

Gender Terms

Prejudice- widely held negative attitudes toward a group and its individual members

Discrimination- treating people differently based on some defining characteristic

Sex- classification of people as male or female based on physical or biological characteristics

Gender- behaviors and attitudes considered by society to represent masculinity and femininity

Gender identity- a sense of being male or female based on learned cultural values

Cisgender- an individual born with one biological sex who identifies as that same gender

Transgender- an individual born with one biological sex but who identifies as the opposite gender

Biological Determinism- principle that behavioral differences are the result of inherited physical characteristics.

Gender Socialization- the social process of learning how to act as a boy or girl

Sexism- a set of beliefs, attitudes, norms, and values used to justify sexual inequality.

Occupational sex segregation- the concentration of women in lower-status, lower-income positions.

Matriarchy- system of society in which women, as a group, dominate men; authority is vested in females

Patriarchy- system of society in which men, as a group, dominate women, as a group; authority is vested in males

Feminism- an ideology in opposition to all forms of stratification based on gender; belief that biology does not consign females to inferior status

Glass Ceiling- the mostly invisible barrier that keeps women from advancing to the top levels at work

Sexual Harassment- the abuse of one's position of authority to force unwanted sexual demands on someone

Life Span- the maximum length of life of a species

Life Expectancy- the average age any person can expect to live

Age stratification- the unequal distribution of scarce resources based on age

Ageism- a set of beliefs, attitudes, norms, and values used to justify age-based prejudice and discrimination.

Gender Notes

Gender Identity

- The idea of being “male” or “female” becomes cemented in our thoughts and behaviors around the age of three.
- One’s gender identity can be different from one’s biological sex

Nature (genetics) vs. Nurture (socialization)

- Nature- genetic studies have shown chromosomal variance in many transgender individuals concluding that our biology determines our gender identity
- Nurture- Margaret Mead analyzed three primitive societies and noted how the concepts of “masculinity” and “femininity” varied greatly from Western ideals concluding that gender is socially determined

Women

- The documentary *Miss Representation* focused on how the media’s portrayal of women is detrimental to future generations who grow up watching stereotyped and shallow versions of what it means to be a woman.
- Disney movies used to be very sexist, celebrating a characters looks over abilities (Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella). However, recent Disney films have worked against these sexist stereotypes (Moana, Frozen, Brave) to portray stronger female leads.
- Women have made strong gains in recent decades but there is still a great deal of room for improvement. There are women in high levels of government in several countries around the world but still remain underrepresented in politics as a whole. There are examples of female entrepreneurs but they remain noticeably lacking from the executive board rooms of many major companies.

Men

- Boys are socialized to bottle up their feelings (“be a man”) and to tackle problems independently rather than with a social support network (friends, family, etc.).
- This leads to higher rates of depression, addiction and suicide
- Growing gender equality has enabled women to enter the workforce which has led to an increase of stay-at-home fathers. Expectations are increasingly more on the men to share in other domestic duties as well.
- HeforShe was started by the United Nations and supported by Emma Watson to encourage men to help support gender equality issues because it is something that benefits them as well.

Sexual Assault on Campus

- Currently, accusations of sexual assault and rape on college campuses are often handled within the university rather than by the police department. This has led to a number of discrimination complaints and lawsuits when these complaints are not handled properly.
- Georgia House Bill 51 seeks to force universities to turn over sexual misconduct allegations to the police. However, many victims claim that it should be their choice how cases are handled.

Transgender

- Jazz Jennings and Caitlyn Jenner were two notable public transgender individuals discussed.
- President Obama ordered schools and government facilities to support transgender restrooms. President Trump has withdrawn Obama’s order stating that it is up to the states to determine.
- North Carolina was the first state to bar transgender individuals from using restrooms different than their biological sex. Kentucky is currently considering the same legislation.
- 40% of transgender individuals attempt suicide because of substantial levels of discrimination, rejection, harassment, and violence suffered by the group.