

Psych 210: Human Sexuality
Reading Notes Set 2

Chapter 8: Gender Identity & Gender Roles

- **Gender-** The social construction of femininity and masculinity and is used to separate social/ cultural aspects of femininity and masculinity from biological aspects
- **Sex-** is biological features (genitalia, reproductive organs, chromosomes etc.)
- **Gender Identity-** One's subjective sense of being a man (or boy) or a woman (girl). The sense is usually acquired by age 3.
- **Gender Role-** A set of culturally specific norms concerning the expected behaviors and attitudes of men and women.
 - Includes everything you feel and think that conveys to yourself and others that you are a certain gender
- Gender role and gender identity are two different aspects of the same thing. They are NOT two different things.
- Biological Influences on Gender Identity
- Role of Chromosomes
 - **Chromosomes-** rod-shapes structures containing the genetic material that determines a person's inherited characteristics.
 - A person has 23 pairs of chromosomes
 - 23 from mom and 23 from dad
 - eggs and sperm have half of the genetic material (23 chromosomes in egg and 23 chromosomes in sperm)
 - Girls are XX
 - Boys are XY
 - The sperm from the father determines the sex of the baby
 - SRY (Sex-determining region of the Y chromosome) determines maleness and is missing from XY girls' Y and is present on XX boys' X
 - One or more genes on the X chromosome help determine femaleness
- Role of Hormones
 - A pair of primitive gonads develop during the 5th and 6th weeks that have the potential for developing into either ovaries or testes
 - Embryo at 5-6 week also have 2 duct systems
 - Wolffian Duct System
 - If allowed, will become the male structures
 - Mullerian duct system
 - If allowed, will become the female structures
 - If the primitive gonads were removed at this stage the baby would be born anatomically a girl
 - If it is a boy the SRY gene will activate the testicles and they will secrete
 - Mullerian duct-inhibiting substance- which causes the ducts of the Mullerian system to shrink.

- o The absence of large testosterone levels results in shrinkage of the Wolffian system and the development of the Mullerian system
- o The development of the male and female structures begins at 7 weeks
- Sexual Differentiation of the Brain
 - o The hypothalamus is different in male and female rats
 - The difference is the differences in testosterone levels
 - o Men and women also have different levels of testosterone in the hypothalamus
 - This is because of the testosterone levels during the 2nd half of pregnancy
- Disorders of Sex
 - o Disorders of Sex Development- individuals with a combination of male and female anatomical features, or in which chromosomal sex is inconsistent with anatomical sex.
- Chromosome Disorders
 - o There are over 70 known disorders involving the sex chromosomes
 - o Klinefelter's Syndrome (XXY or XXXY)
 - Biological men have both masculine characteristics because of the Y
 - Have feminine characteristics because of the XX
 - Tall with long arms and have poor muscular development
 - Enlarged breasts and hips
 - Small penis and shrunken testicles and low sexual desire
 - Some choose to live as boys and others live as girls
 - Caroline Cossey- famous case "James Bond Girl"
 - o Turner's Syndrome (X0)
 - Only one X chromosome
 - Biologically a girl
 - Ovaries never develop properly
 - Because no ovarian hormones they don't menstruate or grow breasts at puberty
- Hormonal Disorders
 - o Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) or Adrenogenital syndrome (AGS)
 - Adrenal glands secrete too much masculinizing hormone during fetal development
 - Internal organs are normal
 - Genitals are masculinized (the clitoris and labia are enlarged)
 - Can be mistaken for boys at birth
 - Usually raised as girls but show increased male-typical gender roles
 - o Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome
 - (testicular feminization syndrome)

- testicles secrete the normal amounts of testosterone but the body tissues do not respond to it
- most common hormonal issue in men
- a clitoris, short vagina, and labia develop
- but the internal female structures never develop because the testicles still secrete the Mullerian duct inhibiting substance
- raised as girls
- develop breasts and hips at puberty because of estrogen
- DHT deficiency syndrome
 - Type of androgen insensitivity syndrome when testosterone is not converted into dihydrotestosterone
 - Boys' external genitals don't develop properly
 - Development occurs at puberty with the rise in testosterone
 - Small penis that looks like a clitoris
 - Incomplete scrotum that looks like labia
 - Undescended testicles
 - Short closed vaginal cavity
- No direct relationship between sex and gender
- 5 different sexes and that human sexuality is not a dichotomy but a continuum
- Attempts to Reassign Sex in Infancy
 - Biology plays a much stronger role than thought before in determining gender identity
 - Bruce → Brenda
 - His penis was cut off during circumcision
 - Parents decided to raise him as a girl
 - This led to many other sex reassignment surgeries
 - Promoted that sex was dichotomous- a person was either a boy or girl
 - Brenda rejected girls' clothes and toys as time went on
 - Preferred boys' clothes and toys
 - Regarded as a tomboy
 - Became depressed and suicidal
 - Changed name to David
 - Later committed suicide
 - Penile agenesis
 - When the testicles develop but the penis does not
 - Child was raised as a girl
 - Thought of himself as a man
 - Reconstructive surgery to become a man and have a penis
 - Many individuals who underwent sex reassignment as infants have rejected the socialization process
- Gender Incongruence in Children