to serve the needs of society (Bell 2013).

social location | describes the relationship between social identity and social power.

social movements | purposeful, organized groups that strive to work toward a common social goal.

social problem | a social condition or pattern of behavior that has negative consequences for individuals, our social world, or our physical world (Guerrero 20164).

social stratification | a set of processes in which people are sorted, or layered, into ranked social categories based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and status.

socialization | the process of learning culture through social interactions.

society | a group of people who live in a defined geographic area, who interact with one another, and who share a common culture (Conerly et al. 2021).

socioeconomic status (SES) | individual or group's place within a system of social stratification. SES can be influenced by race, social class, religion, and other socially constructed categories or human differences, including gender.

sociological imagination | an awareness of the relationship between a person's behavior, experience, and the wider culture that shapes the person's choices and perceptions. (Mills 1959)

sociology of gender | applies the tools of sociology to explore how gender, including sexuality, gender expression, and identity, is socially constructed, imposed, enforced, reproduced, and negotiated.

sodomy | an archaic legal term to describe oral or anal sex, generally between men.

standpoint theory | argues that knowledge is socially situated and that the dominant standpoint of social and natural sciences has been based on "rampant sexism and androcentrism (centering men)" (Harding, 1992).

structural functionalism | also called functionalism, a macro-level theory concerned with large-scale processes and large-scale social systems that order, stabilize, and destabilize societies.

symbolic interactionist theory | is a micro-level theory concerned with how meanings are constructed through interactions with others and is associated with the Chicago School of Sociology.

systems of power | socially constructed beliefs, practices, and cultural norms that produce and normalize power arrangements in social institutions.

T

tokenism | the practice of making only a superficial or symbolic effort to diversify an organization by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups to give the appearance of equality.

transgender | describes people who identify as a gender that is different from the gender they were assigned at birth.

transnational feminism | is a body of theory and activism that highlights the connections between sexism, racism, classism, and imperialism.

W

White supremacy | a complex system of racist power that is based on discredited racist enlightenment-era social science and constructed through policies and practices that privileged white people over people of other races, based on the racist ideas that that there are meaningful differences between people in different racial categories, that White people are physically and culturally superior, and that they are therefore entitled to dominate other people in other racial categories.

This page titled [Glossary](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

DETAILED LICENSING

Overview

Title: Sociology of Gender - An Equity Lens (Karena, Esbensen, and Pertermann)

Webpages: 64

All licenses found:

- [CC BY 4.0](#): 96.9% (62 pages)
- [Undeclared](#): 3.1% (2 pages)

By Page

- Sociology of Gender - An Equity Lens (Karena, Esbensen, and Pertermann) - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Front Matter - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - TitlePage - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - InfoPage - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Table of Contents - [Undeclared](#)
 - Licensing - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 6: License Statement - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Acknowledgments - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - About this Book - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - How to Read This Book Offline - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Message to Students - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - About the Authors - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Publisher's Message to Instructors - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Additional Resources - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Instructor Resources - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Manuscript Development Process - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.2: What Is Sociology? - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender? - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.6: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.7: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.3: Sexual Differentiation - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.4: Constructing Identity - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.5: Gender Expression - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.6: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.7: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.3: Who Do You Love? - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.5: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.6: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 4: Gender in Theory - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.6: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.7: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 5: Gender and Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.5: Shifting Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.6: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.7: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Back Matter - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Index - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Glossary - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Detailed Licensing - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Attributions and References for Glossary Terms - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Image Descriptions - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Self-Check Questions - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Transcripts - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Detailed Licensing - [Undeclared](#)

This page titled [Sociology of Gender - An Equity Lens \(Karena, Esbensen, and Pertermann\)](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

GLOSSARY

2

Abjection: Kristeva, J., & Roudiez, L. S. (2010). Powers of horror: An essay on abjection. *Nachdr.* Columbia University Press.

Coalitional politics: Taylor, K.-Y. (Ed.). (2017). *How we get free: Black feminism and the Combahee River Collective*. Haymarket Books.

Embodiment: Herbert, BM. & Pollatos, O. (2024). The body in the mind: on the relationship between interoception and embodiment. *Top Cogn Sci.* 4:692–704.

Emotional labor: Hochschild, A. R. (1983). *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. University of California Press.

Feminism: Eastern Kentucky University. *Feminism: What is it?* <https://wgs.eku.edu/what-feminism-0>

Gender dysphoria: American Psychiatric Association. (2022). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, Fifth Edition [DSM-5-TR]. doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787

Hegemonic masculinity: Connell, R. (1987). *Gender and power: Society, the person, and sexual politics*. Stanford University Press.
Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity. *Gender & Society*, 19(6), 829–859. doi.org/10.1177/0891243205278639

Heteropatriarchy: Valdes, F. (1996). Unpacking hetero-patriarchy: Tracing the conflation of sex, gender & sexual orientation to its origins. *Yale Journal of Law & the Humanities*, 8(1), 161-211. core.ac.uk/download/pdf/72833279.pdf

Internalized oppression: Pheterson, G. (1986). Alliances between women: Overcoming internalized oppression and internalized domination. *Signs*, 12(1), 146–160. www.jstor.org/stable/3174362

Intersectionality: Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1(8). <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf>

“Macro-sociological” and “micro-sociological” definitions are from “Levels of Analysis: Macro Level and Micro Level” by Jennifer Puentes in *Sociology in Everyday Life: An Equity Lens*, which is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Marginalization: Chandler, D., & Munday, R. (2011). *A dictionary of media and communication*. Oxford University Press.

The Matrix of Domination: Hill Collins, P. (1990). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. Routledge.

“Meritocracy” definition from “9.1 What is Social Stratification” in *Introduction to Sociology 3e* by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, and Asha Lal Tamang, licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Misgendering: Kapusta, S. J. (2016). Misgendering and Its Moral Contestability. *Hypatia*, 31(3), 502–519.

Misogyny: Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Misogyny. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved July 13, 2024, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/misogyny>

People of the Global Majority (PGM): Campbell-Stephens, R. (2020). Global Majority; Decolonising the language and reframing the conversation about race. <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/schools/school-of-education/final-leeds-beckett-1102-global-majority.pdf>

Privilege: Johnson, A. G. (2001). *Privilege, power, and difference, Third Edition*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Sexual orientation: Learning For Justice. (2024). A Glossary of Terms. The Acronym and Beyond. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/best-practices-for-serving-lgbtq-students/lgbtq-terms-definitions-the-acronym-and-beyond>

Sexual violence: World Health Organization [WHO]. (2022). Sexual violence, 941 studies. apps.who.int/violence-info/sexual-violence/

Sex worker: Open Society Foundation. (2019, April). Clearing Up Some Myths About Sex Work. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/understanding-sex-work-open-society>

Social identity: Johnson, A. G. (2014). *The forest and the trees: Sociology as life, practice and promise, Third Edition*. Temple University Press.

Social institution: "Social institution" definition by Kenton Bell from the [Open Education Sociology Dictionary](#), which is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

Social problem: Leon-Guerrero, A. (2019). *Social problems: Community, policy and social action* (Sixth Edition). SAGE Publications.

Society: "Society" definition by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, and Asha Lal Tamang, *Introduction to Sociology 3e*, Openstax, which is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Sociological imagination: Mills, C. Wright. 1959. *Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press

Standpoint theory: Harding, S. (1992). Rethinking standpoint epistemology: What is "strong objectivity?" *The Centennial Review* 36(3), 437-470. www.jstor-org.emporiastate.idm.oclc.org/stable/23739232

This page titled [Attributions and References for Glossary Terms](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann ([Open Oregon](#)) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.

Image Descriptions

4

Image description for Figure 1.6

A circle of arrows around the words Scientific Process. The top arrow says Identify a Social Issue or Find a Research Topic and Ask a Question. This points to the next arrow, which says review existing literature and sources. Build a broad understanding of work previously conducted, identify gaps in understanding of the topic, and position your own research to build on prior knowledge. The next arrow says Formulate a Hypothesis: What are the general causes of the phenomenon you're wondering about? The next arrow says Select a Research Method and Design a Study: Select a research method appropriate to answer your question. Typically, your research question influences the method you will use. The next arrow says Collect data: Collect information on the topic using the research design. The next arrow says Analyze data: Organize and analyze the data after it is collected. If the analysis does or does not support the hypothesis, discuss implications for theory or policy. From here there is an arrow that goes back to Select a Research Method that says Based on findings, what new questions do you have? How can these new questions help develop future projects? Another arrow from Analyze Data continues the circle and says Report Findings: Share results at conferences and in academic journals. Before the conclusions of a study are widely accepted, the studies are often repeated. New research questions may emerge to inspire more research projects. This arrow points back to the top arrow where we started. There is also an attribution statement saying this image is CC BY 4.0 and created by Jennifer Puentes and Michaela Willi Hooper.

Return to Figure 1.6

Image description for Figure 2.12

A table with two columns and five rows.

The left column heading reads, "Stages of Development" and the right column heading reads, "Stages of Development."

The second row reads, "Preparatory Stage" and "Imitation and copying of others – typically parents/family."

The third row reads, "Play Stage" and "Imitate through role play like "dress up" in a fluid manner where they don't quite understand the big picture or have the ability to maintain the role.

The fourth row reads, "Game Stage," and "Distinguish and learn different roles at the same time and how they interact with others. Following rules and expectations of the role."

The bottom row reads, "Generalized other," and "Learn the common norms and expectations of the larger society. Able to internalize how they are viewed by society and others."

Return to Figure 2.12

Image description for Figure 3.3

A vertical bar graph, titled, "Heterosexual Men Are Most Likely and Heterosexual Women Are Least Likely to Orgasm During a Partnered Sexual Encounter". The y-axis is labeled "Percent Who Usually or Always Orgasm", measured in increments of 0, 25, 50, 75, 100. The x-axis is labeled "Men" and "Women". To the right of the graph is a key with a gold square next to the label "heterosexual. A blue square labeled Bisexual, and a pink square labeled Homosexual. The horizontal bars correspond to the key to indicate 95% of heterosexual men, 89% of bisexual men, 88% of homosexual men, 65% of heterosexual women, 66% of bisexual women, and 86% of lesbian women.

Return to Figure 3.3

Image description for Figure 3.5

A black and white photo that shows a large group of young people outside a brick building, with uniformed and plain-clothes officers surveying the group. The young people's facial expressions look angry and distressed. We only see the backs of the police.

Return to Figure 3.5

Image description for Figure 3.11

An infographic with a white background. The title "The Gender Unicorn" is written in friendly script across the top.

The left third of the page has a cartoon of a purple unicorn standing upright like a person. The Right two-thirds of the page is divided into five rows.

A thought bubble near the unicorn's head has a rainbow corresponding to a second rainbow in the top row to the right and a black label that says, "Gender Identity" over teal horizontal arrows, that suggest a number line. To the right of each arrow is a category of gender. The top line says "Female/Woman/Girl." The second line says, "Male/Man/Boy" and the third line says, "Other Gender(s)."

Behind the Unicorn, a line of small green dots in the shape of a bracket, as if the unicorn is bracketed. The dots correspond to a green dot on the second right-hand row and the text "Gender Expression" over three horizontal arrows of the same shade of green, each pointing rightward to the text describing a category of gender expression. The top arrow points to the word "Feminine," the middle arrow points to the word, "masculine," and the bottom arrow points to the word "other."

Near the Unicorn's pelvis, there is a green, purple, and orange double helix, suggesting a segment of DNA that corresponds to another segment in the third row, labeled, "Sex Assigned at birth." Under these labels is a horizontal row of three dots: an orange dot under the label "female," a green dot under the label "male," and a purple dot under the label "Other/Intersex."

On the Unicorn's chest, there are two overlapping hearts, one is red and the other is orange. The orange dot corresponds to an orange heart in the fourth row, labeled "Physically Attracted to" over three orange horizontal arrows pointing to categories of gender. The top arrow points to the label "Woman," the middle arrow points to the label "Men," and the bottom arrow points to the label "Other Gender(s)."

The red heart on the Unicorn's chest corresponds to the red heart in the fifth row, labeled "emotionally attracted to," and three horizontal red arrows pointing to labels that read, respectively, "Women," "Men," and "Other Gender(s)."

In the top right corner of the graphic, black letters spell out "Graphic by TSER

Trans Student Educational Resources."

In the bottom left corner, smaller letters black letters say, "To learn more, go to:

www.transstudent.org/gender."

Return to Figure 3.11

Image description for Figure 3.14

A spiral of 24 overlapping circles that progress in shades of gray from the outermost black circle to the innermost white circle. Each circle lists a form of individual or systemic sexual violence. Beginning with the outermost circle they are labeled with white text: Rape/Murder; Partner Rape; Marital Rape; Date Rape; Child Rape; Statutory Rape; Incest; Rape; Flashing; Sexual Exploitation; Sexual Harassment; Voyeurism; Sexist Jokes; Rigid Gender Roles; Sexualized Media Depictions; Gender Violence Normalized; Mysogonistic Practices; Sexism; Heterosexism; Classism; Antisemitism; Ableism; Racism, and Oppression. The spiral sits within a larger medium-gray circle bordered by two black lines. The outer black line is labeled "norms". Under the image, the title is written in grey text, "The Sexual Violence Continuum. The creator's name, "Lydia Guy - WCSAP 2006" is under the title in smaller grey text.

Return to Figure 3.14

Image description for Figure 3.16

A table that lists Risk And Protective Factors for the Perpetration Of Sexual Violence

- PROTECTIVE FACTORS
 - Families where caregivers work through conflicts
 - Emotional health and connectedness
 - Academic achievement
 - Empathy and concern for how one's actions affect
- INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS
 - Alcohol and drug use
 - Delinquency
 - Lack of concern for others
 - Aggressive behaviors and acceptance of violent behaviors
 - Early sexual initiation
 - Coercive sexual fantasies
 - Preference for impersonal sex and sexual-risk taking
 - Exposure to sexually explicit media
 - Hostility towards women
 - Adherence to traditional gender role norms
 - Hyper-masculinity
 - Suicidal behavior
 - Prior sexual victimization or perpetration
- COMMUNITY RISK FACTORS
 - Poverty
 - Lack of employment opportunities
 - Lack of institutional support from the police and judicial system
 - General tolerance of sexual violence within the community
 - Weak community sanctions against sexual violence
 - perpetrators
- RELATIONSHIP RISK FACTORS
 - Family history of conflict and violence
 - Childhood history of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
 - Emotionally unsupportive family environment
 - Poor parent-child relationships, particularly with fathers
 - Association with sexually aggressive, hypermasculine, and delinquent peers
 - Involvement in a violent or abusive intimate relationship
- SOCIETAL RISK FACTORS
 - Societal norms that support sexual violence
 - Societal norms that support male superiority
 - and sexual entitlement
 - Societal norms that maintain women's
 - inferiority and sexual submissiveness
 - Weak laws and policies related to sexual violence and gender equity
 - High levels of crime and other forms of violence

Return to Figure 3.16

Image description for Figure 3.18

An infographic with a white background. The title “The Gender Unicorn” is written in friendly script across the top.

The left third of the page has a cartoon of a purple unicorn standing upright like a person. The Right two-thirds of the page is divided into five rows.

A thought bubble near the unicorn’s head has a rainbow corresponding to a second rainbow in the top row to the right and a black label that says, “Gender Identity” over teal horizontal arrows, that suggest a number line. To the right of each arrow is a category of gender. The top line says “Female/Woman/Girl,” the second line says, “Male/Man/Boy,” and the third line says, “Other Gender(s).”

Behind the Unicorn, a line of small green dots in the shape of a bracket, as if the unicorn is bracketed. The dots correspond to a green dot on the second right-hand row and the text “Gender Expression” over three horizontal arrows of the same shade of green, each pointing rightward to the text describing a category of gender expression. The top arrow points to the word “Feminine,” the middle arrow points to the word, “Masculine,” and the bottom arrow points to the word “other.”

Near the Unicorn’s pelvis, there is a green, purple, and orange double helix, suggesting a segment of DNA that corresponds to another segment in the third row, labeled, “Sex Assigned at birth.” Under these labels is a horizontal row of three dots: an orange dot under the label “female,” a green dot under the label “male,” and a purple dot under the label “Other/Intersex.”

On the Unicorn’s chest, there are two overlapping hearts, one is red and the other is orange. The orange dot corresponds to an orange heart in the fourth row, labeled “Physically Attracted to” over three orange horizontal arrows pointing to categories of gender. The top arrow points to the label “Woman,” the middle arrow points to the label “Men,” and the bottom arrow points to the label “Other Gender(s).”

The red heart on the Unicorn’s chest corresponds to the red heart in the fifth row, labeled “emotionally attracted to”, and three horizontal red arrows pointing to labels that read, respectively, “Women,” “Men,” and “Other Gender(s).”

In the top right corner of the graphic, black letters spell out “Graphic by TSER

Trans Student Educational Resources.”

In the bottom left corner, smaller letters black letters say, “To learn more, go to:

www.transstudent.org/gender.”

Return to Figure 3.18

Image description for Figure 4.1

A collage with three rows of headshots of major sociological theorists:

- Top row, labeled “Structural Functionalism”:
 - Emile Durkheim (he/him) (1858 – 1917)
 - Talcott Parson’s (he/him) (1902 – 1979)
 - Robert Merton (he/him) (1910 – 2003)
- Middle Row, labeled, “Conflict Theory”:
 - Harriet Martineau (she/her) (1802 – 1876)
 - Karl Marx (he/him) (1818-1883)
 - Max Weber (he/him) (1865 – 1929)
 - W.E.B. DuBios (he/him) (1886 – 1963)
 - C. Wright Mills (he/him) (1916 – 1962)
- Bottom Row, labeled “Symbolic Interactionist”

- Herbert Blumer (he/him) (1900 -1987)
- Erving Goffman (he/him) (1922 – 1982)
- Howard Becker (he/him) (1928 -)
- Sheldon Stryker (he/him) (1924 – 2016)
- Peter Adler (he/him) (1952 –)
- Patricia Adler (she/her) (1952 –)
- Gary Allen Fine (he/him) (1950 –)

[Return to Figure 4.1](#)

Image description for Figure 4.2

A circle with ten smaller eccentric (off-center) nested circles indicating levels of sociological analysis in graduating shades of blue.

To the left of the large circle is a smaller circle with an image of a person holding up a cardboard sign that says, “Justice for Black Lives.” There is a dotted line with “macro-level analysis” and an arrow pointing to the outer layers of analysis.

To the right of the large circle is a smaller circle with an image of two feminine presenting people laughing together as they look at a cell phone. There is a dotted line with “micro-level analysis” and an arrow pointing to the inner layers of analysis.

Here are the labels of the layers of analysis in the large circle:

- The smallest innermost circle sits at the bottom of the image labeled “self.”
- The second circle is labeled “Interaction.”
- The third circle is labeled “Socialization.”
- The fourth circle is labeled “Role.”
- The fifth circle is labeled “Groups.”
- The sixth circle is labeled “Social Inequality, Race, Gender, Class.”
- The seventh circle is a small border of dots, indicating a dividing line between micro-level analysis below and macro-level analysis above.
- The Eighth circle is labeled “Social Institutions, Economics, Politics, Education, Religion, Family, Work.”
- The ninth circle is labeled “Culture.”
- The outermost circle is labeled “Society.”

[Return to Figure 4.2](#)

Image description for Figure 4.3

A table with two columns:

- The left column is labeled
- “Systems of the Human Body” above a picture of a human body with visible organs, bones, muscles, and blood vessels to indicate the systems of the body. Each system is labeled, with a line between each system and its corresponding body part :
- “Nervous” with a line to the brain
- “Endocrine” with a line to glands in the neck
- “Integumentary” with a line to the skin on the right arm
- “Cardiovascular” with a line to the heart
- “Skeletal” with a line of bones in the left wrist
- “Muscular” with a line to the right thigh
- The right column is labeled “Social Systems” and has labeled black and white icons indicating social systems:
- An icon suggesting three people, labeled “Families.”
- An icon suggesting a circle of people, labeled “Communities.”
- An icon suggesting an icon falling into a hand, labeled “Economic.”
- An icon indicating a ballot box, labeled “Politics.”

- A set of 3 icons indicating a teacher at a blackboard, students, and a graduation cap, labeled “Education.”
- A set of 3 icons indicating a temple, a mosque, and a church, labeled “Religion.”
- A set of two icons indicating legal statutes and the scales of justice, labeled “Legal Systems.”

Return to Figure 4.3

Image description for Figure 4.13

The image shows three distinct waves of water that represent the first three waves of feminism. Each wave is larger than the previous wave.

The first wave is labeled as occurring between the 1840s and 1940s. The first wave includes:

- Suffrage (the right to vote)
- Abolition
- Economic Rights
- Intimate Partner Violence

The second wave is labeled as being influenced by the Civil Rights Movement and occurring between the 1950s and 1970s. The second wave includes:

- Civil Rights
- Sexual Liberation
- Reproductive Rights
- Sexual Violence
- Gender Equity in Education and the Workplace
- Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment

The third wave is labeled as incorporating Black Feminist Activism, LGBTQIA+ Activism, and Disability Rights Activism, and occurring between the 1980s and the present. The third wave includes:

- Intersectionality
- Critical Theories of Gender
- Coalition Building
- Racial Justice
- Reproductive Justice
- Disability Justice
- Prison Abolition
- Multiple Feminisms
- International Feminism
- Queer Feminism
- Global South Feminism
- Black Feminism

Return to Figure 4.13

Image description for Figure 5.1

A wheel with an outer rim, a middle section divided into eight pieces (like a pie), and an inner circle at the center.

The outer rim is labeled: “VIOLENCE; PHYSICAL; SEXUAL”

The innermost circle is labeled: “POWER AND CONTROL”

The middle section pieces are labeled:

- USING COERCION AND THREATS

Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her, threatening to leave her, to commit suicide, to report her to welfare making her drop charges, and making her do illegal things.

- USING ECONOMIC ABUSE

Preventing her from getting or keeping a job making her ask for money giving her an allowance, taking her money, not letting her know about or have access to family income.

- USING INTIMIDATION

Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures, smashing things, destroying her property, abusing pets, and displaying weapons.

- USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Putting her down, making her feel bad about herself, calling her names, making her think she's crazy, playing mind games, humiliating her, and making her feel guilty.

- USING MALE PRIVILEGE

Treating her like a servant, making all the big decisions, acting like the master of the castle, being the one to define men's and women's roles.

- USING CHILDREN

Making her feel guilty about the children, using the children to relay messages, using visitation to harass her, and threatening to take the children away.

- USING ISOLATION

Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, and where she goes. Limiting her outside involvement using jealousy to justify actions.

- MINIMIZING, DENYING, AND BLAMING

Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously saying the abuse didn't happen, shifting responsibility for abusive behavior, and saying she caused it.

Return to Figure 5.1

Image description for Figure 5.5

The social identity wheel has common characteristics in the middle that remain stable including, national origin, race/ethnicity, mental/physical ability, sexual orientation, age, gender, gender identity, or expression. The characteristics on the outside can change over time like, work experience, education, appearance, religion, income, language and communication skills, organizational role, family, and political belief.

Return to Figure 5.5

Image description for Figure 5.6

Overview

A multicolored wheel that visualizes an individual's or group's relationship to power and privilege. From a center that says power, two intersecting lines with arrows at each end point outwards and are labeled *marginalization*. There are 16 slices or segments in the wheel. Each segment represents categories of identities or social locations. Social locations near the center of the wheel

experience more power. Social locations near the edge of the wheel experience more oppression and are more marginalized. Gray words outside the circle indicate forms of oppression and discrimination directed at people with those social identities.

Please keep in mind that as we try to describe the relationships between socially constructed power and identity, the categories we use can be imprecise, overlapping, and unstable.

Category descriptions and social identities/locations

- Race/Ethnicity: Black and Indigenous People of Color are the most marginalized identities; White passing is in the middle, and white is closest to the center of power. Racism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Skin color: Dark is the most marginalized identity, with medium shades in the middle and white closest to the center of power. Colorism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Indigeneity: Indigenous is the most marginalized identity, and Settlers are closest to the center of power. Colonialism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Citizenship: Undocumented are the most marginalized, documented non-citizens are in the middle, and citizens are closest to the center of power. Nativism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Language: Non-English speaking is the most marginalized identity; English speaking is in the middle, and native English is closest to the center of power. Xenophobia is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Geography: Rural/inner city is the most marginalized identity, the suburb is in the middle, and the city is closest to the center of power. Classism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Social class: The poor/working poor is the most marginalized identity, the middle class is in the middle, and the wealthy are closest to the center of power. Classism also affects people in this category.
- Housing status: Houseless is the most marginalized identity, sheltered/renting is in the middle, and the property owner is closest to the center of power. Classism also affects people in this category.
- Education: Elementary education is the most marginalized identity, high school is in the middle, and college or university is closest to the center of power. Credentialism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Neurodiversity: Significant neurodivergence is the most marginalized identity; some neurodivergence is in the middle, and neurotypical is closest to the center of power. Ableism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Physical and mental health: Vulnerable is the most marginalized identity, mostly stable is in the middle, and robust is closest to the center of power. Ableism also affects people in this category.
- Ability: Severe disability is the most marginalized identity, mild disability is in the middle, and able-bodied is closest to the center of power. Ableism also affects people in this category.
- Body size: Overweight or obese is the most marginalized identity, average is in the middle, and slim is closest to the center of power. Sizeism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Gender identity: Trans/intersex/nonbinary is the most marginalized, cisgender women are in the middle, and cisgender men are closest to the center of power. Sexism and cisgenderism are forms of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Sexual orientation: Lesbian, bi, pan/asexual are the most marginalized identities, gay men are in the middle, and straight is closest to the center of power. Heterosexism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Marital Status: Single/nonmonogamous are the most marginalized identities, engaged/partnered are in the middle, and married is closest to the center of power. Heterosexism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.

Attributions and license

Based on the work of Patricia Hill Collins, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Allan Johnson, and the visual images of Sylvia Duckworth and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. This version was designed by Kimberly Puttman, Michaela Willi Hooper, and Lauren Antrosiglio, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), CC BY 4.0.

Return to Figure 5.6

Image description for Figure 5.14

A picture of an Iceberg floating in the water. A small part of the iceberg floats above the waterline, and most of it is sunk below the waterline

Above the waterline is the label “Overt White Supremacy” And the words “KKK, Racist Jokes, Racial Slurs, Burning Crosses, Confederate Flags, Indian Schools, Indigenous Genocide, Swastikas, Hate Crime, Racist Mascots, Neo-Nazis.”

Below the waterline is the label, “Covert White Supremacy” and the words, Bootstrap Theory, Denying harms of slavery, Denying the present-day legacies of settler colonialism, denying the harms of settler colonialism, America is a Melting Pot (Assimilation), Fearing People of Color, Eurocentric curriculum, Columbus Discovered America, Housing Discrimination, Expecting PGM to teach White People, Not Believing the experience of PGM, Celebrating Columbus Day, Anti-immigration Policies, Over-representation of PGM in Prisons, Tokenism, Redlining, Paternalism, Police killing PGM, Hiring descrimination, Victim Blaming, Manifest Destiny, School-to-Prison Pipeline, Mass Incarceration, Color Blindness, Claiming Reverse Racism, Denial of White Privilage, Denial of racism, English Only, Racial Profiling, White Savior Complex, Police brutality, Racial Health Disparities, Racial Wealth Gap, Not Challanging Racist jokes, Denying the proesent-day legacies of slavery, Binary gender roles based on Eurocentric partiracal culture, White Grievence/White Masculine Greivence, Treaties not honored by governments, Believing that we are post-racial, Don’t blame me—I never owned slaves, Cultural appropriation, lynching, Internalized white racial superiority.”

Return to Figure 5.14

Image description for Figure 5.23

Four horizontal bars, each describing a stage of social movements.

Stage 1: Emergence – People become aware of an issue and leaders emerge

Stage 2: Coalescence – People join together, organize, and take action

Stage 3: Institutionalization – The movement becomes an established organization

Stage 4: Decline – The relevance of the movement declines overtime.

Return to Figure 5.23

Self-Check Questions

3

Questions

Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept

1. Which of the following best defines sociology?
 1. The study of ancient civilizations
 2. The scientific and systematic study of groups, societies, and social interactions
 3. The analysis of individual behavior in isolation
 4. The study of genetic influences on human behavior
2. The concept of “beginner’s mind” involves:
 1. Approaching the world with preconceived notions to test a perspective
 2. Using expert knowledge to analyze social interactions
 3. Viewing the world without preconceptions to see it from a new perspective
 4. Ignoring new perspectives and focusing on established facts
3. According to C. Wright Mills, the sociological imagination is:
 1. The ability to understand history without considering individual experiences.
 2. A way of seeing behavior solely in terms of individual choices.
 3. An awareness of the relationship between personal behavior and wider culture.
 4. The analysis of societal norms without considering personal experiences.
4. What does the term “figuration” refer to in sociology?
 1. The study of the behavior of individuals and the society that shapes that behavior
 2. The isolation of individuals from social contexts
 3. The process of studying social institutions without considering individuals
 4. The analysis of genetic factors in social behavior
5. What was Harriet Martineau’s significant contribution to sociology that was suppressed for over a century?
 1. Her statistical analysis of European populations
 2. Her translation and critique of Auguste Comte’s work
 3. Her development of economic models
 4. Her theory on political revolutions
6. What term is used in the text to refer to people who identify as Asian, Black, African, Indigenous, Latinx, and other racial and ethnic groups who are not White?
 1. Minority Groups
 2. Marginalized Groups
 3. People of the Global Majority (PGM)
 4. Non-European Populations
7. Reflexivity in research aims to eliminate all biases from the research process.
 1. True
 2. False
8. Sociology, like other social sciences, relies on systematic and evidence-based research to understand society.
 1. True
 2. False
9. Which of the following best describes the concept of gender according to sociological perspectives?
 1. Gender is biologically determined and unchangeable.
 2. Gender is the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences.
 3. Gender is solely based on an individual’s personal feelings and choices.
 4. Gender is universally the same across all societies and cultures.
10. Which term refers to the process by which society teaches and learns the meanings and roles associated with gender?
 1. Socialization
 2. Patriarchy
 3. Heteronormativity

4. Gender binary
11. The gender binary system is:
 1. A biologically universal truth specific to all mammals
 2. A limited system specific to certain cultures
 3. The scientific classification of gender
 4. A core aspect of human identity
12. Which of the following is an example of how sociologists can demonstrate that gender norms are socially constructed? Select all that apply.
 1. Showing that gender norms change over time.
 2. Identifying that gender norms are the same in all societies.
 3. Highlighting that gender norms are imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, or challenged through social interactions.
 4. Identifying differences between gender norms in societies.
13. Gender is real because it is a consequential aspect of identity that shapes how people are treated and their general standing in society, but it is not universally true.
 1. True
 2. False
14. Why is it important to study sociology of gender?
 1. To recognize and better understand the inequalities around us and find solutions to social problems.
 2. To confirm that gender roles are biologically determined and unchangeable.
 3. To prove that gender-based inequality does not exist.
 4. To advocate for maintaining traditional gender roles in society.
15. Which of the following is an example of how sociology of gender can help us understand social patterns?
 1. Explaining why individuals are solely responsible for their social and economic status.
 2. Revealing how gender norms and socialization influence career choices.
 3. Demonstrating that wage gaps are based purely on individual performance.
 4. Confirming that all gender differences are natural and unchangeable.
16. What does the sociology of gender use to identify and explain patterns of inequality?
 1. Personal anecdotes and opinions
 2. Combined research of numerical statistical data and qualitative data
 3. Assumptions about biological determinism
 4. Solely quantitative data without qualitative insights

Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

1. According to Judith Lorber, gender is defined as:
 1. A biological trait that overrides socialization
 2. An immutable characteristic
 3. An individual preference
 4. A process, a system of stratification, and a social institution
2. What is an example of a social construct?
 1. Biological sex
 2. Laws and customs
 3. Chromosomes and hormones
 4. Physical appearance
3. Which of the following best describes gender socialization?
 1. The biological differences between men and women.
 2. The unchangeable aspects of being male or female.
 3. The inherent traits of individuals based on their gender.
 4. The process by which people learn norms, roles, and behaviors associated with gender.
4. What is the first step of gender socialization?
 1. Social interactions in schools
 2. Gender assignment at birth
 3. Media exposure
 4. Peer group influence
5. In patriarchal societies, gender stratification typically results in:
 1. Political, economic, educational, legal, and cultural advantages for men over women.
 2. Equal opportunities for all genders.

3. The absence of gender discrimination.
4. Equal representation of all genders in political offices.
6. Which of the following agents of socialization is considered the most important in gender socialization?
 1. Mass media
 2. Peer groups
 3. Schools
 4. Family
7. Social constructs have inherent meanings that are universally true across all cultures and times
 1. True
 2. False
8. Gender reveal parties are an example of the social aspect of gender assignment.
 1. True
 2. False
9. According to the text, boys in many cultures typically have greater privileges and are given more autonomy and independence at an earlier age than girls.
 1. True
 2. False
10. Social stratification refers to the social categorization of people into rankings based on wealth, income, education, and other factors, including gender.
 1. True
 2. False
11. Which reproductive technology allows for fertilization to occur outside the body and then implantation into the uterus?
 1. In vitro fertilization
 2. Asexual reproduction
 3. Hormone therapy
 4. Quigley scale assessment
12. What hormone is typically found in higher levels in people with XY chromosomes?
 1. Estrogen
 2. Progesterone
 3. Testosterone
 4. Insulin
13. What does the term “sex assigned at birth” refer to?
 1. The identification of a person's gender based on social roles.
 2. The classification of individuals as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes.
 3. The individual's personal gender identity.
 4. The psychological traits of an individual.
14. Which condition describes a person having both male and female physical traits, as seen in some animals but not in humans?
 1. Hirsutism
 2. Gynandromorphism
 3. Klinefelter Syndrome
 4. Turner Syndrome
15. In the U.S., people are socialized to believe that sex and gender are the same thing and strictly binary.
 1. True
 2. False
16. The Quigley Scale was developed to describe the spectrum of normal infant genitalia.
 1. True
 2. False
17. According to Charles Cooley's concept of the “looking-glass self,” which of the following is NOT one of the three elements involved in the development of self?
 1. The imagination of our appearance to the other person.
 2. The imagination of their judgment of that appearance.
 3. The feelings of pride or mortification based on our perception.
 4. The reflection of our genetic traits in our personality.
18. Which scholar advanced a more detailed sociological approach to the self by breaking it down into the components “I” and “me”?
 1. Charles Cooley
 2. George Herbert Mead

3. Raewyn Connell
4. Emily Kane
19. What term is used to describe the harmful practice of referring to people by a gender other than their stated gender identity?
 1. Gender socialization
 2. Deadnaming
 3. Misgendering
 4. Gender policing
20. Which term refers to gender identities that exist beyond the traditional binary classifications of man and woman?
 1. Genderqueer
 2. Cisgender
 3. Nonbinary
 4. Transgender
21. Gender identity is solely based on biological traits and genetic makeup.
 1. True
 2. False
22. The practice of stating pronouns during introductions is intended to create more inclusive and welcoming social settings for trans and nonbinary people.
 1. True
 2. False
23. What is an appropriate use of the term “genderqueer”?
 1. Referring exclusively to people who identify as masculine or feminine.
 2. Describing a gender identity and expression that falls outside binary or normative labels.
 3. Identifying people who strictly use she/her or he/his pronouns.
 4. Labeling individuals who reject any form of gender identity.
24. Which of the following best describes gender policing?
 1. Encouraging children to explore gender nonconforming behaviors.
 2. Imposing or enforcing normative gender expressions on someone based on their sex assigned at birth.
 3. Supporting individuals to express their gender in any way they feel comfortable.
 4. Encouraging boys to engage in feminine activities such as wearing nail polish.
25. According to Raewyn Connell, what is hegemonic masculinity?
 1. A form of masculinity that aligns with characteristics of independence, aggression, competition, and toughness.
 2. A type of masculinity that rejects anything feminine and prioritizes power and status.
 3. The masculine ideal is commonly viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity and any form of femininity.
 4. An extreme form of masculinity that captures cultural pressures on men to conform to dominant gender norms.
26. Emphasized femininity is typically oriented to accommodating men’s interests and desires.
 1. True
 2. False
27. What is the feminine apologetic?
 1. The pressure on women to engage in feminine activities.
 2. The expectation that women balance their participation in masculine activities with feminine gender expression.
 3. The rejection of emphasized femininity in favor of alternative femininities.
 4. The encouragement of gender nonconforming behavior in girls.
28. Gender expression refers solely to the way our gender identity is expressed through clothing.
 1. True
 2. False
29. Hegemonic masculinity is a static concept that remains unchanged over time.
 1. True
 2. False
30. Passing means a person declines to participate in gender expression, choosing instead to remain neutral.
 1. True
 2. False

Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

1. Who began teaching an interdisciplinary course about human sexuality in the 1930s?
 1. Clelia Duel Mosher
 2. Wright Mills
 3. Alfred Kinsey

4. Crystal A. Jackson
2. Which research method did Clelia Duel Mosher and Alfred Kinsey both utilize in their studies of human sexuality?
 1. Experimental design
 2. Case study
 3. Structured interviews
 4. Ethnography
3. According to the Gallup Poll, what percentage of respondents believe that it is unacceptable for married people to have sex with someone outside of their marriage?
 1. 22%
 2. 50%
 3. 75%
 4. 88%
4. The Kinsey Reports were the first documented surveys of women's beliefs and experiences regarding sex.
 1. True
 2. False
5. The orgasm gap demonstrates that men and women report orgasms at similar rates during partnered sexual encounters.
 1. True
 2. False
6. The concept of sociological imagination helps to understand how individual sexual behaviors can be influenced by social and cultural factors.
 1. True
 2. False
7. The term "sex worker" is preferred over "prostitute" because it acknowledges sex work as a form of labor.
 1. True
 2. False
8. Which statement best describes the concept of heteronormativity?
 1. The belief that all forms of sexual attraction are equally valid and natural.
 2. The social enforcement of heterosexuality, viewing other forms of sexual behavior as deviant.
 3. The idea that sexual orientation is solely determined by emotional attraction.
 4. The concept that gender identity and sexual orientation are interchangeable terms.
9. According to the text, which of the following statements about sexual orientation is true?
 1. It only includes sexual attraction and excludes emotional or romantic attraction.
 2. It refers to the relationship between a person's gender identity and the gender identities they are attracted to.
 3. It exclusively describes physical attraction between people of different genders.
 4. It is a static trait that does not change over time.
10. The Kinsey Reports indicated that a significant percentage of men and women reported having some form of homosexual experience, challenging the notion that heterosexuality is the only natural form of sexual attraction.
 1. True
 2. False
11. Sexual attraction and behavior between people of the same gender have always been considered deviant and unnatural in human societies.
 1. True
 2. False
12. Which of the following statements about the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is true?
 1. VAWA was originally passed in 2022.
 2. VAWA funding exclusively supports law enforcement agencies.
 3. VAWA was reauthorized in 2022 with an allocation of \$700 million to combat gender-based violence.
 4. VAWA does not address sexual assault prevention programs.
13. According to the text, which group experiences the highest rates of sexual violence?
 1. Heterosexual men
 2. Bisexual women
 3. Transgender people
 4. Heterosexual women
14. The Sexual Violence Continuum includes all the following forms of sexual violence except:
 1. Rape
 2. Sexist jokes
 3. Consensual intimate partner activities
 4. Voyeurism

15. Which prevention model identifies risk and protective factors for sexual violence?
 1. Biological Determinism Model
 2. Ecological Systems Theory
 3. Social Learning Theory
 4. Rational Choice Theory
16. The rates of sex crimes have significantly decreased since the passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).
 1. True
 2. False
17. Affirmative consent requires consent to be given for each sexual act every time.
 1. True
 2. False
18. Nearly one in ten women have been raped by an intimate partner at some point in their lives.
 1. True
 2. False
19. The OutsmartNYC program focuses on community education and addresses risk and protective factors in nightlife venues.
 1. True
 2. False

Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

1. Which of the following is NOT a criticism of structural functionalism?
 1. It presents a static view of society that fails to account for social change.
 2. It struggles to explain social inequality.
 3. It fails to integrate abstract theorizing with empirical research.
 4. It assumes everything that persists in society has a function for that society.
2. Which of the following theorists is associated with conflict theory?
 1. Talcott Parsons
 2. Herbert Blumer
 3. Emile Durkheim
 4. Karl Marx
3. Which theoretical perspective focuses on micro-level interactions and the meanings individuals ascribe to things?
 1. Structural functionalism
 2. Conflict theory
 3. Symbolic interactionism
 4. Feminism
4. Symbolic interactionism tends to downplay the importance of power, privilege, and oppression.
 1. True
 2. False
5. Structural functionalism was the dominant theoretical framework in American sociology from the 1940s into the 1960s and 1970s.
 1. True
 2. False
6. What is the main argument of standpoint theory?
 1. Knowledge is universally objective and unbiased.
 2. Knowledge is socially situated and reflects dominant standpoints.
 3. Knowledge can only be obtained through scientific methods.
 4. Knowledge is irrelevant to social sciences.
7. Which of the following best describes the focus of third-wave feminism?
 1. Securing voting rights for women.
 2. Challenging exclusionary feminisms and emphasizing intersectionality.
 3. Promoting the idea of women's domestic roles.
 4. Addressing issues solely related to white middle-class women.
8. Which feminist theorist is associated with introducing standpoint theory?
 1. Ida B. Wells
 2. Patricia Hill Collins
 3. Sandra Harding
 4. Chandra Talpade Mohanty
9. Which concept refers to political association with those who have differing identities around shared experiences of

- oppression?
1. Identity politics
 2. Coalitional politics
 3. Intersectionality
 4. Standpoint theory
10. First-wave feminism was solely focused on addressing the oppression faced by White middle-class women.
1. True
 2. False
11. Standpoint theory argues that marginalized groups carry specific knowledge of their own social contexts, which is critical for accurate and objective research.
1. True
 2. False
12. Transnational feminism critiques Western feminist projects that prioritize a white, North American standpoint and ignore the needs of women in the Global South.
1. True
 2. False
13. According to Simone de Beauvoir in “The Second Sex,” what is the relationship between gender identity and social construction?
1. Gender identity is something we are born with and cannot change.
 2. Gender identity is socially constructed and must be learned in a social context.
 3. Gender identity is solely determined by biological factors.
 4. Gender identity is a fixed trait that develops in early childhood.
14. What concept did Julia Kristeva introduce to describe the feeling of horror or revulsion when the distinction between self and other is threatened?
1. Abjection
 2. Alienation
 3. Objectification
 4. Dehumanization
15. Which of the following best describes post-structuralism’s focus on gender?
1. It emphasizes binary categories of gender.
 2. It focuses on the biological determinants of gender.
 3. It deconstructs binary categories and explores how gender is constructed and performed.
 4. It denies the influence of social structures on individual behavior.
16. Queer theory emerged from which wave of feminism?
1. First-wave feminism
 2. Second-wave feminism
 3. Third-wave feminism
 4. Fourth-wave feminism
17. Queer theory actively constructs and defends specific sexual and gender identities.
1. True
 2. False
18. Post-structuralism refutes the importance of social structures in shaping individual behavior.
1. True
 2. False
19. As defined by Julia Kristeva, abjection is a natural and unchangeable response to socially constructed differences.
1. True
 2. False
20. Simone de Beauvoir argued that women are inherently passive objects in society.
1. True
 2. False
21. Which concept describes a form of social stratification in the labor market where one group is more likely to do certain types of work than other groups?
1. Occupational segregation
 2. Gender wage gap
 3. Emotional labor
 4. Pink-collar jobs
22. Structural functionalists believe that when gender roles are established, social solidarity decreases.
1. True

2. False
23. Interactionists would examine how meaning is produced and negotiated in social interactions and then translated into wage inequality.
 1. True
 2. False
24. Feminist theoretical perspectives highlight how systems of power like patriarchy create conditions leading to gender-based income inequality.
 1. True
 2. False
25. Postcolonial theory emerged from critiques of colonialism, empire, enslavement, and neocolonial racist-economic oppression and reveals how European ideas about people in former colonies are unbiased and accurate.
 1. True
 2. False

Chapter 5: Gender and Power

1. Which of the following best describes the Matrix of Domination as theorized by Patricia Hill Collins?
 1. A hierarchical structure where power is distributed based on merit.
 2. An interconnected system of power constructed through structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal domains.
 3. A political framework that eliminates gender inequality.
 4. A scientific model used to study mineral formations.
2. What is the primary way patriarchal power is reinforced in many cultures during daily family rituals?
 1. By enforcing strict dress codes.
 2. Through the father leading family prayers.
 3. By requiring children to attend specific schools.
 4. Through communal meal sharing.
3. Which of the following is a socially constructed system of power that normalizes power arrangements in families according to a gender-based hierarchy?
 1. Meritocracy
 2. Patriarchy
 3. Hegemony
 4. Intersectionality
4. According to Patricia Hill Collins, which domain of power involves methods of policing, enforcement, and social sanctions?
 1. Interpersonal power
 2. Structural power
 3. Disciplinary power
 4. Cultural power
5. Interpersonal power refers to our sense of power or agency to control our lives and the power dynamics between individuals.
 1. True
 2. False
6. Cultural power, also known as hegemony, is created and reinforced solely by formal institutions like the government and educational systems.
 1. True
 2. False
7. In patriarchal societies, the hierarchical family structure is reproduced in religious, educational, and economic institutions.
 1. True
 2. False
8. Intersectionality, as coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, describes how different aspects of social identity interact to create unique experiences of privilege and marginalization.
 1. True
 2. False
9. What is tokenism?
 1. Genuine inclusion of underrepresented groups in all aspects of an organization.
 2. Making a superficial effort to diversify an organization without true inclusion.
 3. Actively resisting the inclusion of underrepresented groups.
 4. Promoting equality by treating everyone the same.
10. What did Rosabeth Kanter identify as a common effect of tokenism on women in the workplace?
 1. Increased opportunities for career advancement

2. Reduced visibility and attention
3. Increased performance pressure and attention to gender differences
4. Equal footing with male colleagues
11. According to Chester M. Pierce, what are microaggressions?
 1. Major acts of discrimination and violence.
 2. Statements or actions that subtly insult or demean individuals based on their group membership.
 3. Inclusive and positive comments toward marginalized groups.
 4. Legal measures to ensure equality.
12. What is internalized oppression?
 1. External discrimination faced by marginalized groups.
 2. The process of oppressed individuals adopting and believing in the prejudices of the dominant society.
 3. Efforts by marginalized groups to resist oppression.
 4. Legal policies that reinforce inequality.
13. Tokenism occurs when organizations make genuine efforts to include underrepresented groups at all levels.
 1. True
 2. False
14. Tokenism is the practice of making only a superficial or symbolic effort to diversify an organization without true inclusion.
 1. True
 2. False
15. Microaggressions are major acts of discrimination that occur rarely.
 1. True
 2. False
16. Microaggressions are everyday slights or insults that occur frequently and subtly.
 1. True
 2. False
17. Internalized oppression can affect both marginalized and privileged aspects of an individual's identity.
 1. True
 2. False
18. Which of the following social movements introduced new laws and ways of thinking about intimate partner violence (IPV)?
 1. Civil Rights Movement
 2. Battered Women's Movement
 3. Labor Movement
 4. LGBTQ+ Rights Movement
19. Which stage of social movements involves the movement becoming an established organization with paid staff?
 1. Emergence
 2. Coalescence
 3. Institutionalization
 4. Decline
20. According to the text, what event significantly changed gender roles in the United States by increasing women's participation in the workforce by 50%?
 1. The Great Depression
 2. The Civil Rights Movement
 3. World War Two
 4. The Industrial Revolution
21. What does the Wheel of Power and Control help us to understand about intimate partner violence (IPV)?
 1. Economic inequality
 2. Political corruption
 3. The dynamics of abusive relationships
 4. Technological advancements
22. Reactionary social movements seek to promote social change and progress.
 1. True
 2. False
23. Karl Marx's theories form the foundation of conflict theory, which identifies social inequality as a driver of social change.
 1. True
 2. False
24. Dismantling unequal systems of power requires honoring the specific knowledge of people who are marginalized by these systems.
 1. True

2. False
25. Intimate partner violence (IPV) persists solely due to the lack of new laws addressing the issue.
 1. True
 2. False

Answer Key

Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept

1. Which of the following best defines sociology?
 1. The study of ancient civilizations
 2. The scientific and systematic study of groups, societies, and social interactions (correct)
 3. The analysis of individual behavior in isolation
 4. The study of genetic influences on human behavior
 5. Answer feedback: Sociology is the scientific and systematic study of groups, societies, and social interactions. This study ranges from observing small and personal groups to large groups and institutions.
2. The concept of “beginner’s mind” involves:
 1. Approaching the world with preconceived notions to test a perspective
 2. Using expert knowledge to analyze social interactions
 3. Viewing the world without preconceptions to see it from a new perspective (correct)
 4. Ignoring new perspectives and focusing on established facts
 5. Answer feedback: Beginner’s mind is to practice approaching the world around us as if we don’t know in advance what to expect. Unlearning what we think we know, we become more open and receptive to the experience of seeing things through a new perspective (McGrane 1994).
3. According to C. Wright Mills, the sociological imagination is:
 1. The ability to understand history without considering individual experiences.
 2. A way of seeing behavior solely in terms of individual choices.
 3. An awareness of the relationship between personal behavior and wider culture. (correct)
 4. The analysis of societal norms without considering personal experiences.
 5. Answer feedback: Mills described the sociological imagination as the intersection between biography and history, or between a person’s behavior, experience, and the wider culture that shapes the person’s choices and perceptions.
4. What does the term “figuration” refer to in sociology?
 1. The study of the behavior of individuals and the society that shapes that behavior (correct)
 2. The isolation of individuals from social contexts
 3. The process of studying social institutions without considering individuals
 4. The analysis of genetic factors in social behavior
 5. Answer feedback: In simpler terms, figuration means that as we study social institutions, the individuals using those institutions must also be “figured” into the analysis.
5. What was Harriet Martineau’s significant contribution to sociology that was suppressed for over a century?
 1. Her statistical analysis of European populations
 2. Her translation and critique of Auguste Comte’s work (correct)
 3. Her development of economic models
 4. Her theory on political revolutions
 5. Answer feedback: Martineau translated and edited Comte’s Course on Positive Philosophy (1842) from French to English. She made Comte more accessible and helped establish him as a founder of sociology. Powerful men who dominated social sciences criticized her work.
6. What term is used in the text to refer to people who identify as Asian, Black, African, Indigenous, Latinx, and other racial and ethnic groups who are not White?
 1. Minority Groups
 2. Marginalized Groups
 3. People of the Global Majority (PGM) (correct)
 4. Non-European Populations
 5. Answer feedback: This term refers to Asian, Black, African, Indigenous, Latinx, and other racial and ethnic groups who are not White (Campbell-Stephens 2020). Sexism and racism from European colonialism continues to marginalize people who are not cisgender White men.
7. Reflexivity in research aims to eliminate all biases from the research process.
 1. True

2. False (correct)
3. Answer feedback: Reflexivity is a practice of self-reflection that examines how personal biases, feelings, reactions, and motives influence research. It also makes power dynamics between researchers and research participants more visible. It reduces the impact of bias.
8. Sociology, like other social sciences, relies on systematic and evidence-based research to understand society.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: There is a misconception that studying society is based only on opinions. Sociology is an evidence-based discipline, meaning that sociologists gather and interpret data. Sociology has strict codes of conduct, rigor, oversight of research, and validation.
9. Which of the following best describes the concept of gender according to sociological perspectives?
 1. Gender is biologically determined and unchangeable.
 2. Gender is the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences. (correct)
 3. Gender is solely based on an individual's personal feelings and choices.
 4. Gender is universally the same across all societies and cultures.
 5. Answer feedback: We learn and teach what gender is every day. Gender is the meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences. The meanings are imposed, reproduced, and negotiated in culture and social interactions.
10. Which term refers to the process by which society teaches and learns the meanings and roles associated with gender?
 1. Socialization (correct)
 2. Patriarchy
 3. Heteronormativity
 4. Gender binary
 5. Answer feedback: Socialization is the process of learning culture through social interactions.
11. The gender binary system is:
 1. A biologically universal truth specific to all mammals
 2. A limited system specific to certain cultures (correct)
 3. The scientific classification of gender
 4. A core aspect of human identity
 5. Answer feedback: The gender binary is a limited system of gender classification in which gender can only be masculine or feminine. This way of thinking about gender is specific to certain cultures and is not culturally, historically, or biologically universal.
12. Which of the following is an example of how sociologists can demonstrate that gender norms are socially constructed? Select all that apply.
 1. Showing that gender norms change over time. (correct)
 2. Identifying that gender norms are the same in all societies.
 3. Highlighting that gender norms are imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, or challenged through social interactions. (correct)
 4. Identifying differences between gender norms in societies. (correct)
 5. Answer feedback: We can demonstrate that gender norms change over time, are not the same in all societies, and are imposed, enforced, reproduced, negotiated, or challenged through social interactions. If it is not universally true, it is a social construction.
13. Gender is real because it is a consequential aspect of identity that shapes how people are treated and their general standing in society, but it is not universally true.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Things that are true are based on objective facts. The meanings, attitudes, behaviors, norms, and roles that a society or culture ascribes to sexual differences are not based on objective facts. Gender is real in its consequences but not universally true.
14. Why is it important to study sociology of gender?
 1. To recognize and better understand the inequalities around us and find solutions to social problems. (correct)
 2. To confirm that gender roles are biologically determined and unchangeable.
 3. To prove that gender-based inequality does not exist.
 4. To advocate for maintaining traditional gender roles in society.
 5. Answer feedback: We study sociology to find solutions to social problems in our society. Another reason is to recognize how individuals do and don't fit into the world, including how they are viewed and how they view others through the lens of gender.

15. Which of the following is an example of how sociology of gender can help us understand social patterns?
 1. Explaining why individuals are solely responsible for their social and economic status.
 2. Revealing how gender norms and socialization influence career choices. (correct)
 3. Demonstrating that wage gaps are based purely on individual performance.
 4. Confirming that all gender differences are natural and unchangeable.
 5. Answer feedback: We can analyze how gender norms and socialization steer women and feminine-presenting people into teaching jobs in primary and secondary schools, while men and masculine-presenting people tend to be either maintenance staff, coaches, or administrators.
16. What does the sociology of gender use to identify and explain patterns of inequality?
 1. Personal anecdotes and opinions
 2. Combined research of numerical statistical data and qualitative data (correct)
 3. Assumptions about biological determinism
 4. Solely quantitative data without qualitative insights
 5. Answer feedback: Sociology of gender combines numerical statistical data and qualitative data to conduct research into patterns of inequality.

Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct

1. According to Judith Lorber, gender is defined as:
 1. A biological trait that overrides socialization
 2. An immutable characteristic
 3. An individual preference
 4. A process, a system of stratification, and a social institution (correct)
 5. Answer feedback: Lorber framed gender as a process, a system of stratification, and a social institution. Her theory states that gender creates the social differences, a system of stratification, and an organizing social structure of gender (Lorber 2009).
2. What is an example of a social construct?
 1. Biological sex
 2. Laws and customs (correct)
 3. Chromosomes and hormones
 4. Physical appearance
 5. Answer feedback: A social construct is a shared meaning created, accepted, and reproduced by social interactions between people within a society. Laws, customs, countries, races, religions, and ideas about knowledge and “common sense” are examples of social constructs.
3. Which of the following best describes gender socialization?
 1. The biological differences between men and women.
 2. The unchangeable aspects of being male or female.
 3. The inherent traits of individuals based on their gender.
 4. The process by which people learn norms, roles, and behaviors associated with gender. (correct)
 5. Answer feedback: Gender socialization is the process by which people learn the norms, stereotypes, roles, and scripts related to gender through direct instruction or by exposure and internalization.
4. What is the first step of gender socialization?
 1. Social interactions in schools
 2. Gender assignment at birth (correct)
 3. Media exposure
 4. Peer group influence
 5. Answer feedback: Gender assignment is the first step of gender socialization. In the mid-20th century, birth announcements with gender assignment phrases like “It’s a boy!” became common. This is an example of the social aspect of gender assignment.
5. In patriarchal societies, gender stratification typically results in:
 1. Political, economic, educational, legal, and cultural advantages for men over women. (correct)
 2. Equal opportunities for all genders.
 3. The absence of gender discrimination.
 4. Equal representation of all genders in political offices.
 5. Answer feedback: Patriarchal societies limit possibilities for people socialized as feminine as well as people who are excluded from the dominant gender binary. People socialized as masculine have political, economic, educational, legal and cultural advantages.
6. Which of the following agents of socialization is considered the most important in gender socialization?

1. Mass media
2. Peer groups
3. Schools
4. Family (correct)
5. Answer feedback: Family is the first and most important agent of socialization because it is the center of a child's life. Parents, siblings, guardians, grandparents, and extended family all teach a child what he, she, or they need to know through primary socialization.
7. Social constructs have inherent meanings that are universally true across all cultures and times
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Social constructs are flexible and adaptable to society's needs and are always subject to change and adaptation over time and across cultures.
8. Gender reveal parties are an example of the social aspect of gender assignment.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Gender reveal parties share the biological sex of an unborn child, socially assigning a gender to them. People pop a balloon to release pink or blue confetti, cut a cake that is pink or blue inside, or shoot off colored pink or blue fireworks.
9. According to the text, boys in many cultures typically have greater privileges and are given more autonomy and independence at an earlier age than girls.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Parents socialize boys and girls differently. Boys in many cultures typically have greater privileges, more autonomy, and independence at an earlier age. Even when parents set gender equality as a goal, there may be underlying indications of inequality.
10. Social stratification refers to the social categorization of people into rankings based on wealth, income, education, and other factors, including gender.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Social stratification sorts or layers people into ranked social categories. Factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and status determine rank. Sociologists use this term to describe a system of social standing.
11. Which reproductive technology allows for fertilization to occur outside the body and then implantation into the uterus?
 1. In vitro fertilization (correct)
 2. Asexual reproduction
 3. Hormone therapy
 4. Quigley scale assessment
 5. Answer feedback: With the advent of reproductive technologies, like in vitro fertilization, an ovum can be fertilized outside of the body and then implanted into a uterus.
12. What hormone is typically found in higher levels in people with XY chromosomes?
 1. Estrogen
 2. Progesterone
 3. Testosterone (correct)
 4. Insulin
 5. Answer feedback: Sexual reproduction is regulated by estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. Everybody has all of these hormones. People with XX chromosomes typically have higher estrogen and progesterone. People with XY chromosomes have higher testosterone.
13. What does the term "sex assigned at birth" refer to?
 1. The identification of a person's gender based on social roles.
 2. The classification of individuals as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes. (correct)
 3. The individual's personal gender identity.
 4. The psychological traits of an individual.
 5. Answer feedback: Sex assigned at birth is the assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on a combination of anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes.
14. Which condition describes a person having both male and female physical traits, as seen in some animals but not in humans?
 1. Hirsutism
 2. Gynandromorphism (correct)

3. Klinefelter Syndrome
4. Turner Syndrome
5. Answer feedback: Gynandromorphs appear to be half male and half female. Gynandromorphism is a condition that is not found in humans, but as many as 1.5% of people are born with differences in sexual development (DSD).
15. In the U.S., people are socialized to believe that sex and gender are the same thing and strictly binary.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: In the U.S. and many Western countries, we are socialized to assume that a person's sex is based on the biological differences that determine these two reproductive functions, egg production and fertilization and that gender and sex are the same thing.
16. The Quigley Scale was developed to describe the spectrum of normal infant genitalia.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: The "Quigley Scale" was developed by pediatric endocrinologist Charmian Quigley in 1995 to describe the spectrum of normal infant genitalia from "fully masculinized" to "fully feminized."
17. According to Charles Cooley's concept of the "looking-glass self," which of the following is NOT one of the three elements involved in the development of self?
 1. The imagination of our appearance to the other person.
 2. The imagination of their judgment of that appearance.
 3. The feelings of pride or mortification based on our perception.
 4. The reflection of our genetic traits in our personality. (correct)
 5. Answer feedback: The development of a self involves three elements in Cooley's analysis: "the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of [their] judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification."
18. Which scholar advanced a more detailed sociological approach to the self by breaking it down into the components "I" and "me"?
 1. Charles Cooley
 2. George Herbert Mead (correct)
 3. Raewyn Connell
 4. Emily Kane
 5. Answer feedback: George Herbert Mead (he/him) (1863–1931) broke the self down into two "phases": the "I" and the "me." The "me" recognizes the "organized sets of attitudes" of others toward the self. The "I" responds to the attitudes of others.
19. What term is used to describe the harmful practice of referring to people by a gender other than their stated gender identity?
 1. Gender socialization
 2. Deadnaming
 3. Misgendering (correct)
 4. Gender policing
 5. Answer feedback: Misgendering is the harmful practice of referring to people by a gender other than their stated gender identity (Kapusta 2016).
20. Which term refers to gender identities that exist beyond the traditional binary classifications of man and woman?
 1. Genderqueer
 2. Cisgender
 3. Nonbinary (correct)
 4. Transgender
 5. Answer feedback: Some people who do not identify as men or women may identify as nonbinary or genderqueer, for example. Nonbinary refers to gender identities beyond binary identifications of man or woman/masculine or feminine.
21. Gender identity is solely based on biological traits and genetic makeup.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Gender identity is the gender we experience ourselves to be. A growing body of research reveals that gender identity is not purely based just on socialization or biology but a combination of the two and also on individual preference.
22. The practice of stating pronouns during introductions is intended to create more inclusive and welcoming social settings for trans and nonbinary people.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: The practice of stating pronouns during introductions has helped create more inclusive and welcoming

social settings for trans and nonbinary people.

23. What is an appropriate use of the term “genderqueer”?
 1. Referring exclusively to people who identify as masculine or feminine.
 2. Describing a gender identity and expression that falls outside binary or normative labels. (correct)
 3. Identifying people who strictly use she/her or he/his pronouns.
 4. Labeling individuals who reject any form of gender identity.
 5. Answer feedback: Genderqueer is an umbrella term that covers gender identity and expression that falls outside the binary/non-normative labels. Some people use gender-neutral pronouns, such as ze/hir or they/them, rather than the gendered pronouns she/her or he/his.
24. Which of the following best describes gender policing?
 1. Encouraging children to explore gender nonconforming behaviors.
 2. Imposing or enforcing normative gender expressions on someone based on their sex assigned at birth. (correct)
 3. Supporting individuals to express their gender in any way they feel comfortable.
 4. Encouraging boys to engage in feminine activities such as wearing nail polish.
 5. Answer feedback: Gender policing is the act of imposing or enforcing normative gender expressions on someone who is perceived to be not adequately performing those gender norms via their appearance or behavior, based on their sex assigned at birth.
25. According to Raewyn Connell, what is hegemonic masculinity?
 1. A form of masculinity that aligns with characteristics of independence, aggression, competition, and toughness.
 2. A type of masculinity that rejects anything feminine and prioritizes power and status.
 3. The masculine ideal is commonly viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity and any form of femininity. (correct)
 4. An extreme form of masculinity that captures cultural pressures on men to conform to dominant gender norms.
 5. Answer feedback: Masculine ideals can be highly constraining to men, according to Connell. Hegemonic masculinity is the masculine ideal commonly viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity and any form of femininity (Connell 1987; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).
26. Emphasized femininity is typically oriented to accommodating men’s interests and desires.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Emphasized femininity, also called idealized femininity or traditional femininity, is an expression of femininity that emphasizes women’s subordination to men. Examples include nurturing, caring, emotional, softness, prettiness, and smallness.
27. What is the feminine apologetic?
 1. The pressure on women to engage in feminine activities.
 2. The expectation that women balance their participation in masculine activities with feminine gender expression. (correct)
 3. The rejection of emphasized femininity in favor of alternative femininities.
 4. The encouragement of gender nonconforming behavior in girls.
 5. Answer feedback: Women’s participation in masculine activities requires balance to achieve social acceptance in the face of gender policing.
28. Gender expression refers solely to the way our gender identity is expressed through clothing.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Gender expression includes clothing, personal grooming, self-adornment, physical posture, gestures, and other elements of self-presentation.
29. Hegemonic masculinity is a static concept that remains unchanged over time.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Characteristics and behaviors associated with hegemonic masculinity may change over time.
30. Passing means a person declines to participate in gender expression, choosing instead to remain neutral.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Passing is when a transgender person’s status goes undetected in mainstream society. Many trans people also experience pressure to “pass.” Passing requires binary gender expression that is so “flawless” that a person’s trans identity cannot be detected.

Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality

1. Who began teaching an interdisciplinary course about human sexuality in the 1930s?

1. Clelia Duel Mosher
2. Wright Mills
3. Alfred Kinsey (correct)
4. Crystal A. Jackson
5. Answer feedback: In the 1930s, the zoologist Alfred Kinsey (he/him) began teaching an interdisciplinary course on human sexuality for married students.
2. Which research method did Clelia Duel Mosher and Alfred Kinsey both utilize in their studies of human sexuality?
 1. Experimental design
 2. Case study
 3. Structured interviews (correct)
 4. Ethnography
 5. Answer feedback: Their research methods relied on structured interviews to collect qualitative data. Mosier surveyed women about their sexual experience decades before Kinsey, but her survey was not published until 1980.
3. According to the Gallup Poll, what percentage of respondents believe that it is unacceptable for married people to have sex with someone outside of their marriage?
 1. 22%
 2. 50%
 3. 75%
 4. 88% (correct)
 5. Answer feedback: A 2023 Gallup Poll found that only 22% of respondents believed that it is unacceptable for unmarried people to have sex, but 88% believe that it is unacceptable for married people who have sex with someone outside of marriage (Jones 2023).
4. The Kinsey Reports were the first documented surveys of women's beliefs and experiences regarding sex.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Clelia Duel Mosher conducted earlier surveys.
5. The orgasm gap demonstrates that men and women report orgasms at similar rates during partnered sexual encounters.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Men report orgasms at higher rates than women.
6. The concept of sociological imagination helps to understand how individual sexual behaviors can be influenced by social and cultural factors.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: C. Wright Mills (he/him) described the sociological imagination as a way of understanding behavior that seems like an individual choice or problem and can be understood as the result of social and cultural influences.
7. The term "sex worker" is preferred over "prostitute" because it acknowledges sex work as a form of labor.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: The term "sex worker" is preferred over the more stigmatized term "prostitute" because it acknowledges that sex work is a form of labor that encompasses a range of activities beyond having sex with strangers for cash.
8. Which statement best describes the concept of heteronormativity?
 1. The belief that all forms of sexual attraction are equally valid and natural.
 2. The social enforcement of heterosexuality, viewing other forms of sexual behavior as deviant. (correct)
 3. The idea that sexual orientation is solely determined by emotional attraction.
 4. The concept that gender identity and sexual orientation are interchangeable terms.
 5. Answer feedback: Heteronormativity is the social enforcement of heterosexuality, in which there are only two genders, that these genders are opposites, and that any sexual activity between people of the same gender is deviant or unnatural.
9. According to the text, which of the following statements about sexual orientation is true?
 1. It only includes sexual attraction and excludes emotional or romantic attraction.
 2. It refers to the relationship between a person's gender identity and the gender identities they are attracted to. (correct)
 3. It exclusively describes physical attraction between people of different genders.
 4. It is a static trait that does not change over time.
 5. Answer feedback: Sexual orientation refers to emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people. It signifies the relationship between a person's gender identity and the gender identities to which a person is most attracted (Learning for Justice 2018).
10. The Kinsey Reports indicated that a significant percentage of men and women reported having some form of homosexual

- experience, challenging the notion that heterosexuality is the only natural form of sexual attraction.
1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: The Kinsey Reports (1949 and 1953) estimated that at least 37% of men and 13% of women reported "some form of homosexual experience," and about 10% of the men and 4% of the women who participated in the survey reported "extensive homosexual experience."
11. Sexual attraction and behavior between people of the same gender have always been considered deviant and unnatural in human societies.
1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Sexual attraction and intimacy between people of the same gender have always existed in human societies, with varying degrees of social acceptance.
12. Which of the following statements about the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is true?
1. VAWA was originally passed in 2022.
 2. VAWA funding exclusively supports law enforcement agencies.
 3. VAWA was reauthorized in 2022 with an allocation of \$700 million to combat gender-based violence. (correct)
 4. VAWA does not address sexual assault prevention programs.
 5. Answer feedback: In 2022, congress re-authorised the 1994 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). VAWA has \$700 million to support local law enforcement agencies, a national network of rape crisis programs, and prevention programs that aim to reduce the risk of sex crimes.
13. According to the text, which group experiences the highest rates of sexual violence?
1. Heterosexual men
 2. Bisexual women
 3. Transgender people (correct)
 4. Heterosexual women
 5. Answer feedback: The people most likely to experience sexual violence are trans People of the Global Majority and those who have done sex work, been homeless, or have (or had) a disability (NSVRC 2119).
14. The Sexual Violence Continuum includes all the following forms of sexual violence except:
1. Rape
 2. Sexist jokes
 3. Consensual intimate partner activities (correct)
 4. Voyeurism
 5. Answer feedback: In the sexual violence continuum, overlapping circles represent forms of sexual violence. The outermost circles show commonly recognized forms of sexual violence legally referred to as sexual assault. Consensual activities are not sexual violence.
15. Which prevention model identifies risk and protective factors for sexual violence?
1. Biological Determinism Model
 2. Ecological Systems Theory (correct)
 3. Social Learning Theory
 4. Rational Choice Theory
 5. Answer feedback: This model is based on Ecological Systems Theory. The system moves from the individual to institutions, and society. Some forms of sexual violence occur at the interpersonal level, and others occur at community, societal, and historical levels.
16. The rates of sex crimes have significantly decreased since the passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).
1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Despite the strong social sanctions against perpetrators of sex crimes and the allocation of significant public resources to punish them, rates of sex crimes have not decreased.
17. Affirmative consent requires consent to be given for each sexual act every time.
1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Affirmative consent is consent given for each sex act each time.
18. Nearly one in ten women have been raped by an intimate partner at some point in their lives.
1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Nearly one in 10 women have been raped by an intimate partner in her lifetime, including completed forced penetration, attempted forced penetration, or alcohol/drug-facilitated completed penetration.
19. The OutsmartNYC program focuses on community education and addresses risk and protective factors in nightlife venues.

1. True (correct)
2. False
3. Answer feedback: OutsmartNYC conducts community education workshops at nightlife venues in the city on topics such as sexual violence prevention, bystander intervention, recognizing and addressing identity-based harm, conflict resolution, and de-escalation techniques.

Chapter 4: Gender in Theory

1. Which of the following is NOT a criticism of structural functionalism?
 1. It presents a static view of society that fails to account for social change.
 2. It struggles to explain social inequality.
 3. It fails to integrate abstract theorizing with empirical research. (correct)
 4. It assumes everything that persists in society has a function for that society.
 5. Answer feedback: It fails to integrate abstract theorizing with empirical research.
2. Which of the following theorists is associated with conflict theory?
 1. Talcott Parsons
 2. Herbert Blumer
 3. Emile Durkheim
 4. Karl Marx (correct)
 5. Answer feedback: Conflict theory proposes that conflict is a basic fact of social life. It arose in the U.S. in the 1960s and draws from Karl Marx. Some well-known conflict theorists include C. Wright Mills (he/him) (1916–1962) and Randall Collins (he/him) (1941–).
3. Which theoretical perspective focuses on micro-level interactions and the meanings individuals ascribe to things?
 1. Structural functionalism
 2. Conflict theory
 3. Symbolic interactionism (correct)
 4. Feminism
 5. Answer feedback: Symbolic interactionist theory studies how meanings are constructed through interactions with others. It is associated with the Chicago School of Sociology. See the “Symbolic Interactionist” section for more.
4. Symbolic interactionism tends to downplay the importance of power, privilege, and oppression.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Critics argue that symbolic interactionist theory has a hard time explaining macro-level phenomena. Other critics argue that it tends to downplay the importance of power, privilege, and oppression.
5. Structural functionalism was the dominant theoretical framework in American sociology from the 1940s into the 1960s and 1970s.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Structural functionalism, or functionalism, is concerned with large-scale social systems that order, stabilize, and destabilize societies. It was the dominant theoretical framework in American sociology from the 1940s into the 1960s and 1970s.
6. What is the main argument of standpoint theory?
 1. Knowledge is universally objective and unbiased.
 2. Knowledge is socially situated and reflects dominant standpoints. (correct)
 3. Knowledge can only be obtained through scientific methods.
 4. Knowledge is irrelevant to social sciences.
 5. Answer feedback: Standpoint theory argues that knowledge is socially situated and that the dominant standpoint of social and natural sciences has been based on “rampant sexism and androcentrism (centering men)” (Harding 1992).
7. Which of the following best describes the focus of third-wave feminism?
 1. Securing voting rights for women.
 2. Challenging exclusionary feminisms and emphasizing intersectionality. (correct)
 3. Promoting the idea of women’s domestic roles.
 4. Addressing issues solely related to white middle-class women.
 5. Answer feedback: The third wave, from the 1990s to the present day, builds a more intersectional body of theory and more coalitional activism. It centers the standpoints of people who are disabled, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, and People of the Global Majority.
8. Which feminist theorist is associated with introducing standpoint theory?
 1. Ida B. Wells

2. Patricia Hill Collins
 3. Sandra Harding (correct)
 4. Chandra Talpade Mohanty
 5. Answer feedback: Harding introduced standpoint theory in the 1970s to challenge dominant ideas about what counts as legitimate knowledge.
9. Which concept refers to political association with those who have differing identities around shared experiences of oppression?
1. Identity politics
 2. Coalitional politics (correct)
 3. Intersectionality
 4. Standpoint theory
 5. Answer feedback: Coalitional politics refers to political association with those who have differing identities around shared experiences of oppression (Combahee River Collective Statement).
10. First-wave feminism was solely focused on addressing the oppression faced by White middle-class women.
1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: The first wave, in the late 19th and early 20th Century, was marked by movement activism to end slavery and secure voting rights for women.
11. Standpoint theory argues that marginalized groups carry specific knowledge of their own social contexts, which is critical for accurate and objective research.
1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Standpoint theory argues that knowledge is socially situated and that the dominant standpoint of social and natural sciences has been based on “rampant sexism and androcentrism (centering men)” (Harding 1992).
12. Transnational feminism critiques Western feminist projects that prioritize a white, North American standpoint and ignore the needs of women in the Global South.
1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Transnational feminism highlights the connections between sexism, racism, classism, and imperialism. It responds to global capitalism, transnational immigration, and a history of settler-colonialism that still has effects today.
13. According to Simone de Beauvoir in “The Second Sex,” what is the relationship between gender identity and social construction?
1. Gender identity is something we are born with and cannot change.
 2. Gender identity is socially constructed and must be learned in a social context. (correct)
 3. Gender identity is solely determined by biological factors.
 4. Gender identity is a fixed trait that develops in early childhood.
 5. Answer feedback: In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir (she/her) famously argued in *The Second Sex* that “one is not born a woman, but becomes a woman.” In other words, our gender identity is socially constructed and must be learned in a social context.
14. What concept did Julia Kristeva introduce to describe the feeling of horror or revulsion when the distinction between self and other is threatened?
1. Abjection (correct)
 2. Alienation
 3. Objectification
 4. Dehumanization
 5. Answer feedback: The French psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva (she/her) defined abjection as “Our reaction (horror, vomit) to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between subject and object or between self and other” (Kristeva 2010).
15. Which of the following best describes post-structuralism’s focus on gender?
1. It emphasizes binary categories of gender.
 2. It focuses on the biological determinants of gender.
 3. It deconstructs binary categories and explores how gender is constructed and performed. (correct)
 4. It denies the influence of social structures on individual behavior.
 5. Answer feedback: Post-structuralism focuses on how gender is constructed, reproduced, enforced, challenged, and transformed in gendered language and gendered ideas of work (Tannen 1994, 2017; Butler 1988). You practiced deconstructing these categories in Chapter Two.
16. Queer theory emerged from which wave of feminism?

1. First-wave feminism
 2. Second-wave feminism
 3. Third-wave feminism (correct)
 4. Fourth-wave feminism
 5. Answer feedback: Emerging from third-wave feminism, queer theory has been defined as a framework for understanding gender and sexual practices outside of heterosexuality.
17. Queer theory actively constructs and defends specific sexual and gender identities.
1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Queer theory critiques heteronormativity and breaks down traditional assumptions about sexual and gender identities without constructing or defending any specific identities.
18. Post-structuralism refutes the importance of social structures in shaping individual behavior.
1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Post-structuralism calls for a more expansive understanding of social structures, not a refutation of their importance.
19. As defined by Julia Kristeva, abjection is a natural and unchangeable response to socially constructed differences.
1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Kristeva notes that while the impulse behind abjection can be natural, the response to socially constructed differences is learned and can be unlearned.
20. Simone de Beauvoir argued that women are inherently passive objects in society.
1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: De Beauvoir argued that women are socially constructed as passive objects, not inherently so.
21. Which concept describes a form of social stratification in the labor market where one group is more likely to do certain types of work than other groups?
1. Occupational segregation (correct)
 2. Gender wage gap
 3. Emotional labor
 4. Pink-collar jobs
 5. Answer feedback: Occupational segregation is when one group is more likely to do certain types of work than other groups. Gender-based occupational segregation describes situations in which women are more likely to do certain jobs and men do others.
22. Structural functionalists believe that when gender roles are established, social solidarity decreases.
1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: For functionalists, when gender roles are established, social solidarity increases. When women began to demand equal pay for equal work during WWII, emerging norms were reinforced by new labor laws that prohibited gender discrimination in the workplace.
23. Interactionists would examine how meaning is produced and negotiated in social interactions and then translated into wage inequality.
1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Interactionists study how race and gender produce social interactions that create wage inequality. For example, a woman who is strong and opinionated might be perceived as bossy. In contrast, a man would be perceived as having leadership potential.
24. Feminist theoretical perspectives highlight how systems of power like patriarchy create conditions leading to gender-based income inequality.
1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: A feminist theoretical perspective on the gender wage gap helps us see how systems of power, like patriarchy, create the social conditions that lead to gender-based income inequality.
25. Postcolonial theory emerged from critiques of colonialism, empire, enslavement, and neocolonial racist-economic oppression and reveals how European ideas about people in former colonies are unbiased and accurate.
1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Postcolonial theory analyzes how colonizers justified their domination and subjugation of other people

and their resources (Said 1995; Spivak 1988). It emerged from critiques of empire and enslavement advanced by scholars from former colonies.

Chapter 5: Gender and Power

1. Which of the following best describes the Matrix of Domination as theorized by Patricia Hill Collins?
 1. A hierarchical structure where power is distributed based on merit.
 2. An interconnected system of power constructed through structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal domains. (correct)
 3. A political framework that eliminates gender inequality.
 4. A scientific model used to study mineral formations.
 5. Answer feedback: The Matrix is held together by four kinds of power, which Collins calls domains of power: structural power, disciplinary power, cultural or hegemonic power, and interpersonal power.
2. What is the primary way patriarchal power is reinforced in many cultures during daily family rituals?
 1. By enforcing strict dress codes.
 2. Through the father leading family prayers. (correct)
 3. By requiring children to attend specific schools.
 4. Through communal meal sharing.
 5. Answer feedback: In many patriarchal cultures, the ritual of man leading family prayers is a daily reinforcement of the power of the father as the head of a family. It can play an important role in producing and normalizing gender-based dominance in society.
3. Which of the following is a socially constructed system of power that normalizes power arrangements in families according to a gender-based hierarchy?
 1. Meritocracy
 2. Patriarchy (correct)
 3. Hegemony
 4. Intersectionality
 5. Answer feedback: Establishing the power of the father as the head of a family is an important role in producing and normalizing gender-based dominance in society.
4. According to Patricia Hill Collins, which domain of power involves methods of policing, enforcement, and social sanctions?
 1. Interpersonal power
 2. Structural power
 3. Disciplinary power (correct)
 4. Cultural power
 5. Answer feedback: Disciplinary power is the power to punish and reward. It includes formal and informal methods of enforcement, policies and procedures, and social sanctions like shunning. Disciplinary power is held by law enforcement, teachers, parents, and managers.
5. Interpersonal power refers to our sense of power or agency to control our lives and the power dynamics between individuals.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Interpersonal power is constructed by social location (we will cover this in the next section). Our sense of personal motivation to change is impacted by our sense of connectedness, autonomy, self-efficacy, and personal agency (Deci and Ryan 1974).
6. Cultural power, also known as hegemony, is created and reinforced solely by formal institutions like the government and educational systems.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Hegemony is the authority that one dominant social group holds over others. It is reinforced by a society's commonly held values, customs, religion, social norms, and art that convince people to either buy into or resist existing power structures.
7. In patriarchal societies, the hierarchical family structure is reproduced in religious, educational, and economic institutions.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: In patriarchal societies, this heteronormative, hierarchical family structure is reproduced in religious, educational, and economic institutions to produce and normalize masculine dominance in society.
8. Intersectionality, as coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, describes how different aspects of social identity interact to create unique experiences of privilege and marginalization.
 1. True (correct)

2. False
3. Answer feedback: Intersectionality describes how multiple social locations overlap and influence each other to create complex hierarchies of power and oppression and that overlapping social identities produce unique inequities that influence the lives of people and groups (Crenshaw 1989).
9. What is tokenism?
 1. Genuine inclusion of underrepresented groups in all aspects of an organization.
 2. Making a superficial effort to diversify an organization without true inclusion. (correct)
 3. Actively resisting the inclusion of underrepresented groups.
 4. Promoting equality by treating everyone the same.
 5. Answer feedback: Tokenism is the practice of making only a superficial or symbolic effort to diversify an organization by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups to give the appearance of equality.
10. What did Rosabeth Kanter identify as a common effect of tokenism on women in the workplace?
 1. Increased opportunities for career advancement
 2. Reduced visibility and attention
 3. Increased performance pressure and attention to gender differences (correct)
 4. Equal footing with male colleagues
 5. Answer feedback: As women moved into leadership positions previously held by men, they were challenged in male-dominated workplaces. They were more visible, had increased performance pressure, and an expectation to live up to gender stereotypes.
11. According to Chester M. Pierce, what are microaggressions?
 1. Major acts of discrimination and violence.
 2. Statements or actions that subtly insult or demean individuals based on their group membership. (correct)
 3. Inclusive and positive comments toward marginalized groups.
 4. Legal measures to ensure equality.
 5. Answer feedback: Microaggressions indirectly reference stereotypes to assert the dominance of the aggressor. Chester M. Pierce (he/him) coined the term in 1970 when he regularly witnessed people who are White direct towards people who are Black (DeAngelis 2009).
12. What is internalized oppression?
 1. External discrimination faced by marginalized groups.
 2. The process of oppressed individuals adopting and believing in the prejudices of the dominant society. (correct)
 3. Efforts by marginalized groups to resist oppression.
 4. Legal policies that reinforce inequality.
 5. Answer feedback: Internalized oppression is a process by which individuals within an oppressed group incorporate and accept the prejudices of the dominant society (Pheterson 1986).
13. Tokenism occurs when organizations make genuine efforts to include underrepresented groups at all levels.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Social groups or organizations can increase gender representation without addressing oppressive systems of power embedded in their organization. People recruited to diversify those organizations can experience harm.
14. Tokenism is the practice of making only a superficial or symbolic effort to diversify an organization without true inclusion.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Tokenism is the practice of making a superficial effort to diversify an organization. For example, recruiting a few people from underrepresented groups. In other words, tokenism attempts diversity without equitable representation or full inclusion.
15. Microaggressions are major acts of discrimination that occur rarely.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: They have been compared to death by a thousand cuts because these everyday slights affect the victim's mental health and create a toxic environment at school, work, and even within our circles.
16. Microaggressions are everyday slights or insults that occur frequently and subtly.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Psychologist Derald Wing Sue (he/him) defines microaggressions as "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership" (Sue 2021).
17. Internalized oppression can affect both marginalized and privileged aspects of an individual's identity.
 1. True (correct)

2. False
3. Answer feedback: Internalized oppression is intersectional. For example, a White, cisgender queer woman may internalize inferiority. She might struggle to assert herself in public roles. At the same time, she may also have internalized racial and cisgender superiority.
18. Which of the following social movements introduced new laws and ways of thinking about intimate partner violence (IPV)?
 1. Civil Rights Movement
 2. Battered Women's Movement (correct)
 3. Labor Movement
 4. LGBTQ+ Rights Movement
 5. Answer feedback: A survivor-led social movement, sometimes called the "Battered Women's Movement," successfully changed how communities respond to IPV by introducing new laws and new ways of thinking about IPV, like the Wheel of Power and Control.
19. Which stage of social movements involves the movement becoming an established organization with paid staff?
 1. Emergence
 2. Coalescence
 3. Institutionalization (correct)
 4. Decline
 5. Answer feedback: In the institutionalization stage, the movement no longer requires grassroots volunteerism. It is an established organization, typically with a paid staff.
20. According to the text, what event significantly changed gender roles in the United States by increasing women's participation in the workforce by 50%?
 1. The Great Depression
 2. The Civil Rights Movement
 3. World War Two (correct)
 4. The Industrial Revolution
 5. Answer feedback: During WWII, the majority of people serving in the US military were men. Women's participation in the workforce increased by 50% because the essential jobs that middle-class men vacated were taken up by middle-class women (Rose 2018).
21. What does the Wheel of Power and Control help us to understand about intimate partner violence (IPV)?
 1. Economic inequality
 2. Political corruption
 3. The dynamics of abusive relationships (correct)
 4. Technological advancements
 5. Answer feedback: The conditions that keep people from leaving abusive relationships can include a lack of physical and social resources, shame, and fear of harm to themselves and people they love. Cultural norms about gender can also trap people in abusive relationships.
22. Reactionary social movements seek to promote social change and progress.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)
 3. Answer feedback: Reactionary social movements, like the anti-abortion movement, try to block social change or reverse social changes that have already been achieved. The recent anti-transgender backlash tries to maintain heteropatriarchal dominance.
23. Karl Marx's theories form the foundation of conflict theory, which identifies social inequality as a driver of social change.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Karl Marx was concerned with the conditions necessary for a large-scale social change from capitalist to socialist economies. For him, social inequality drives social change. He formed the foundation of conflict theory, which is covered in Chapter 4.
24. Dismantling unequal systems of power requires honoring the specific knowledge of people who are marginalized by these systems.
 1. True (correct)
 2. False
 3. Answer feedback: Dismantling unequal systems of power requires honoring the specific knowledge of people who are marginalized by unequal systems of power and taking our lead from them in movements to shift power toward a more just society.
25. Intimate partner violence (IPV) persists solely due to the lack of new laws addressing the issue.
 1. True
 2. False (correct)

3. Answer feedback: Changing policies, laws, culture, and interpersonal power have changed some of the social norms around IPV, but much more remains to be changed. See “Looking Through the Lens: The Matrix of Power and Intimate Partner Violence” for more information.

Transcripts

5

Transcript for Figure 1.7, Global Majority – This Video is So Beautiful

[Music.]

The global majority.

[Music.]

If you are Black, African, Arab, Asian, Brown, of Mixed heritage, Indigenous to the global south, or are routinely racialized, together you make up 85% of the entire world's population. You are not the minority – you are the Global Majority. In fact, any racialized or ethnic group that has been routinely labeled “minority” is likely to belong to the Global Majority.

The language used to describe your identity holds great power. It can make you feel taller or smaller, empowered or marginalized, invisible or over-exposed. It can deny your individualism or bring instant awareness that you are the greater part of the whole. As Global Majority people, the decolonization of your hearts and minds has begun. You lead the way in revealing a new world of interconnected communities, globally connected for the majority need, not the minority greed. I and I now becomes we. There is space for I to be because we are existing within a spirit of oneness and really in this way all of us have the potential to become the people of the Global Majority.

[Music.]

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 1.7, Global Majority – This Video is So Beautiful

Transcript for “[GLOBAL MAJORITY – THIS VIDEO IS SO BEAUTIFUL](#)” by [Rosemary Campbell-Stephens](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 1.8, Harriet Martineau and Sociology

[Narrator]: Harriet Martineau was an English writer known as the first female sociologist and one of the early members of the field. She wrote 35 books and a long list of essays on sociological topics from the feminine perspective. Martineau pushed for people to understand the status of women and to conduct research to demonstrate their condition within society. Her topics also included marriage, children, race, domestic duties, and how religion impacted them and their families.

She is also known for translating the works of Comte into English, which helped broaden the understanding of sociology as a science. Martineau was born in England in 1802 and was a descendant of the French Protestants that had fled France. The family believed in the importance of education for all children; however, Harriet's mother pushed for girls to learn domestic work and not go to college. This is evident in her first published book on female education, where Martineau wrote about her experience when her education formally ended upon reaching adulthood.

Despite not leaving the realm of academia, Martineau worked for a monthly publication explaining economic philosophies to readers. She sought out truths based on reason and logic, feeling that Comte's positivism could help society progress, leading her to jump into sociology. In 1837, Martineau published “Society in America,” demonstrating her approach to using sociological methods. The text was based on her travels to America, where she met abolitionists and people working to educate girls. Although male peers widely criticized her observations and findings, she stood by her claims, especially regarding the lack of women's educational opportunities in the United States.

Her next book, “How to Observe Morals and Manners,” continued to fuel the fire. She wrote about the significance of population

dynamics, the emergence of science as the most significant human endeavor, and made claims about the principles of progress. Martineau stressed that to write about society, one must first observe locals on their own terms. She wanted sociologists to study all aspects of society, bringing in politics, economics, religion, and social institutions to reveal existing inequalities.

Martineau's writings covered a wide range of topics but brought in a feminist perspective to the study. She developed three standards to measure society's progress: examining who held the least power, understanding the main views on authority and autonomy, and analyzing access to resources for self-government and moral followings. Martineau would be followed by other great sociologists like Weber and Durkheim. Although her work was somewhat set aside, she was widely received and popular during her lifetime. It would take more time until her works were widely read again, solidifying Martineau as one of the very first women sociologists who left a lasting mark on the entire study.

Thank you very much for listening. If you have any questions or comments, please write them below. Also, always remember to hit that like and subscribe button so you will know when we have new content coming on the Learning the Social Sciences YouTube channel. Once again, thank you for listening, and bye-bye.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 1.8, Harriet Martineau and Sociology

Transcript for “[Harriet Martineau and Sociology](#)” by [Learning the Social Sciences](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 1.9, What is Photovoice?

[Music]

[Laura Lorenz, Co-founder of Photovoice and Educator]: Photovoice puts cameras in the hands of people with valuable lived experience so they can explore and share their perspectives on health, family, community, and their futures.

[Narrator]: The goal of Photovoice is to give a voice to those who, because of their age, status, or condition, do not have a strong say in the policies and decisions that impact their health, safety, and quality of life. Photovoice participants around the globe include a wide variety of people. Some have chronic health conditions or are living with a disability. Some are immigrants or belong to a particular minority group. Others are living with mental illness or have suffered from a brain injury.

Photovoice participants can be young or old, homeless or housed, veterans or civilians, employed or out of work. No two are alike – each one is a unique individual with a unique set of life circumstances. What they all share in common is a need to be heard.

[Lorenz]: In the Photovoice method, participants use pictures and words to document their challenges and strengths, successes and failures, hopes and fears from their perspective.

Their photos prompt respectful conversations among equals whether researchers, participants, community members, or decision makers. The photos and conversations become valuable data for advocacy, policy making, and decisions on a path forward.

[Narrator]: Using Photovoice, you can encourage discussion among people with valuable lived experience, investigate and share experiences from a first person perspective, highlight social justice issues that might be hidden from public view, identify needs that otherwise might go unnoticed, get the attention of policy makers, and collaborate for change. Photovoice projects have been facilitated by a range of stakeholders; in other words, people who have a special interest in certain groups. These stakeholders can be anyone, but often include clinicians, researchers, educators, community members, and non-profits. Together with their Photovoice participants, they undertake a process that can best be described as a Photovoice path. The steps of this path may guide the participants as they learn about Photovoice and decide on a topic, take photographs that show their thoughts and experiences, discuss and reflect on their photos and experiences, write or dictate captions to share the stories behind their photos, identify common themes, and inform others through exhibits and other outreach.

[Music.]

[Narrator]: Unlike traditional research, where researchers hold all the power, Photovoice flips this script by empowering participants to transform valuable lived experience into data for change. The Photovoice participatory approach generates

authentic real-life data that opens people's eyes to new possibilities, creates awareness, and becomes a catalyst for change. This visual research method has limitless applications and can be adapted to almost any group of people.

Talking with Pictures: Community Integration of Older Adults with Brain Injury

Lexington, MA, USA, 2015

[Lorenz]: In 2015, a Talking with Pictures project in Lexington, Massachusetts, looked with fresh eyes at community integration of older adults with brain injury. The project exhibit fostered community dialogue about the integration of people with disabilities into community life and informed town decision making regarding sidewalk improvements. It also gave the participants a deep and rewarding sense of pride and accomplishment.

Pictures that Speak: Involving Youth in Community Health

Mdantsane Township, Eastern Cape, South Africa, 2001

[Carson Peters, Former Intern, Student of Public Health]: In 2001 in Mdantsane Township, South Africa, four members of the youth-led non-profit Youth Academy were chained to be co-leaders on a Photovoice project. Participants took photographs of community resources and problems from their point of view, wrote captions, and prepared an exhibit organized under six themes: Health and Welfare; Education and Training; Community Vision; Economic Opportunity; Security; and Township Life. Exhibits at public libraries, the local hospital, and the regional capital captured policymaker attention and helped the young people feel heard.

Photovoice: A Community Activism Project

Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell, Lowell, MA, USA, 2001

[Stephanie Lloyd, Evaluator and Educator]: In 2001 a group of girls in Lowell, Massachusetts, participated in a Photovoice community activism project as an after-school activity of Girls Incorporated of Greater Lowell. Project goals were to identify resources and challenges in Lowell as seen from the perspectives of adolescent girls. Girls Inc. members portrayed community resources and needs using photographs and captions and reached policy makers and decision makers through an exhibit at City Hall.

Challenges to Getting Food to the Table: Experiences of Low-Income Veterans Raising Children

Houston, TX, USA, 2019

[Matt Dezan, U.S. Army Veteran and staff member of The Veterans' Place, Inc., in Northfield, Vermont]: In a study of veterans' experiences feeding their families, Photovoice asked low-income veterans with children to reflect on their experiences trying to provide adequate nutritious food for themselves and their families. Researchers learned about the barriers veterans face in getting food on the table, the strategies they employ, and the impact on their families. Their photos and captions prompted the creation of a new model to describe and understand what influences the veterans' home food environment and to improve their access to nutritious foods for their children.

[Maria Paiewonsky, Institute for Community Inclusion in Boston]: Hi, I work with young people with intellectual disabilities and I can't tell you how important it is for these young people to have multiple ways of telling people what they want and what's important to them for their young adult lives. And it also helps those individuals who are providing services to them to be more clear on how they can help these young people. So I can't say enough about Photovoice.

[Mala Matacin, Associate Professor, Dept. of Psychology, University of Hartford]: Using Photovoice to capture the lives of college students amidst the global Covid-19 pandemic was challenging and meaningful. The response from our university policymakers has been so supportive and we will continue to work on our two most prominent findings: Mental health issues and remote learning.

I don't think people understand the impact of having your voice heard and in that way Photovoice is – it's just a tremendous methodology.

[Narrator]: After participating in Photovoice, many participants feel a new confidence and sense of self-esteem from having an opportunity to be heard, to be seen, and to help others.

[Lorenz]: Whether you're an educator, researcher, patient, clinician, community member, or work for a non-profit, Photovoice may be just the tool you need to show stories, share power, and change lives.

[Narrator]: Photovoice Worldwide's mission is to help individuals and organizations worldwide use Photovoice safely, ethically, and successfully, and to create a global community for Photovoice peer-to-peer support and continuing education. For more information, visit our website at www.photovoiceworldwide.com.

[Music.]

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 1.9, What is Photovoice?

Transcript for "[PhotoVoice](#)" by [SecGovGroup](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 2.17, All Purpose Household Pink Tool Kit Review

[Jenny]: This is a fun little tool box that I keep in the house. It has 39 different pieces in it and I like that it's pink because my husband won't grab them and take the tools away, cuz you

know, and it's just nice to have all my tools in one place.

I don't even know what some of these things do but it's just nice to have tools that are just mine and can keep them organized. This would make a great gift for the kid going off to college, for Grandma who just needs to have some tools handy and, like I said, just to have my own inside tools.

They're heavy duty, they work pretty good, you know. They're not as hefty as my husband's tools but they're definitely what I need just around the house to hang pictures, just to do whatever I'm doing around the house, and need to have a screwdriver or pair of pliers, but they are pretty good, solid built, and I like that the carrying case has cutouts for each piece so you know what's missing and it keeps it organized.

I love it!

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 2.17, All Purpose Household Pink Tool Kit Review

Transcript for "[All Purpose Household Pink Tool Kit Review](#)" by [JennyKnits Reviews](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 2.18, Why 'Passing Privilege' Is A Problem In The Trans Community | Queer 2.0 | NBC News

Some trans people are luckier than others. Some trans women are able to go to the grocery store and pick up their dry cleaning without anyone knowing that they're trans. Some trans men are able to get a haircut, go to the movies, and go shopping at the mall without anyone knowing that they're trans either.

In the trans community, we call that *passing*. When trans people pass, we are able to exist in the world without people necessarily knowing that we're trans. Passing comes with all sorts of privileges. When you pass—when you don't look trans—it can be easier to:

- Find a job
- Find a partner
- Be accepted by the world around you

Passing also helps trans people avoid violence and harassment. The messed up reality is that when people can't tell that you're trans from looking at you, you're often safer.

****Passing is a problem.****

As trans people, we shouldn't be forced to conform to gender norms and bodily standards in order to be treated with dignity. Trans folks should be able to **look** trans, whatever that means, and still have stable employment and a sense of community. Rather than asking trans people to pass, we need to redefine the way we understand women, men, and people in general.

– There's no right way to look like a woman.

– There's no right way to look like a man.

– And for us non-binary trans folks, you shouldn't have to look like a man **or** a woman in order to be treated well by your community.

Instead of making trans people pass as our gender in order to be treated with respect, let's take a pass at the **real** problems facing trans folks:

– Having your gender identity scrutinized in public? ****Pass.****

– Higher rates of violence and poverty? ****Pass.****

– Living in a transphobic world? ****Oh, hard pass.****

Now that's some passing I can get behind.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 2.18, Why 'Passing Privilege' Is A Problem In The Trans Community | Queer 2.0 | NBC News

Transcript for "[Why 'Passing Privilege' Is A Problem In The Trans Community | Queer 2.0 | NBC News](#)" by [NBC News](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 2.19, America Ferrera's Iconic Barbie Speech | Barbie | Max

It is literally impossible to be a woman.

You are so beautiful and so smart, and it kills me that you don't think you're good enough. Like,

we have to always be extraordinary, but somehow we're always doing it wrong.

You have to be thin, but not too thin. And you can never say you want to be thin. You have to say

you want to be healthy, but also you have to be thin.

You have to have money, but you can't ask for money because that's crass. You have to be a boss, but you can't be mean. You have to lead, but you can't squash other people's ideas. You're supposed to love being a mother, but don't talk about your kids all the damn time. You have to be a career woman, but also always be looking out for other people.

You have to answer for men's bad behavior, which is insane. But if you point that out, you're accused of complaining. You're supposed to stay pretty for men, but not so pretty that you tempt them too much or that you threaten other women because you're supposed to be a part of the sisterhood, but always stand out and always be grateful. But never forget that the system is rigged. So find a way to acknowledge that, but also always be grateful.

You have to never get old, never be rude, never show off, never be selfish, never fall down, never fail, never show fear, never get

out of line.

It's too hard, it's too contradictory, and nobody give you a medal or says thank you. And it turns out, in fact, that not only are you doing everything wrong, but also everything is your fault.

I'm just so tired of watching myself and every single other woman tie herself into knots so that people will like us. And if all of that is also true for a doll just representing a woman, then I don't even know.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 2.19, America Ferrera's Iconic Barbie Speech | Barbie | Max

Transcript for "[America Ferrera's Iconic Barbie Speech | Barbie | Max](#)" by Max is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 3.10, Teen Coming Out Stories

[Joon Park]: Cole Sprouse if you are watching this, I love you.

[Gianna Collier-Pitts]: Coming out was more of just like a long-form process since I knew around middle school that I was into, you know, more than just guys.

[C Mandler]: I realized I was queer in high school.

[Leah Juliett]: I was 14 years old when I was outed as being gay. Being outed was probably one of the worst experiences of my life.

[Joon Park]: So I was actually 17 when I first came out and it was a very organic process. My mom, after picking me up from school, took this weird drive that we never really take and then pulled over.

[Rowan Hepps Keeney]: I first came out as bi at the end of eighth grade, somewhere between 8th and 9th grade. I told my sister—she was the first person that I told.

[C Mandler]: And it was really funny because I'd gone to public school prior to that and all my friends teased me, oh you're going to private school, it's all girls, you're gonna become a lesbian. Oh, you guys don't know anything, I'm so straight. And I'm just so not straight.

[Gianna Collier-Pitts]: I went to Catholic school and section homosexuality wasn't even a thing so I doubt bisexuality would have even been a topic we could say in class.

[C Mandler]: This girl got really drunk on Mike's Hard Lemonade and I ended up taking her home in a cab and I looked up at her and made eye contact with her. And like just this weird feeling kind of rushed over my body and I realized I just fallen in love with this girl out of nowhere who I didn't know.

[Joon Park]: And then, at that moment, I kind of knew the direction but she was heading towards and she asked me very bluntly if I was gay. And already I could see in her eyes that there was no kind of malicious intent in her asking me, and so with tears in my eyes I just kind of said, yeah, mom I am gay. And I just started breaking down crying because it was so cathartic and my mom was just kind of looking at me like, it's not that serious.

[Rowan Hepps Keeney]: and so I would like come to school like a skirt or something I want someone be like, oh my god you're wearing a skirt and I was like, look I do this, like that's always been something that I've done, and just because I'm a lesbian like we're gonna make a whole big to-do about the fact that I am wearing a skirt or makeup or something like that.

[Gianna Collier-Pitts]: I actually told my best friend that I was by the first day that I moved into college and by my sophomore year I had finally told everyone and I told them via Instagram. My dad was the only one who took it a little bit hard. He was more upset at the fact that I sent him a link to my Instagram post instead of calling him.

[C Mandler]: Coming out as trans was a lot harder because I didn't have language to describe gender identity until I got to college

and yet if you're not entirely sure of who or what you are from the second you come out of the womb, people like to invalidate what you have to say about who you are.

[Gianna Collier-Pitts]: If you're thinking of coming out to your parents and you're pretty sure they're accepting maybe just tell them in person don't don't put it on Instagram and give them a link, but other than that you know it was a pretty positive experience. I wouldn't really regret it or change when I did it or how I did it.

[Leah Juliett]: But it also taught me that coming out and sharing who you are doesn't necessarily need to be a grand gesture and a large experience. It can be very personal and it can be very intimate and it can just be you starting to live your life openly.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 3.10, Teen Coming Out Stories

Transcript for "[Teen Coming Out Stories](#)" by [Fusion Comedy](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 3.11 Coming Out Stories – Andy

****I'm Andy. I'm a gay man, and I came out last October.****

It wasn't easy for me. For the first 45 years of my life, it was very, very hard. I struggled, and I knew I was gay, but I just couldn't tell anyone. I held that secret for all these years.

The night I did come out to my two good friends, I went home and thought about it. I thought, *right, I made that first step—telling someone*. So, I decided I would let everyone know. I put it on Facebook, and the response I got from all the locals was amazing. It was fantastic.

****I hated being in that class.****

It was a horrible, horrible, horrible place. I was taunted by a few people—not everyone—but a few folks made my life a living hell with taunting names and homophobic remarks. I was young at the time. I knew I was gay, but I just didn't know how to come out.

All through my life—I'm 60 next month, and as I said, I only came out last October—I hated myself. I couldn't be me. It was hard. I lived a lie. It's all been about accepting myself, and I couldn't even say the word *gay*.

I would be filled with panic attacks. I was on medication. I had a nervous breakdown. I contemplated suicide several times. I just didn't want to live because I couldn't be me.

Until last year, I met two good friends who saw the struggle I was going through. With their help, I managed to come out.

****My advice to anyone struggling:****

I know there are people out there struggling, because I struggled. I hated myself, just trying to live. I know there are others going through the same thing I did. Don't do what I did. Don't live that lie. Don't stay in that hideous place—the closet. It's a horrible, horrible place to be. Be yourselves. Be true to yourselves, and you will find the support. I certainly did.

The support here has been great—great support to me. I can't thank them enough. They are there if I need advice, and I just have to call them. Life can be good.

****If there's anyone out there going through the same struggle I did, tell someone.****

You'll find, as you start to tell, it gets easier. I don't have any fear anymore. The few homophobes who made my life hell—they mean nothing to me now. They can't hurt me. I've taken back control of my life, and I'm loving life. Life is good.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 3.11 Coming Out Stories – Andy

Transcript for "[Coming Out Stories – Andy](#)" by [Waverley Care](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 3.15, Tea and Consent

If you're still struggling with consent, just imagine instead of initiating sex you're making them a cup of tea.

You say, "Hey, would you like a cup of tea?" and they go, "Oh my God, I would love a cup of tea, thank you!" then you know they want a cup of tea. If you say, "Hey, would you like a cup of tea?" and they're like, "Uh, you know, I'm not really sure," then you can make them a

cup of tea or not, but be aware that they might not drink it, and if they don't drink it then – and this is the important bit – don't make them drink it. Just because you made it doesn't mean you're entitled to watch them drink it.

And if they say, "No, thank you," then don't make them tea. At all. Just don't make them tea, don't make them drink tea, don't get annoyed at them for not wanting tea. They just don't want tea, okay?

They might say, "Yes, please, that's kind of you," and then when the tea arrives they actually don't want the tea at all. Sure, that's kind of annoying as you've gone to all the effort of making the tea, but they remain under no obligation to drink the tea. They did want tea, now they don't. Some people change their mind in the time it takes to boil the kettle, brew the tea, and add the milk, and it's okay for people to change their mind and you are still not entitled to watch them drink it.

And if they're unconscious, don't make them tea. Unconscious people don't want tea and they can't answer the question, "Do you want tea?" because they're unconscious, okay? Maybe they were conscious when you asked them if they wanted tea and they said yes but in the time it took you to boil the kettle, brew the tea, and add the milk they are now unconscious. You should just put the tea down. Make sure the unconscious person is safe and – this is the important part again – don't make them drink the tea. They said yes then, sure, but unconscious people don't want tea.

If someone said yes to tea, started drinking it, and then passed out before they'd finished it, don't keep on pouring it down their throat. Take the tea away, make sure they are safe, because

unconscious people don't want tea. Trust me on this.

If someone said yes to tea around your house last Saturday, that doesn't mean they want you to make them tea all the time. They don't want you to come around to their place unexpectedly and make them tea and force them to drink it, going, "But you wanted tea last week!" or to wake up to find you pouring tea down their throat, going, "But you wanted tea last night!"

If you can understand how completely ludicrous it is to force people to have tea when they don't want tea, and you are able to understand when people don't want tea, then how hard is it to understand when it comes to sex? Whether it's tea or sex, consent is everything, and on that note... I'm going to make myself a cup of tea.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 3.15, Tea and Consent

Transcript for "[Tea and Consent](#)" by [Thames Valley Police](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 4.11, Our Story: Building Black & Hmoob Movement

Growing up poor,

we thought you weren't really going to make it anywhere

or see what's really out there.

We were all high school dropouts—homeless, jobless,

just hanging out in the parking lot.

We were doing pretty much nothing.

We were poor. We struggled with bills and rent at times.

Early on, I had been developing a strong race consciousness,
a strong awareness of injustice.

At a very young age, I knew that poverty was wrong.

I've always known I was going to be different.

I had the opportunity to go abroad for a year, to Thailand,
and I thought my life had changed so much.

But when I came back, I realized some things changed,
and some things didn't.

What didn't change was us still hanging out in the parking lot.

I thought to myself:

"If they could see beyond the doorsteps of our community,
if they could see beyond Madison,
what would it do for them?"

Kajo gave us the opportunity
to really step out of our personal boxes
and see that we are more than just some kids from the projects.

Freedom Inc began 15 years ago
as a group of Hmong girls who would come together in the parking lot.

They'd talk about everyday issues:

"I lost my driver's license,"

"I got too many tickets,"

"I keep getting kicked out of school."

We got together and talked about these issues,
but we also started learning how these personal struggles
were connected to broader issues of social justice.

It was about racial profiling, organizing, poverty,
addressing the system that was set up
so that you become a failure.

Freedom Inc is a grassroots organization

working to end violence within and against low-income communities of color.

We do this by building the power, leadership, and organizing capacity
of Hmong and Black women, youth, and LGBTQ+ people.

I was asked to help build a space for queer LGBTQ+ people
who didn't necessarily identify as straight or cisgender.

When I was starting to accept my sexuality,
I don't think I would have been okay with myself
if spaces like that didn't exist.

When the Hmong girls met,
Black girls in the community started joining.

Some of the Black girls asked,
"What about us? Why just Hmong girls?"

That's how Black Beauties became part of Freedom Inc.

Hmong and Black communities
were placed in some of the poorest areas of the U.S. 35 years ago.

Nobody thought that one day, we'd talk to each other,
figure out that we have a lot in common,
and stand up for each other.

Part of our vision is healing.

The truth is, many of us are survivors of different forms of trauma and assault.

I see it even within my own staff—so much pain.

We provide domestic violence and sexual assault services,
and we organize through healing.

Freedom Inc has saved many youth.

The thing about our staff, who are survivors too,
is that we don't have to go through things alone.

We provide an ear, a shoulder.

We also learn how to listen, how to be there for others.

We empower them to be the change they want to see.

Patriarchy still exists. Sexism still exists.

We cannot wait—we've got to get up and do something.

I have way too much love and too much to offer
to just not do anything.
Our work is truly about creating the world we want to live in.
Freedom, to me, isn't about destruction.
Freedom is about love.
As long as I'm alive, I'm going to create it.
And if it's not created for me,
at least my child will get to experience some of it.
With that belief, I fight.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 4.11, Our Story: Building Black & Hmoob Movement

Transcript for "[Our Story: Building Black & Hmoob Movement](#)" by [Freedom, Inc.](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 4.15, Judith Butler: Your Behavior Creates Your Gender | Big Think

[Interviewer]: What does it mean that gender is performative?

[Judith Butler]: It's one thing to say that gender is performed and that is a little different from saying gender is performative. When we say gender is performed we usually mean that we've taken on a role or we're acting in some way and that our acting or our role playing is crucial to the gender that we are and the gender that we present to the world. To say that gender is performative is a little different because for something to be performative means that it produces a series of effects. We act and walk and speak and talk in ways that consolidate an impression of being a man or being a woman.

I was walking down the street in Berkeley when I first arrived several years ago and a young woman who was I think in high school leaned out of her window and she yelled, "Are you a lesbian?", and she was looking to harass me or maybe she was just freaked out or she thought I looked like I probably was one or wanted to know and I thought to myself well I could feel harassed or stigmatized, but instead I just turned around and I said yes I am and that really shocked her.

We act as if that being of a man or that being of a woman is actually an internal reality or something that is simply true about us, a fact about us, but actually it's a phenomenon that is being produced all the time and reproduced all the time, so to say gender is performative is to say that nobody really is a gender from the start. I know it's controversial, but that's my claim.

[Interviewer]: How should this notion of gender performativity change the way we look at gender?

[Judith Butler]: Think about how difficult it is for sissy boys or how difficult it is for tomboys to function socially without being bullied or without being teased or without sometimes suffering threats of violence or without their parents intervening to say maybe you need a psychiatrist or why can't you be normal. So there are institutional powers like psychiatric normalization and there are informal kinds of practices like bullying which try to keep us in our gendered place.

I think there is a real question for me about how such gender norms get established and policed and what the best way is to disrupt them and to overcome the police function. It's my view that gender is culturally formed, but it's also a domain of agency or freedom and that it is most important to resist the violence that is imposed by ideal gender norms, especially against those who are gender different, who are nonconforming in their gender presentation.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 4.15, Judith Butler: Your Behavior Creates Your Gender | Big Think

Transcript for “[Judith Butler: Your Behavior Creates Your Gender | Big Think](#)” by [Big Think](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 4.17, Crip Queer Pride with Daisy Wislar

[Daisy Wislar]: Hi! I’m Daisy, I use they/them pronouns, and I’m queer and I’m disabled.

[Daisy walking with a cane, wearing a rainbow-colored cap and t-shirt that says, “The Future is Accessible.”]

[Daisy Wislar]: I’ve been disabled since birth, and growing up I had a lot of surgeries and physical therapies in order to reach certain physical benchmarks that doctors told me I was “supposed” to have reached at my age.

[Daisy is joined by two friends who wear rainbow and trans flags.]

[Daisy Wislar]: I was told to stretch my hamstring this way, to turn my foot that way, walk straighter, stand taller, and basically make my body fit into other people’s standards that were never really within my reach to begin with. I had no access to disabled role models in the media or in my personal life. I had no way of thinking about my disability outside of a medical context, and as a result, I totally internalized the idea that my disability was a “bad thing” that needed medical intervention in order to be fixed.

At the same time as I was going through adolescence, I started realizing that I wasn’t straight. Luckily I had some out friends, supportive teachers, and an active Gay Straight Alliance, that really supported me and helped me process what that meant for me.

[Daisy and their friends arrive at Pride. Multi-colored flags in the background.]

[Daisy Wislar]: Even though I started to feel a real pride in my queer identity, there was this entire part of me, my disability, that I didn’t get to celebrate like I did my queerness. For example, I once had someone that I matched with on a lesbian dating app tell me, “Aww, it’s okay Babe, I still think you’re beautiful, I’ll take care of you,” after I told her I was disabled.

Yeah that was bad. [chuckles]

[Daisy cringes.]

[Daisy Wislar]: I just wanted to scream, “You don’t have to tell me it’s okay to be disabled! I know it’s okay! I don’t need you to take care of me, and I don’t need your apology just for existing as myself!”

In that moment, it hit me extra hard that the queer community isn’t always disability-inclusive. All I could think was, “Well I guess this community isn’t really mine after all.”

I started connecting with people who are unapologetic about being both queer and disabled. I met people who took rules about what men and women were “supposed to do,” or how bodies were “supposed to look,” and rewrote them, revised them, or threw them away entirely. And then I realized that I could apply the same thing to my own life, not only in terms of my queerness, but in terms of my disability as well. I slowly started to experiment with bow ties, button downs, backwards hats, and other markers of gender outside of the feminine norm. I also started using my cane when I actually needed it, rather than feeling ashamed of it. I realized that I could invite people to stare on my own terms, and find pride, confidence, and empowerment in that. Now, dressing like this is like a visual representation of all the ways my body is defiant of norms and expectations.

[Daisy showing off their outfit.]

[Daisy Wislar]: What I’ve learned from this is that disability is an identity in its own right, and being able to claim that identity may take some time. I mean, I was born disabled and it took me years and years.

[Photo of Daisy. Their t-shirt reads, “Queer & Disabled.”]

[Daisy Wislar]: I don’t have to be ashamed. My disability isn’t just a medical condition. My body doesn’t need to be fixed, and I

am so, so proud of that. Pride and comfort aren't inherent, but shame doesn't have to be either.

[Daisy shares a milkshake with their partner. Their faces gently touch.]

[Daisy Wislar]: We're all on our own journey to understanding what it means to be queer, disabled, trans, whatever it may be. Know that wherever you are in that process, your journey is valid and you are not alone in it.

Written and directed by Daisy Wislar. To learn more about Storytellers like me, visit RootedinRights.org/Storytellers.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 4.17, Crip Queer Pride with Daisy Wislar

Transcript for “[Crip Queer Pride with Daisy Wislar](#)” by [Rooted in Rights](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 5.7, LAVERNE COX on Issues facing the Transgender Community | Bent Lens | In Conversation

[Laverne Cox]: But I think there's the all underlying the healthcare issues, the employment issues, the murder and violence issues is the presumption that we are always and only the gender that we were signed at birth and therefore we should be treated as some, oh God I'm getting – about to get – way too real here, some human being – I was about to say something –

wrote that I was, people have been writing, you know, that I'm mentally ill, that trans people are mentally ill, so that kind of stigmatizing, right, continues to perpetuate mythology that we are somehow deranged and mentally ill and there is a reason then to discriminate against us. Yes, even if somebody were mentally ill, it does not mean that they need to be beating to death on the street.

[Applause.]

So when we can begin to dismantle that misconception, then we can begin to extend healthcare, then we can begin to say, okay, we can employ trans folks. Then we can have housing and bathrooms and accommodations that are appropriate for trans people without

like freaking out and saying you know doing all this stuff that we often do, we need, there's a basic assumption that we need to challenge around binary gender and then we need to look at the intersections of race and class with that right so that this move, this LGBT movement has to look at other issues. Because we just are looking at the transgender piece, we're missing a lot,

because when folks are black and Latina mostly and are getting HIV at disproportionate rates or

being murdered at disproportionate rates or trafficking to sex work at disproportionate rates, there's something about being black and Latina in our white supremacist culture that we have

to look at and and so we have to be we have to be fighting racism and classism and patriarchy along with transphobia, right, okay.

[Applause.]

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 5.7, LAVERNE COX on Issues facing the Transgender Community | Bent Lens | In Conversation

Transcript for “[LAVERNE COX on Issues facing the Transgender Community | Bent Lens | In Conversation](#)” by [TIFF Originals](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 5.10 How Microaggressions are like Mosquito Bites

[Narrator]: For people who still don't think microaggressions are a problem...

[Person 1]: Oh, you're so well-spoken.

[Narrator]: Imagine, instead of a rude comment, a microaggression is like a mosquito bite. It's irritating.

[Sound of mosquitoes buzzing]

[Narrator]: Mosquito bites are annoying, but if it happens rarely, it's just a minor bother.

[Person 2]: Where are you **really** from?

[Person 3]: Cleveland.

[Narrator]: Sure, it's annoying but not a huge deal. The real issue is that some people get bitten more than others.

[Person 4]: Whether on a date, shopping, or commuting, people experience microaggressions more frequently.

[Person 5]: Everything happens for a reason.

[Person 6]: I'm just buying apples.

[Narrator]: Even when just watching TV or walking down the street, you face microaggressions.

[Person 7]: We have to preserve our culture. I couldn't even tell you were gay!

[Narrator]: Mosquitoes appear everywhere.

[Person 8]: I'm getting bit every day—multiple times a day!

[Narrator]: This constant irritation makes you want to react, which seems like an overreaction to those who don't experience it regularly.

[Person 9]: It's just a mosquito bite. Who cares? Another angry Black woman.

[Narrator]: But microaggressions can have deeper effects than just being annoying. Some can harm your well-being.

[Person 10]: Maybe astrophysics is too hard for you. Try something easier.

[Narrator]: And others are life-threatening.

[Person 11]: You looked suspicious. I felt threatened.

[Narrator]: So, before you dismiss someone's reaction, remember—some people deal with microaggressions all the time.

[Person 12]: You're so exotic.

[Narrator]: By microaggressions, we mean mosquito bites.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 5.10 How Microaggressions are like Mosquito Bites

Transcript for "[How Microaggressions are like Mosquito Bites](#)" by [Seventeen](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 5.13, Video captures neo-Nazis interrupting drag reading hour

[Yelling.]

[Reporter]: Drag queen Juicy Garland captured the moment a group of neo-Nazis tried to disrupt a drag story hour she was hosting at a cafe in New Hampshire.

[Juicy Garland]: All we were doing was promoting literacy and providing kids with cute, good stories.

[Yelling, knocking.]

[Reporter]: The event was happening at the Teatotaler Cafe in Concord, New Hampshire. The owner says this is not the first time a drag story hour has been targeted.

[Emmett Soldati, cafe owner]: This is not the first time, it's not the second time, it's not the third time. But the truth is that we have been doing this kind of programming basically since we have existed in the state of New Hampshire, which is over a decade.

[Reporter]: The state attorney general's office, which is investigating the incident, said the group gathered outside were members of NSC131, a neo-Nazi organization with small chapters based in New England, according to the Anti-Defamation League.

[Juicy Garland]: I will be back, and we will continue to do these. If anything I'm only more encouraged to defy these people, to continue to do what we do.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 5.13, Video captures neo-Nazis interrupting drag reading hour

Transcript for "[Video captures neo-Nazis interrupting drag reading hour](#)" by [CNN](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 5.17, Clatsop-Nehalem tribes' return of ancestral land

[Charlotte Celiaste Basch, Clatsop-Nehalem Confederated Tribes]: Growing up, I often was told that the Clatsop people are now extinct, they don't exist anymore and I, obviously knowing I was a Clatsop – am a Clatsop – person, I knew that was wrong.

[Narrator]: Charlotte Basch is walking with her parents on the land where her ancestors used to live, along the Necanicum River Estuary in the present-day town of Seaside.

[Charlotte Basch]: The estuary is where the Neawanna, the Neacoxie, and the Necanicum Rivers all come together. It's an incredibly beautiful spot.

[Narrator]: This is where the Clatsop of Native American people signed a treaty for the right to fish and hunt indefinitely, and were nevertheless, they were forced to leave.

[Charlotte Basch]: I'm named after my great-grandmother Charlotte, my great-great-grandmother Celiaste, both of which lived in this community and on this land.

[Narrator]: Charlotte and her father, Dick, are descendants of Clatsop Chief Coboway through his daughter Celiaste. Dick learned from his grandmother Charlotte how his ancestors used this village site before white settlement pushed them out. They didn't have a reservation to go to so they scattered across the Northwest. Many lost track of their family lineage.

[Dick Basch, Vice-Chairman, Clatsop-Nehalem Tribal Council]: There were pieces that were able to be threaded through the generations. You know, of course a lot was lost, but I'm lucky enough that I know something about our family and our history.

[Narrator]: While this peaceful stretch of undeveloped land feels remote, it's actually just a couple miles from the throngs of vacationing tourists in the bustling beach town of Seaside. On a busy street in the center of town, Dick worked with an artist to illustrate the history of his ancestors' homeland and share their story with the community.

[Dick Basch]: The importance of this place was immense. The long houses here had family, neighbors right across the estuary where there was another village. This was such an important place that after our treaty was signed, that treaty included the right to fish forever here at the mouth of the Neacoxie.

[Narrator]: But that treaty was never honored by the U.S. government. So the Clatsop never got what they were promised for giving up their land, and they still have no federal recognition.

[Dick Basch]: They put up fences and no trespassing signs and our people weren't able to go to the place they gathered and they were arrested for trespassing. Can you imagine that? The horror that they had to endure.

[Narrator]: Generations later, Roberta Basch found that problem persisted with the land trust that owned this property when she was denied access to gather traditional plants.

[Roberta Basch]: They said, 'No, you can't,' because they were preserving, conserving, some of those plants. Well, I know how to do that. My people have been doing that since time immemorial. It has been very difficult to be told you can't be who you are because for us we are not separate from the land, we are not separate from the plants. The plants keep our bodies alive, the plants keep this whole area alive. We're not separate, but we've been told by society that we have to learn how to separate ourselves from the land. That's not possible, it's just not possible to be able to do that.

[Narrator]: Katie Voelke is the executive director of the North Coast Land Conservancy. Her land trust protected the property from development and restored its tidal marsh ecosystem. She says years of hearing from tribal members like Roberta led her organization to make an historic

decision.

[Katie Voelke, North Coast Land Conservancy]: We realized that though we have a conservation mission, our connection to this land is not and could never be as deep and important and meaningful as the connection of the Clatsop people. We realized that what we owned was one of the most important places to other people, and why would we own that when we know that those other people will care for it even more greatly than we would?

[David Stowe, Clatsop-Nehalem Tribal Council Member]: They said it was never our land, and they deeded the land back to us. That's remarkable and because of that we sit here today and the circle has come all the way around and we have – it's going to really, literally allow us to be a tribe.

[Tribal member]: How long would take to dry something like this?

[Narrator]: Though they had no land to call home, the Clatsop-Nehalem people never forgot their culture. Now, they finally have a place to practice it.

[Dee Zimmerlee, Treasurer, Clatsop-Nehalem Tribal Council]: They're typically dried out, it's dried, and then you soak it and you work, work it that way.

One of the things that we want to do is keep that culture alive to teach our tribal members, to teach family, to teach those in the community.

[Narrator]: They're making plans to build a longhouse and a museum at the site.

[David Stowe]: So here we are for the first time in a very, very long time actually owning land in our homeland. We're like, okay, now what do we do? We're thinking about our future and having a lot of discussions and like, how do you put Humpty Dumpty back together again? And so now we have this huge hope and we're dreaming again.

[Narrator]: With the title transfer, the tribes reclaimed about 18 acres of their ancestral homeland and launched a whole new chapter of their history.

[Charlotte Basch]: To be able to look now and know that this is actually in tribal ownership again is truly indescribable. It gives you a sense of pride, I think, in resilience. Knowing that our people, our community have been here literally since time immemorial

and despite everything that happened to us we're still here in this place.

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 5.17, Clatsop-Nehalem tribes' return of ancestral land

Transcript for "[Clatsop-Nehalem tribes' return of ancestral land](#)" by [Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 5.18, Comunidad muxe de Oaxaca

verdaderos abc

[Applause.]

[Music.]

Después

[Music.]

hong kong

me voy

[Music.]

Pero

[Music.]

no

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 5.18, Comunidad muxe de Oaxaca

Transcript for "[Comunidad muxe de Oaxaca](#)" by [NotiMex](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

Transcript for Figure 5.21, Cultural Shift: Women's Roles in the 1950s

[Music.]

[Male Narrator]: If the image of a woman during World War Two was Rosie the Riveter, the 1950s female idea became Susie Homemaker. The same women who were often encouraged to work in the factories to support the war effort were now urged to demonstrate their patriotism by staying home.

[Female Speaker]: If you look at the difference between the way the magazines portrayed women in the 40s and magazines portrayed women in the 50s, you can see a huge propaganda effort took place to convince women that their place was in the home, that they didn't want to wear overalls, that really you were much more fulfilled if you could cook a good dinner than if you could make a wing on an airplane.

[First speaker in 1950s commercial]: You have no idea how much I've got to do! Remember I haven't got your dream kitchen to make things easier.

[Second speaker in 1950s commercial]: This whole kitchen was designed for efficiency and convenience.

[Male Narrator]: Experts like noted pediatrician and author Dr. Benjamin Spock and popular advice columnist Ann Landers encouraged this homemaker image, advising women to put their children and husbands first even at the expense of their own needs. Yet even as many mothers prided themselves and their families, the number of women working outside the home rose steadily as they took jobs to help maintain their families' standard of living. Soon both married and unmarried women were a significant part of the labor pool.

[Female Speaker]: In the 1950s, 33 percent of the workforce was female.

[Male Narrator]: Women who did not work outside the home often volunteered in their places of worship and in their charitable organizations. There they learned the political and organizational skills that would become critical as they joined with working women to mastermind the women's movements of the 60s and 70s.

[Music.]

Licenses and Attributions for Transcript for Figure 5.21, Cultural Shift: Women's Roles in the 1950s

Transcript for "[Cultural Shift: Women's Roles in the 1950s](#)" by [NBC News Learn](#) is included under fair use.

[Return to video](#)

DETAILED LICENSING

Overview

Title: Sociology of Gender - An Equity Lens (Karena, Esbensen, and Pertermann)

Webpages: 64

All licenses found:

- [CC BY 4.0](#): 96.9% (62 pages)
- [Undeclared](#): 3.1% (2 pages)

By Page

- Sociology of Gender - An Equity Lens (Karena, Esbensen, and Pertermann) - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Front Matter - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - TitlePage - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - InfoPage - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Table of Contents - [Undeclared](#)
 - Licensing - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 6: License Statement - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Acknowledgments - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - About this Book - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - How to Read This Book Offline - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Message to Students - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - About the Authors - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Publisher's Message to Instructors - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Additional Resources - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Instructor Resources - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Manuscript Development Process - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 1: Gender as a Sociological Concept - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.2: What Is Sociology? - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.3: Social Sciences and Systems of Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.4: Applying Sociology to the Study of Gender - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.5: Why Study Sociology of Gender? - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.6: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 1.7: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 2: Gender as a Social Construct - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.2: A Process, and a System, and a Social Institution - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.3: Sexual Differentiation - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.4: Constructing Identity - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.5: Gender Expression - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.6: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 2.7: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 3: Gender, Sex and Sexuality - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.2: Sexuality and the Sociological Imagination - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.3: Who Do You Love? - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.4: Sexual Violence and Patriarchy - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.5: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 3.6: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 4: Gender in Theory - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.2: Early Theoretical Perspectives - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.3: Feminist Activism and Theory - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.4: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.5: Theorizing the Gender Wage Gap - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.6: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 4.7: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Chapter 5: Gender and Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.1: Chapter Introduction - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.2: Gender in Unequal Systems of Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.3: Individuals within Gender-Based Systems of Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.4: Gender in Global Systems of Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.5: Shifting Power - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.6: Conclusion - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - 5.7: References - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Back Matter - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Index - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Glossary - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Detailed Licensing - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Attributions and References for Glossary Terms - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Image Descriptions - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Self-Check Questions - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Transcripts - [CC BY 4.0](#)
 - Detailed Licensing - [Undeclared](#)

This page titled [Sociology of Gender - An Equity Lens \(Karena, Esbensen, and Pertermann\)](#) is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Nora Karena, Heidi Esbensen, and Dana Pertermann via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.