

The Psychology of SEX AND GENDER

SECOND EDITION

Jennifer K. Bosson • Camille E. Buckner • Joseph A. Vandello







The Psychology of Sex and Gender

Second Edition

For my parents, Jo-Ellen and Edward.

J. K. B.

For Kate, Kathleen, and my beloved family.

C. E. B.

For Winter and Kelly.

J. A. V.

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The Psychology of Sex and Gender

Second Edition

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PREFACE

This book reflects a new approach to the psychology of sex and gender. As instructors of undergraduate psychology of gender courses, we regularly face three challenges when selecting a textbook. First, some textbooks lack broad coverage of the latest sex and gender science. Second, existing gender textbooks often emphasize the psychology of women rather than giving equal weight to the experiences of people of all sexes and gender identities. Third, the field of gender research changes at a remarkable pace, making textbooks feel dated quickly. In this book, we specifically tackle each of these challenges to yield an updated and engaging addition to the field.

To tackle the first challenge—that gender textbooks lack coverage of the latest sex and gender science—our book puts contemporary empirical scholarship at the center. This approach reflects our belief that students must critically evaluate the empirical evidence and draw their own conclusions about controversial issues and findings. Given the centrality of sex and gender to most of our lives, people tend to approach these topics with preconceived views, but such views can stem from stereotypes, folk beliefs, and outdated assumptions that are inconsistent with systematic, empirical observations. Our book emphasizes science as a useful, albeit imperfect, method for reducing biases. At the same time, we cover politically charged topics and tackle challenging discussions when relevant. Research on sex and gender has inevitable social and political implications, and when such implications arise, we invite students to consider multiple perspectives and question their assumptions.

To tackle the second challenge—that existing textbooks often prioritize the psychology of women—our book takes a broad approach to the psychology of sex and gender. Many of the top-selling psychology of gender textbooks are primarily about women, and for good reason: These books fill an important social and historical need, as women and women's experiences were largely neglected by mainstream psychology for many decades. That said, ours is a different kind of textbook, one that closely reflects current sociocultural contexts and understandings of sex and gender. Our book includes not only the rich literature on men and masculinity but also the expanding literatures on transgender, nonbinary, agender, and gender-nonconforming identities and experiences. It also highlights sexual orientation diversity and intersectionality and pushes students to think about ever more inclusive ways of conceptualizing sex and gender.

To tackle the third challenge—that the field of gender research proceeds at a breakneck pace—we cover the most up-to-date findings and interweave these with classic, time-honored theories, approaches, and studies. In the past decade, scientific understandings of sex and gender saw rapid transitions. We now know more than ever before about topics like gender identity and sexual orientation, genes and hormones, the effects of gender biases, and the nature of sexism. Old theories and assumptions that long held sway are regularly upended by new findings. At the same time, underlying these rapid

changes are some enduring psychological principles and truths. Psychology of gender instructors need a book such as this one that both keeps up with the forefront of the field and situates it within the fundamentals of psychology.

Not only does this book fill needs specific to the psychology of sex and gender, it also fills a more general need shared by all instructors: to enhance students' learning by promoting deep processing of information. Specifically, this text uses current best practices from the scholarship of teaching and learning to facilitate students' understanding of material by prompting them to develop habits of critical and integrative thinking.

Finally, a word about our title. We realize that many books on the same topic will opt for the simpler *Psychology of Gender*. Many gender researchers avoid the term *sex* because of the convention in the field that *sex* refers to biological and anatomical differences among people, while *gender* refers to the sociocultural assumptions and roles that accompany sex differences. Breaking from this convention, we embrace the term *sex* and use it simply to refer to categories of difference, such as "male," "female," "intersex," and "nonbinary." We therefore include *sex* in our title to illustrate that categories of sex are conceptually distinct from *gender*, rather than to imply any distinction between biological and social causes. In fact, throughout the book, we regularly insist that nature and nurture are intertwined in ways that make them impossible to separate. This reflects a growing awareness within psychology of the inseparability of nature and nurture: Biological factors shape how people and cultures conceptualize gender, and social factors shape our interpretations of the anatomy and physiology of sex. We highlight this theme explicitly in Chapter 3 ("The Nature and Nurture of Sex and Gender") but return to it repeatedly throughout the book.

INTENDED COURSES AND READERS

We intend this book to be used as a core text for undergraduate courses in the psychology of gender, the psychology of women, and the psychology of men. As such, it covers requisite content including sex versus gender, the sex and gender binaries, gender stereotypes, gender role socialization, sexism, and sex similarities and differences in cognitive, emotional, relational, workplace, and health outcomes. Many universities—both public and private, research oriented and teaching focused—offer these or similar courses as part of the regular curriculum in the Psychology Department, but these courses also appear in Departments of Sociology, Women's and Gender Studies, and Men's Studies. A course in the psychology of gender has wide appeal for students, regardless of academic major. While many are majors in psychology, sociology, or women's and gender studies, with some planning to pursue graduate study in these disciplines, others take the course out of interest in the topic or because understanding sex and gender will prepare them for a career in an applied area. This textbook should appeal to a broad range of students, and our writing reflects this by incorporating cross-disciplinary material regularly.

ORGANIZATION, FEATURES, AND PEDAGOGY

This book is organized into seven units, although instructors can easily shift the order of chapters without disrupting the flow. Unit I lays the foundation for the rest of the

book by introducing the concepts of sex and gender, defining essential terminology, and placing the study of sex and gender within sociohistorical contexts in Chapter 1. This unit also discusses some of the unique methodological approaches and challenges in the study of sex and gender and prepares students to evaluate the validity of research designs and researchers' conclusions critically (Chapter 2). Unit II covers material on how people become gendered beings, from their prenatal origins and sex assignment at birth (Chapter 3) to childhood gender role socialization and adult development (Chapter 4). In Unit III, we focus on gendered social perception and systems of sex- and gender-based status and power by examining gender stereotypes (Chapter 5) and sex-related differences in structural power and discrimination (Chapter 6).

In Unit IV, we examine cognitive and emotional aspects of sex and gender, including similarities and differences in cognitive ability (Chapter 7) and gendered aspects of communication and emotion (Chapter 8). Unit V focuses on domains of personal and social life, including sexuality, relationships, and the work–home interface. While Chapter 9 offers in-depth analyses of sexual orientation and sexuality, Chapter 10 covers friendships, romantic relationships, and parenting. Chapter 11 then examines the interconnection between work and home life in the context of changing family arrangements and societal norms. Unit VI, which covers health and well-being, considers the roles of sex and gender in both physical health (Chapter 12) and psychological health (Chapter 13). This unit also considers the gendered aspects of aggression and violence that impact health (Chapter 14). Finally, Unit VII, which is new to the second edition, stimulates reflection on the main themes presented throughout the textbook. It prompts students to consider past and present understandings of gender psychology and use these to identify unanswered questions that will likely shape the field in the future (Chapter 15). We encourage instructors to use Chapter 15 to generate end-of-the-term critical thinking exercises and assignments that allow students to reflect on what they have learned by reading this book.

The themes that guided our writing, which are evident throughout each chapter, include the following:

Updated Science. We cover up-to-date findings in the psychology of sex and gender. This keeps students abreast of the latest scholarship in the field, prepares them to evaluate unfounded assumptions about sex and gender critically, and offers them a solid foundation of knowledge upon which to build.

Diversity Emphasis. We wrote this book to meet the needs of an increasingly globally aware and sophisticated student population. To this end, we focus on a diversity of gender identities, sexual orientations, races and ethnicities, cultural and subcultural backgrounds, and intersections among these dimensions. Moreover, we routinely integrate diversity and intersectionality into the chapter text rather than boxing them separately or treating them as afterthoughts. This emphasis on diverse perspectives and contents benefits students in several ways. First, exposure to inclusive content increases feelings of belonging among underrepresented students, who see their own experiences reflected in the text. This can foster interest in and engagement with the material, as students see that the psychology of sex and gender is about everyone, not just those who occupy dominant or privileged social

groups. Second, exposure to diverse content can increase students' awareness of the unique backgrounds of others who differ from them, foster an appreciation for issues of social justice, and help students build interpersonal skills that will assist them in their chosen careers and life paths. Finally, exposure to diverse perspectives and experiences can increase students' creativity, cognitive flexibility, and problem-solving abilities, and these skills can generalize beyond the learning environment into other aspects of life.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. This book uses best practices in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) field to enhance student learning. Throughout the book, we present information in a manner that increases the likelihood of attaining the gold standard in any educational setting: the transfer of new student knowledge beyond the context in which it occurs. For example, we:

- Illustrate text concepts with current popular culture and relevant real-world examples to capture and hold student interest and prompt students to connect new material to what they already know.
- Prompt students to think (metacognitively) about their knowledge, perspectives, and assumptions. This increases the likelihood that they will use information and evidence to calibrate their understandings and that they will gain insight into what they do and do not fully understand, allowing them to ask more targeted questions.
- Weave themes (e.g., power, critical thinking, and nature–nurture) throughout the text and revisit them regularly to reinforce student learning and help students organize the new material in deeper and more meaningful ways that span different chapters. We take a similar approach with our coverage of gender-related theories. Rather than including a stand-alone theory chapter, we integrate theories directly in the text where relevant. This encourages students to use and apply theories as organizing frameworks and not simply consider theories in isolation from the phenomena they explain.
- Encourage students to apply the knowledge that they acquire from reading this book to other course material, current events, and their own personal experiences. This allows them to evaluate how their new understandings fit or clash with material they already know, thus deepening processing and increasing the likelihood of retention.

We also incorporate several specific pedagogical tools in each chapter to ensure that readers get the most out of this book. These include the following:

Learning Objectives. We begin each chapter with learning objectives, which contain the main takeaway ideas and cognitive skills that students should learn through a careful reading of the chapter. Per SOTL best practices, we state these as concrete actions (e.g., describe, analyze, and apply) that demonstrate mastery of the material.

Knowledge Pre- and Post-Tests. Each chapter (except the final summary chapter) begins with a short "Test Your Knowledge" quiz that gives the reader a sense of the coverage to come and challenges intuitions about sex and gender. These quizzes prompt metacognition. They allow readers to track changes in their understanding of the material by comparing their pretest answers with the correct answers, which appear at the chapter's end.

Journey of Research. Many topics in the study of gender have long and sometimes controversial histories. The "Journey of Research" feature traces these histories by examining changes in scholars' thinking about specific questions over time. This situates students' understandings of topics within context and illustrates concretely how science continually evolves.

Stop-and-Think Questions. Each chapter contains several "Stop and Think" questions that activate and fine-tune students' critical thinking skills. These questions engage all levels of Bloom's taxonomy—from the lowest-level domain (*remembering*) to the highest-level domain (*creating*)—and many of them engage multiple domains (e.g., both *applying* and *evaluating*). For instance, stop-and-think questions may ask readers to consider a topic more deeply, draw connections between different topics, interpret a finding from multiple theoretical perspectives, or evaluate the pros and cons of a given outcome.

Debates. The study of gender is punctuated by many lively intellectual disagreements, and we detail many of these within the chapter "Debate" feature. While some debates are theoretical, others pertain to the validity, interpretation, or implications of empirical evidence. Debate features present both sides of an issue in an unbiased way and invite readers to weigh the evidence and draw their own informed conclusions. These debates activate readers' critical thinking skills while offering a sense of the reflexive and iterative nature of science.

Sidebars. To capture attention and offer additional detail about topics of interest or new and exciting findings, each chapter includes several short (one- or two-paragraph) sidebars, such as "A Day of Equal Pay?" "Boys and Body Image," and "Transgender Political History."

Chapter Summaries. Each chapter ends with a summary that reiterates the learning objectives from the beginning of the chapter and then briefly recaps the chapter material that is central to student reflection in the process of meeting these objectives.

TEACHING RESOURCES

This text includes an array of instructor teaching materials designed to save you time and to help you keep students engaged. To learn more, visit sagepub.com or contact your SAGE representative at sagepub.com/findmyrep.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE SECOND EDITION?

We are excited to present the second edition of *The Psychology of Sex and Gender*, which reflects a great deal of research, reflection, and decision-making. We had three primary goals in mind when writing the second edition: (1) updating scientific findings, (2) expanding the diversity and inclusion focus, and (3) enhancing the SOTL focus to improve student learning. We implemented these changes broadly across the textbook so that they appear in every chapter. In what follows, we summarize our three goals and then offer a chapter-by-chapter summary of detailed changes.

Updated Science. First, we provided the most up-to-date scientific findings from gender psychology and related fields that study sex and gender. More specifically, we updated our content to include approximately 550 new references in total and 240 from 2018 or later.

Greater Diversity and Inclusion Focus. Second, we expanded our diversity and inclusion focus. For instance, we adopted more gender-inclusive pronouns ("they/them") and terms ("Latinx") throughout, and we covered a wider and more diverse range of cultures, experiences, and perspectives. We also added more empirical research examining gender-related outcomes at the intersections of different social identities (e.g., sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical ability, social class), and we explicitly encourage students to consider how access to power and resources differs at these various intersections of identity.

Enhanced Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) Focus. Third, we made structural and pedagogical changes to the textbook to facilitate student comprehension and learning. For example, we added an updated summary and reflection chapter (Chapter 15, "Gender Past, Present, and Future"), and we reorganized the content in most chapters to enhance clarity and flow. Finally, we bolstered our pedagogical features to capture attention, prompt critical reflection, and encourage connections. As noted, we made these pedagogical changes to increase the transfer of new student knowledge beyond the end of the immediate learning experience.

Detailed Chapter-Level Changes

Chapter 1 Introducing Sex and Gender

- Added new scholarship on symbolic representation and visibility of dominant and subordinate groups in the "Structures of Power and Inequality" section.
- Updated examples of current gender events and controversies from around the world (e.g., recognition of nonbinary and third gender statuses on legal documents; impacts of the #MeToo movement; inclusion of girls and transgender children in the Boy Scouts of America; backlash against gender studies and gender equality movements in Europe).

- Added new sidebars on sexual mistreatment ("The #MeToo Movement") and psychology's need for greater diversity ("Is Psychology Research WEIRD?").
- Added inclusive terminology (Latinx, nonbinary, genderqueer, gender fluid).
- Increased coverage of sociocultural diversity (e.g., controversies surrounding use of "Latinx" as a gender-neutral term; predominance of White men in the Promise Keepers).
- Added new intersectionality content (e.g., steps for adopting intersectional perspectives; description of second-wave feminism).

Chapter 2 Studying Sex and Gender

- Added a new sidebar on the debate about psychological sex differences versus similarities ("Do Many Small Sex Differences Make a Big Difference?").
- Updated the debate on "Should Psychologists Study Sex Differences?"
- Updated coverage of current events related to sex and gender (e.g., the 2019 ban on transgender individuals serving in the U.S. military).
- Added new terminology (variance, person-by-treatment designs).
- Added new scholarship on going beyond the binary to the "Guidelines for Gender-Fair Research" and expanded content into a new subsection on "Guidelines for More Inclusive Research."
- Added cross-cultural and non-U.S. content (e.g., life expectancy around the world; sex differences in burnout among Norwegian physicians).
- Incorporated coverage of nonbinary and agender identities and of intersectional perspectives into the section on "Designing the Study and Collecting Data."

Chapter 3 The Nature and Nurture of Sex and Gender

- Added new scholarship (e.g., the microbiome; gender confirmation procedures for transgender individuals; machine learning; epigenetics) and influential theories (dynamic systems theory).
- Updated current events coverage (e.g., Caster Semenya's court decision; California resolution condemning intersex infant surgery).
- Added new terminology (microbiome, gut-brain axis, machine learning).
- Expanded diversity coverage to go beyond the binary (e.g., roles of income and education in gender confirmation procedures; rights of intersex individuals in genital surgery decisions).
- Added content reflecting non-Western events and experiences (e.g., intersex individuals in developing countries).

Chapter 4 Gender Development

- Added new scholarship on influential topics and theories (e.g., gender-typing of children's bedrooms; the constructivist-ecological perspective; changes in gendered self-views over time).
- Updated examples (e.g., the gender-creative parenting movement; gender reveal parties) and statistics (e.g., children's exposure to media and screens; rates of same-sex dating experiences).
- Added a new sidebar on coping with bullying among LGBTQ youth ("Getting Involved = Getting By?").
- Added new terminology (constructivist-ecological perspective, hegemonic masculinity).
- Expanded material on experiences of gender-nonconforming children.
- Added new cross-cultural coverage (e.g., global adolescent gender norms; cross-cultural same-sex dating experiences).

Chapter 5 The Contents and Origins of Gender Stereotypes

- Added new scholarship on cross-cultural stereotypes (e.g., gender stereotypes in Ghana).
- Added a sidebar on the 2019 U.K. ban on stereotypes in advertisements ("Can We Ban Gender Stereotypes?").
- Updated the debate on "Are Gender Stereotypes Accurate?"
- Added a Stop-and-Think question about positive versus negative stereotypes.
- Expanded coverage of stereotypes about transgender individuals.
- Added new scholarship on intersectionality (e.g., stereotypes based on race and sexual orientation).

Chapter 6 Power, Sexism, and Discrimination

- Added new scholarship on gender nondiscrimination (e.g., different interpretations of Title VII), the personal-group discrimination discrepancy, and the Me Too movement.
- Updated coverage of theories (e.g., sex ratio theory, social dominance theory), concepts (e.g., ethnocentrism, sexism), and statistics (e.g., sex ratios on U.S. college campuses, the Global Gender Gap Index).
- Added a sidebar on the roles of hostile and benevolent sexism in the 2016 U.S. Presidential election ("Can Sexism Elect Presidents?").
- Added cross-cultural and non-U.S. content (e.g., sex differences in land ownership in Africa) and expanded diversity coverage (e.g., use of violence

against LGBT individuals to exert power; microaggressions against individuals with disabilities).

- Incorporated new intersectional material (e.g., unequal access to resources and power among men; workplace bias against women with disabilities; suicidality among LGBT individuals with disabilities).

Chapter 7 Cognitive Abilities and Aptitudes

- Added new scholarship on math anxiety, reading/writing abilities, and women's representation in STEM fields.
- Added a sidebar on stereotypes about White men in films titled "In Hollywood, Brilliance = (White?) Men."
- Added new Stop-and-Think questions about the greater male variability hypothesis and the limitations of binary sex comparisons.
- Added new terminology (education debt, essentialism, eugenics).
- Expanded the cross-cultural focus (e.g., children's reading and math performance across cultures).
- Added intersectional content to highlight systems of inequity (e.g., eugenics and forced sterilizations; achievement gaps and inequities at intersections of sex, race, and income).

Chapter 8 Language, Communication, and Emotion

- Added new scholarship on gendered use of diminutives, gendered topics of gossip, and boys' resistance to masculinity norms.
- Added new sidebars on gendered language in obituaries ("Do Men 'Die' More Than Women?") and links between men's emotional expressions and cardiovascular health ("Men, Emotional Expression, and Health").
- Updated examples of gender-relevant concepts (e.g., Harper Lee's gender-neutral moniker; Kanye West's famous interruption of Taylor Swift).
- Increased coverage of inclusive language (e.g., acceptance of gender-neutral pronouns) and the limitations of binary sex comparisons in language research.
- Added material to expand the intersectional and diversity focus (e.g., interactions of sex and race in assertive language use; code-switching among biracial Black/White individuals).

Chapter 9 Sexual Orientation and Sexuality

- Incorporated a new chapter opener about celebrity coming-out stories to reflect the diversity of sexual orientations.

- Added new scholarship on sexting, sexual assertiveness, biological determinants of sexual orientation, the orgasm gap, sexual pleasure among transwomen, sexual fluidity, and breast cancer risks associated with hormone replacement therapies.
- Updated statistics (e.g., rates of sexual identity in Western cultures; rates of sexual behaviors; disparities among sexual identity, desire, and behavior; heritability of sexual orientations).
- Added a new sidebar ("Transgender ≠ Gay!") on the links between transgender status and sexual orientation.
- Added new terminology (aromantic, sexual assertiveness, sexting, sexologist, arousability, proceptivity).
- Expanded coverage of cultural influences on sexual behavior and cross-cultural stigmatization of same-sex activity.
- Added new material on classes of sexual orientation in young American adults.

Chapter 10 Interpersonal Relationships

- Added new scholarship on social networks, jealousy and cross-sex friendships, and friends with benefits.
- Added new LGBTQ+ inclusive scholarship (e.g., LGBTQ+ friendships; transgender and nonbinary romantic relationships; same-sex marriage rates; experiences of aromantic individuals).
- Expanded cross-cultural and non-U.S. content (e.g., dating scripts across cultures; mate preferences of Belgian students; arranged and autonomous marriages in Turkey; links between country wealth and new mother well-being).
- Increased intersectional coverage (e.g., social network pressures of Black women; chosen families of queer, Latino men; sex and race differences in mate preferences; household labor divisions based on socioeconomic status; hookup rates among Latinx and White U.S. college students).

Chapter 11 Work and Home

- Added new scholarship (e.g., household labor divisions; the glass escalator; workplace sex-based harassment; U.S. women's soccer team's pay discrimination lawsuit; work–family conflict and guilt; the coronavirus pandemic and flexible work arrangements).
- Updated statistics (e.g., paid parental leave in the United States; the gender wage gap; U.S. households headed by same-sex couples; most common occupations by sex; rates of overwork).

- Improved the structure of the "How Does Gender Operate in the Workplace?" section.
- Added new terminology (bystander intervention; comparable worth; glass escalator).
- Increased inclusive language by marking heterosexual relationships throughout to highlight heterocentric bias in research.
- Increased cross-cultural and non-U.S. coverage (e.g., women's housework across cultures; paternity leave among Japanese fathers; Iceland's 2018 wage gap legislation).
- Expanded intersectional focus (e.g., sex and race differences in the glass cliff and glass escalator; race/ethnicity differences in the motherhood penalty; sex and disability differences in workplace stressors).

Chapter 12 Gender and Physical Health

- Added a new section titled "What Do We Know About Sex-Specific Health Issues?" covering andrology and gynecology, X-linked diseases, and sex differences in cancer rates and treatment efficacy.
- Updated statistics throughout (e.g., life expectancy; obesity and physical activity rates; leading causes of death; HIV rates among transwomen; homicide rates and life expectancy).
- Added two new sidebars on transgender-relevant topics ("Life Expectancy in the Transgender Community" and "Advocating for Trans-Positive Medical Research").
- Added new terminology (andrology, fibroids, gynecology, hemophilia, muscular dystrophy, Rett syndrome, minority stress theory).
- Expanded coverage of transgender issues (e.g., the need for HIV research; heart attack rates; hormone treatment and breast cancer risk).
- Added cross-cultural and non-U.S. content (e.g., Nigerian and Kenyan mother–daughter puberty discussions; gender-affirming treatments in Europe; the isolation of menstruating Nepali girls and women).
- Expanded coverage of intersectionality in a new section titled "Sex, Race/Ethnicity, Socioeconomic Status, and Culture."

Chapter 13 Gender and Psychological Health

- Added new scholarship on epigenetic factors in depression, sexting among adolescents, the American Psychological Association guidelines for counseling boys and men, and body dysmorphic disorder in men.
- Updated details and statistics (e.g., classification of transgender identity in psychiatry manuals; global rates of eating disorders; homelessness among LGBTQ youth).

- Added new sidebars on links among sex, rumination, and sexism ("Ruminating About Sexism?"), correlates of sexting ("Sexting and Mental Health"), and body image activism ("The Body Positivity Movement").
- Added new terminology (serial victimization, misgendered).
- Updated the debate "Do Women Suffer from Depression More Than Men?"
- Added material to be more LGBTQ+ inclusive (e.g., links of gender-affirming procedures with body satisfaction/eating disorders in transgender adults).
- Expanded coverage of intersectional topics (e.g., on internalizing disorders by sex and race/ethnicity; sexual violence and mental illness by sex and disability status; eating disorders in women by race/ethnicity).

Chapter 14 Aggression and Violence

- Added new scholarship on bullying, male sexual assault victims, intimate partner violence control tactics, cultural scripts and sexual aggression, and predictors of perpetrating LGBTQ violence.
- Updated statistics (e.g., college campus sexual violence rates; violent crime and imprisonment rates by sex).
- Added new sidebars on nonphysical partner abuse ("#MaybeHeDoesntHitYou") and homicides of LGBTQ individuals ("The Legacies of Brandon Teena and Matthew Shepard").
- Added new terminology (e.g., bullying, flaming, denigrating, excluding, outing).
- Improved chapter structure (e.g., by adding a "Violent Crime" subsection and moving the debate and the "Sex-Based Harassment" subsection).
- Added cross-cultural and non-U.S. content (e.g., bullying rates around the world; cyberbullying in European countries).
- Expanded focus on intersectionality (e.g., violent victimization based on sexual orientation, race, and socioeconomic status).

Chapter 15 Gender Past, Present, and Future

- Moved the chapter from the supplementary materials (first edition) to the textbook (second edition).
- Added new scholarship on evolutionary psychology, the nature–nurture of testosterone, sex similarities in gonadal hormones, dynamic systems theory, women's objectification and collective action, and big data methods and sexuality.
- Restructured the chapter to improve flow (e.g., rearranged content across "Gender Past," Gender Present," and "Gender Future" sections).

- Updated two sidebars ("Transgender Political History" and "Did Me Too Anger You, Too?").
- Added new terminology (dynamic systems approach, gender paradox in happiness, big data).
- Increased cross-cultural coverage (e.g., women's voting rights; rates of nonbinary and agender individuals).
- Expanded the intersectional focus (e.g., gender wage gap based on race; sexual objectification by sex and race; gender paradox of happiness by race; use of the term "intersectionality" in psychology literature).

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Joe: My teaching has been most inspired by my own teachers, whose passion and enthusiasm for their subjects were infectious. Three teachers, in particular, remain with me today: Gary Steeples (my seventh-grade math teacher, who inspired a love of learning), Bob Baron (my undergraduate psychology instructor, who solidified my career path), and Dov Cohen (my graduate school advisor, whose many lessons resonate with me daily). Although I am now a teacher, I remain a student, and my own students are some of my most valuable teachers.

Jennifer K. Bosson

Camille E. Buckner

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Camille E. Buckner loves to think and learn new things, especially about gender. After graduating from Rice University with a BA in psychology and French in 1991, she got her PhD in social-personality psychology from the University of Texas at Austin in 1997 under the mentorship of Janet Spence. Camille is a professor of psychology at Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia, and she loves teaching, learning from her students, and following their paths after graduation. She most enjoys teaching courses on research design, cultural psychology, and gender psychology, and her research interests include gender stereotyping and discrimination, inclusive classrooms and communities, and best practices in teaching and learning. She and her family appreciate living in the multicultural DC metro area.

Joseph A. Vandello grew up as the second of three children in a small town in Iowa. He received his BS from the University of Iowa in 1994 and received his PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2000. In 2002, he joined the Psychology Department at the University of South Florida. His culturally homogenous (i.e., White, middle-class) upbringing fed a curiosity about understanding the diversity of the human experience outside of his small corner of the world and led him to study social psychology as a career. He has broad research interests in understanding manhood and masculinity, aggression, honor, underdogs, interracial interactions, and moral judgments.

UNIT ONE

FOUNDATIONS

Actress and activist Laverne Cox.

Source: Getty Images / Sarah Morris / Staff

Test Your Knowledge: True or False?

1.1 Life experiences can cause biological differences between women and men.

1.2 There are only two biological sexes: male and female.

1.3 Throughout human history, there is evidence that some societies were true matriarchies in which women ruled the society, controlled how it operated, and held more power than men.

1.4 Many people who believe in feminist principles do not identify as feminists.

1.5 The American Psychiatric Association considers transgender identity to be a clinically diagnosable psychological disorder.

INTRODUCING SEX AND GENDER

Key Concepts

How Do We Explain Central Concepts in the Psychology of Sex and Gender?

- Sex and Gender
- The Sex and Gender Binaries
- Masculinity and Femininity
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Intersectionality

What Makes Sex and Gender So Complicated?

- Complexity and Change
- Ubiquity and Invisibility

How Have Gender Movements Shaped History?

- Structures of Power and Inequality
- Women's Movements and the Rise of Feminisms
  - *Women's Movements*
  - *Feminisms*
- *Debate: Are Men Overlooked in Feminist Movements?*
- Men's Movements
- Gay Rights Movements
- The Transgender Movement
- Where Are We Now? Inclusivity and Intersectionality

About This Book

- Our (Interdisciplinary) Psychological Approach
- Our Challenge to You: Critical Thinking

Learning Objectives

Students who read this chapter should be able to do the following:

1.1 Explain central terminology in the study of sex and gender.

1.2 Evaluate how culture, gender identity, and sexual orientation shape the experience and expression of sex and gender.

1.3 Evaluate the meaning and relevance of feminisms, gender movements, and systems of power, privilege, and inequality.

1.4 Demonstrate how to approach the textbook material in "critical thinking mode."

INTRODUCING SEX AND GENDER

Why study sex and gender? These topics invite scrutiny because they are, at the same time, both central to the daily lives of most people and near-constant sources of controversy around the world. A few examples will illustrate both progress and pushback regarding sex and gender. In 2014, Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani girl who survived a murder attempt by the Taliban, became the youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner for her work advocating for girls' education rights around the world. In 2015, Laverne Cox, an actress, film producer, and transgender activist, became the first openly transgender person to win an Emmy Award for her documentary on trans youth entitled *Laverne Cox Presents: The T Word*. Also in 2015, the United Nations endorsed an initiative called "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality," with over 90 countries vowing to take concrete steps to decrease gender inequality. Following U.S. President Donald Trump's inauguration in early 2017, people of all sexes worldwide staged the largest collective protest in human history (the "Women's Marches") to advocate for basic human rights for all, regardless of sex, gender, race, class, ability, religion, or sexual orientation (Frostenson, 2017). Later that year, the Me Too movement—founded by Tarana Burke in 2006—went viral worldwide on Twitter. This movement aims to raise awareness of sexual violence and support its survivors, particularly those who are overlooked due to age, race, gender identity, or ability status. In 2017, the Boy Scouts of America opened its doors to transgender children for the first time and in 2019, it allowed girls to join. And the list goes on.

As advocates pursue gender equality, others push back. After the Obama administration changed a long-standing policy to allow transgender people to serve openly in the U.S. military in 2016, the Trump administration reversed the decision and reinstated the ban in 2019 (Sonne & Marimow, 2019). In 2018, corresponding with the rise of right-wing nationalism in Europe, Hungary banned university gender studies programs, Bulgaria banned a United Nations gender equality project in schools, and Italy blocked academic research on classroom bullying based on race, gender, and sexual orientation (Apperly, 2019). Leaders in these countries view gender studies as ideology, not science, and believe it undermines male authority, traditional families, and notions of sex as biological fact. A recent Vatican document written to clarify how Catholic educators should approach sex and gender education echoed these concerns (Congregation for Catholic Education, 2019). While the document calls for more listening and dialogue, it asserts that sex is a biological binary (with only two options, male and female) whose purpose is to ensure procreation. The document also asserts that since men are naturally masculine and women are naturally feminine, any deviations from this are unnatural and destabilize the family. Gender psychologists find these concepts and controversies interesting and important, and we will discuss them further in this chapter and throughout this book.

Sex and gender have the power to shape identities, interpersonal interactions, opportunities, and societal institutions. It would be difficult to escape their influence,

even if we tried. In this book, we examine the roles that sex and gender play on individual, interpersonal, social, and cultural levels. Along the way, we address questions such as these: How have ideas about sex and gender changed over time, and how do they vary from culture to culture? How do gendered environments shape brain development? How do people of various sexes and gender identities differ? How do sex, gender, race, class, physical ability, and sexual orientation interact to shape our identities, life experiences, and opportunities? We hope that you share our interest in these—and many other—questions about the psychology of sex and gender.

While the field of psychology got its official start in the late 1800s, researchers in mainstream psychology did not consider gender a legitimate topic of study for much of the field's history (Chrisler & McHugh, 2018). This began to change in the 1970s, largely due to an upsurge in the scholarship of feminist psychologists at the time (for more on this, see the "Women's Movements and the Rise of Feminisms" section of this chapter). Since then, the scientific study of sex and gender has grown exponentially, with methods and theories becoming more sophisticated over time. In this book, you will learn about the most central theories and research findings on sex and gender.

This chapter sets the stage for the rest of the book by introducing you to some important terms and concepts and situating the study of sex and gender within a historical context. It lays the foundation for future chapters that will go into greater depth and detail.

The #MeToo Movement

In 2006, civil rights activist Tarana Burke founded the Me Too movement to foster healing among girls and women of color who survived sexual violence and to organize advocates to decrease sexual violence. After the *New York Times* published a 2017 story about decades of sexual harassment and assault by film producer Harvey Weinstein (Kantor & Twohey, 2017), actress Alyssa Milano urged women to tweet #MeToo if they had experienced sexual harassment or assault. The hashtag went viral, with over 1.7 million people from around the globe tweeting their #MeToo stories (LaMotte, 2017). Some criticize the Me Too movement for fostering a "guilty until proven innocent" mentality and privileging the experiences of wealthy, educated, White women (White, 2017). Despite this, *Time* magazine named the Me Too silence breakers as its 2017 "Person of the Year" in recognition of the public attention that they brought to sexual harassment and assault. It will be interesting to follow how the movement evolves and what societal changes result.

HOW DO WE EXPLAIN CENTRAL CONCEPTS IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX AND GENDER?

To communicate about sex and gender effectively, it is important to understand some basic terminology. In this section, we clarify the terminology used throughout this book, but keep in mind that not all scholars agree on the definitions of terms such as *sex* and *gender*. When relevant, we acknowledge disagreements and clarify our preferred conceptualizations. See Table 1.1 for an overview of terms.

Table 1.1 Central Terminology in the Psychology of Sex and Gender

Term	Central Question	Examples
Sex	Which category does an individual occupy?	Male, female, or outside the binary (e.g., intersex)
Gender	What attributes and experiences (traits, interests, roles, attitudes, stereotypes, socialization practices, etc.) are associated with the different sex categories?	Masculine (or male-typed), feminine (or female-typed), androgynous, agendered
Gender identity	How does an individual identify their gender internally?	Boy, girl, man, woman, transgender man (transman), transgender woman (transwoman), agender, genderqueer, nonbinary
Sex–gender correspondence	Does an individual's gender identity match their assigned sex?	Yes (cisgender), no (transgender, agender, nonbinary)
Gender expression	How does an individual express themselves outwardly (via dress, social behavior, etc.)?	Masculine (male-typed), feminine (female-typed), androgynous, nonbinary
Gender roles	What social roles are associated with the different sex categories?	Male-typed (provider/protector), female-typed (caretaker/homemaker), androgynous
Gender traits	What are an individual's personality characteristics?	Masculine (male-typed), feminine (female-typed), androgynous
Gender role attitudes	What do people believe are the proper roles for individuals to occupy based on their sex?	Attitudes fall on a continuum from traditional to egalitarian
Gender stereotypes	What attributes do people associate with members of different sexes and genders?	Women are stereotyped as emotional and kind (communal). Men are stereotyped as decisive and independent (agentic). Transgender people are stereotyped as similar to cisgender people in some ways, but as unique in other ways
Sexual orientation	What are the sexes or genders of others to whom an individual feels romantic and/or sexual attraction?	Straight, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, fluid

STOP AND THINK

Examine Table 1.1 and consider where you fall on these dimensions of sex and gender. Do you consider yourself feminine, masculine, androgynous, or none of the above? How do you express your gender outwardly to others? Is gender a salient aspect of your daily life and how you see yourself? Why or why not? Have your gender attributes changed over time? If so, how?

Sex and Gender

In a classic article, Rhoda Unger (1979) argued that the meaning of the word *sex* was unclear in psychological research because it was overused. *Sex* referred to *sex* chromosomes and *sex*ual anatomy—both of which are biological factors—as well as to *sex* roles and *sex* differences in personality, which arguably reflect sociocultural influences. Although it referred to different types of factors, the term *sex* was often interpreted in a biological sense. Thus, differences between men and women were labeled *sex differences* and were assumed to reflect biological causes. However, differences between women and men do not always—or even mostly—stem from biological factors.

To reduce ambiguity about the causes and interpretations of sex differences, Rhoda Unger (1979) suggested using the term *gender* to refer to the nonbiological, culturally constructed aspects of being female or male and the term *sex* when discussing the biological aspects. Unfortunately, this is not as easy as it might seem, for at least two reasons. First, for any given difference between the sexes, we do not know precisely how much of it stems from biology and how much stems from socialization, cultural norms, and life experience. Take sex differences in physical aggression. On average, boys and men are more physically aggressive than girls and women (Archer, 2019). However, this difference reflects a complex combination of biological and social factors. For instance, the hormone testosterone predicts aggression, and men have higher levels of testosterone than women do (Severson & Barclay, 2015). But boys and men are also socialized to perform physically active, risky behavior and to deal with negative emotion by directing it outward (Kågesten et al., 2016). These two factors interact to contribute to sex differences in aggression, which makes it very difficult to disentangle the root cause of any observed sex difference.

Second, even the very meanings of *biological* and *social* factors can be somewhat fuzzy. People generally understand hormones as biological factors and socialization as a set of social factors. However, performing male-typed behaviors can increase testosterone in women, and performing female-typed behaviors can decrease testosterone in men. Since women and men learn from experience to perform male-typed and female-typed behaviors at different rates, some researchers question whether seemingly *biological* testosterone differences between the sexes might actually reflect the result of gender socialization experiences (van Anders, Steiger, & Goldey, 2015; van Anders, Tolman, & Jainagaraj, 2014). In other words, differentiating biological from social causes is not straightforward, a topic we will explore more fully in Chapter 3 ("The Nature and Nurture of Sex and Gender").

Sex A term typically used to categorize people as male, female, or intersex.

Gender The meanings that people give to the different sex categories. Gender includes broad sets of attributes and experiences (e.g., identities, traits, interests, roles, attitudes, stereotypes, and socialization practices) commonly associated with sex.

To resolve the issue in this book, we follow a convention adopted by Alice Eagly (2013) and use the word **sex** to refer to categories of people based on whether they are male, female, or outside the binary (more on this in a moment). Thus, when we refer to *sex differences*, we usually mean average differences between women and men, as the vast majority of research on sex differences focuses exclusively on people who identify themselves as falling into one of these two categories. In the next section, we will discuss problems with this system of categorizing sex. For now, note that our use of the word "sex" when discussing differences between people does not imply anything about the causes (biological or social) of these differences. In contrast, we use the term **gender** to refer to the meanings that people give to the different sex categories. Thus, gender refers to broad sets of identities, traits, interests, roles, tendencies, attitudes, stereotypes, and socialization practices commonly associated with sex. For instance, gender roles are social roles (e.g., provider or caretaker) that are typically associated with people based on sex. Importantly, aspects of gender often differ by age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture, social class, and historical era, a point that we will emphasize throughout this book. As with our use of the term *sex*, our use of the term *gender* implies nothing about the causes of the phenomenon in question.

Soothing a crying infant can cause temporary decreases in men's testosterone levels, which raises this question: Do hormones cause changes in gender-typed behavior, or does gender-typed behavior cause changes in hormones?

Source: © iStockphoto.com/bukharova

The Sex and Gender Binaries

The **sex and gender binaries** refer to overarching social systems that conceptualize sex (male or female) and gender (masculine or feminine) as consisting of two opposite, nonoverlapping categories. Most (though not all) human societies and cultures operate under the framework of the sex binary, in large part because this binary tends to streamline social interactions, organize labor divisions, and modulate social institutions. However, the binary also oversimplifies the complexity of the natural world. In fact, nature offers a lot of variety when it comes to the biological components of sex (Fausto-Sterling, 2000). In a review of medical studies published between 1955 and 2000, biologist Anne Fausto-Sterling and her colleagues estimated that approximately 1.7% of human infants are born intersex (Blackless et al., 2000). **Intersexuality** is a condition in which the biological components of sex (chromosomes, hormones, and internal and external sex organs) do not consistently fit the typical female or typical male pattern. When we wrote that "sex" refers to categories of people who are male, female, or outside the binary, this is an example of what we meant by "outside the binary." Intersexuality takes many forms, and you will learn more about these in Chapter 3 ("The Nature and Nurture of Sex and Gender"). For now, an example of intersexuality is an individual who is genetically male (XY) with undescended testicles and external genitalia that look female. This happens when people are born with complete androgen insensitivity syndrome (CAIS). Because they appear female, infants with CAIS often are assigned female

at birth and raised as girls, leading them to develop a female gender identity despite having male sex chromosomes.

The complexity of biological factors underlying sex illustrates that sex does not operate cleanly in a binary fashion with only two categories. Taking this idea further, some scholars propose that the very idea of "biological sex" (the categories of male, female, and intersex) is a social construction (Marecek, Crawford, & Popp, 2004). This means that the categories of sex are not fixed, universal facts in nature but instead are shaped and constructed by different belief systems within specific cultures. By extension, the sex binary is also not a fixed, universal reality. Think about how people within a given culture respond when an intersex baby is born. When parents and doctors view intersex babies as anomalies and use surgery to make them fit into the sex binary, this demonstrates the social construction of "biological" sex. That is, people socially agree that there are only two natural sexes, when nature clearly offers more than two. To reflect on this point further, consider the following quote:

> The genitals of [intersex individuals] are only ambiguous if they must be labeled as female or male (i.e., seen in terms of two nonoverlapping categories). If sex is not dimorphic, then the intersexed do not have ambiguous genitals but *variations* of the two more commonly known forms. In other words, what looks like ambiguity from the perspective of a two-sex categorization scheme is natural variation viewed from outside that scheme. (Golden, 2008, p. 139)

Similar to the sex binary, the gender binary—the assumption that individuals embody *either* masculine *or* feminine traits and tendencies—does not validly describe the human experience. In fact, the reality of **androgyny** counters the gender binary. Androgyny refers to possessing high levels of both stereotypically masculine (e.g., assertive and independent) and feminine (e.g., warm and gentle) traits (Bem, 1974). As we will discuss, masculinity and femininity are complex, multidimensional constructs, and some dimensions (e.g., gender-related occupational preferences) show more evidence of being binary than others (e.g., gender-related personality traits; Lippa, 2005).

The sex and gender binaries are thus oversimplified categorical structures that people often impose on the world. Some cultures do, however, recognize more than two sexes and genders, with a great deal of cross-cultural variety emerging in the meanings, norms, and beliefs that people attach to these groups. For example, *two-spirit people* are Native American and Indigenous North American individuals who live outside the sex/gender binary and adopt elements of both the female and male gender roles. In India, *hijras* are a separate caste of people who live as neither men nor women and are considered sacred within Hinduism. In the Western Balkans, *sworn virgins* are biologically female but live as men and can never marry. In Iraq, *mustergil* are women who live like men but can return to the female gender role to marry (Lang & Kuhnle, 2008). These examples demonstrate some of the many ways that cultures attach meaning to **nonbinary** individuals who are neither male nor female. While many Western cultures have been slow to recognize and accept people who fall outside the sex and gender binaries, this is gradually changing. We will return to this idea later in the chapter (see the section "Complexity and Change").

Sex binary The conceptualization of sex as consisting of two opposite and nonoverlapping categories, such as male or female.

Gender binary The conceptualization of gender as consisting of two opposite and nonoverlapping categories, such as masculine or feminine.

Intersexuality A condition in which the biological components of sex (chromosomes, hormones, and internal and external sex organs) do not consistently fit the typical female or typical male pattern.

Androgyny Possession of high levels of both stereotypically male-typed and female-typed traits.

Nonbinary (or genderqueer) Describes people who fall outside the sex and gender binaries and identify as neither man nor woman; an umbrella term capturing many forms of identity.

STOP AND THINK

Why do you think certain people and certain cultures enforce sex and gender binaries? What do cultures gain from this? Why are some people and some cultures more accepting than others of going beyond sex and gender binaries? What features of a culture might correlate with the tendency to acknowledge more than two sexes and genders?

Masculinity Possession of physical and psychological attributes typically associated with men.

Femininity Possession of physical and psychological attributes typically associated with women.

Masculinity and Femininity

What makes someone masculine, feminine, androgynous, or none of the above? It has been surprisingly difficult for gender researchers to answer these questions. In a groundbreaking article, Anne Constantinople (1973) declared masculinity and femininity to be two of the muddiest concepts in the psychological literature. Despite this, researchers generally agree that **masculinity** is the possession of physical and psychological attributes typically associated with men, and **femininity** is the possession of physical and psychological attributes typically associated with women. As noted, psychological androgyny is the possession of high levels of both masculine and feminine attributes.

Is Androgyny Good for Your Health?

Having an androgynous personality means being high in both male-typed traits (e.g., "analytical" and "independent") and female-typed traits (e.g., "affectionate" and "understanding"). Since both of these types of traits predict positive outcomes in important life domains (e.g., personal achievement, interpersonal relationships), some researchers proclaim androgyny to be "good for your health." In fact, one large study of over 4,800 White, Black, and youth examined the correlations between androgyny scores and quality of life across physical, emotional, social, and school domains (S. M. Scott et al., 2015). Androgyny correlated positively with quality of life but only among White and Latina girls. Among boys, high levels of male-typed traits and low levels of female-typed traits best predicted quality of life. Why do you think these different patterns of associations might emerge for girls and boys?

Latinx A gender-neutral term referring to someone of Latin American heritage.

Before leaving this section, we would like to comment on our use of the term "Latinx" in Sidebar 1.2. This is the gender-inclusive term that we use throughout the book to refer to mixed-sex (female and male), genderqueer, and nonbinary individuals or groups of Latin American descent. This term is not without controversy, as some—particularly older members of the Latinx community—view it as disrespectful

to their traditional Latin culture. At the same time, younger generations—particularly genderqueer Millennials—embrace the term because it allows them to acknowledge their ethnicity and gender identity simultaneously (BELatina, 2019). As with any term of identity, we think it is important for people to use the term that they prefer, but given the focus of this book, we will use the more gender-inclusive term "Latinx" when relevant.

Gender Identity

Gender identity refers to individuals' psychological experience of their gender and how they identify their gender such as man, woman, nonbinary, or genderqueer. Gender identity often (though not always) involves feeling a basic sense of belongingness to a sex category. Most people—referred to as **cisgender**—experience a match between their assigned sex at birth and the gender with which they feel a sense of belonging. Conversely, **transgender** individuals experience a mismatch between their assigned sex at birth and their psychological sense of their gender. Moreover, some people are **agender**, meaning that they feel internally ungendered and do not associate with a sex category. Others identify as **gender fluid**, meaning that their gender identities shift over time and depend on the situation. For example, gender fluid individuals might shift between identifying as a woman and a man, or they might shift between binary (female vs. male) and nonbinary identities.

Gender identity
Individuals' psychological experience of their gender and how they identify their gender such as man, woman, nonbinary, or genderqueer.

Cisgender
Describes people who experience a match between their sex assigned at birth and their psychological gender identity.

Transgender
Describes people whose psychological gender identity does not align with their assigned sex at birth.

Gender-Neutral Pronouns?

Some transgender, agender, and nonbinary individuals prefer that others use gender-neutral pronouns (e.g., *ze* instead of *she* or *he* and *zir* instead of *her* or *him*) when referring to them (Bennett, 2016). Others prefer plural pronouns (e.g., *they/them*), while some are indifferent to pronouns. Because it can be difficult to know which pronouns people prefer—and calling people by the wrong pronouns may be viewed as disrespectful—it is considered polite simply to ask.

In her multifactorial theory of gender identity, Janet Spence notes that a wide variety of attributes (e.g., roles, traits, interests, and attitudes) shape gender identity and that these attributes are uncorrelated factors that vary greatly from person to person (Spence, 1993; Spence & Buckner, 1995). For example, knowing that someone identifies as a man (a male gender identity) would not necessarily allow us to predict whether he also likes sports (a male-typed interest), makes decisions easily (a male-typed trait), or occupies a leadership position (a male-typed role). For some individuals, these attributes do align in a male-typed manner; for others, they do not. Moreover, while people's gender identity can reflect many different constellations of these gender attributes, Spence argued

Agender
Describes people who feel internally ungendered.

Gender fluid
Describes people whose gender identity shifts or changes flexibly rather than remaining constant.

Gay Typically refers to a man who is attracted only (or primarily) to men.

Lesbian Refers to a woman who is attracted only (or primarily) to women.

Bisexual Typically signifies being attracted to women and men.

Heterosexual Signifies being attracted only (or primarily) to persons of the other sex (in a binary, male–female system).

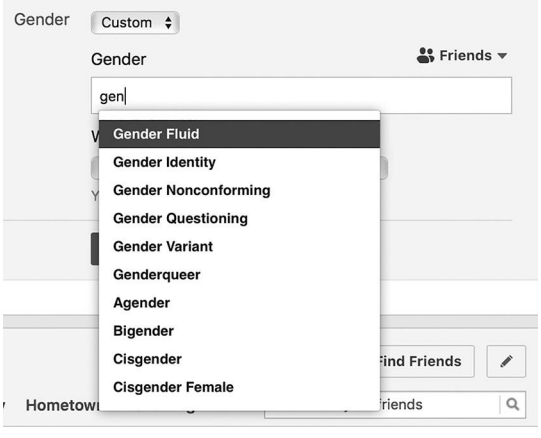
Pansexual Signifies being attracted to people of all sexes and gender identities.

that most people develop a sense of belongingness to their assigned sex early in life and maintain this identity throughout life.

While Spence's (1993) theory acknowledges the multidimensionality of gender, it fails to account for the full spectrum of nonbinary and fluid gender identities that people feel and express. Recognizing the complexity of gender identity, Kay Deaux and Abigail Stewart (2001) caution against viewing gender identity as a single, inflexible identity that emerges early in life and remains stable. They instead view gender identity as a set of overlapping identities that are negotiated dynamically and shaped by norms and other people in social contexts.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation refers to people's tendency to develop romantic and sexual attractions to others based on their sex. Note that gender identity is independent of sexual orientation. For example, a biologically female person who identifies as a woman and is attracted only to women would be considered a cisgender lesbian, whereas a biologically male person who identifies as a woman and is attracted only to men would be a transgender heterosexual woman (or heterosexual transwoman). Sexual orientation category labels include **gay**, **lesbian**, **bisexual**, **heterosexual**, **pansexual**, and **asexual**. Of course, just as imposing category labels oversimplifies sex and gender, some argue that labeling sexual orientation categories also oversimplifies reality. Proponents of this view point to the fact that sexual orientation is a complex, multidimensional construct that consists—at the very least—of cognitive, motivational, and behavioral factors (Herek, 2000), as you will read more about in Chapter 9 ("Sexual Orientation and Sexuality").



Reflecting the complexity of gender identity, Facebook added over 50 gender identity options in 2014.

Intersectionality

Traditional psychological perspectives on sex and gender tend to view "women" and "men" as uniform groups rather than focusing on the differences among them. This approach ignores the fact that people belong not only to a sex or gender identity category but simultaneously to categories of race, class, age, nationality, religion, physical ability, and sexual orientation. It also ignores cultural and historical contexts that give power and privilege to certain groups while disadvantaging others. In contrast, **intersectionality** involves examining how people's life experiences differ due to the levels of privilege and structural inequality associated with their specific location across various demographic categories (Collins, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991). For example, would young, Black transmen experience the same job opportunities as young, White, cisgender men? Rather than just focusing on how "young men" as a group are impacted by ageism, an intersectional perspective might

focus on how gender identity interacts with racism to shape the opportunities of young, transgender Black men.

Cole (2009) encourages psychologists to adopt a more intersectional approach by taking three important steps. First, researchers should ask who is included in the social categories of the people they study (in order to determine who may be excluded). For example, a researcher who examines access to reproductive health care in a sample of primarily young, educated, White women should consider who is left out and not assume her findings represent all women. Second, Cole challenges researchers to consider the role of structural inequalities in shaping participants' experiences (e.g., how racism impacts homelessness in transgender youth of color). Finally, Cole encourages researchers to look for commonalities in their participants' experiences, despite differences in their identities (e.g., how sexual assault experiences could unite low-income, transwomen of color and wealthy, White, cisgender women). These practices may prompt researchers to view categories such as race and gender within broader contexts of privilege and discrimination, rather than simply viewing them as internal features of individuals. In sum, a nuanced understanding of sex and gender will require psychologists to examine more fully the intersecting identities and social inequalities that shape people's lives. We return to this idea in the upcoming section "Women's Movements and the Rise of Feminisms."

Asexual
Signifies having a lack of desire for sex or sexual partners.

Intersectionality
An approach that examines how social categories (sex, gender, race, class, age, physical ability, sexual orientation), and the advantages and disadvantages associated with them, interact to shape people's life experiences and opportunities.

Is Psychology Research WEIRD?

The vast majority of the research samples in psychology consist of people from majority Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) nations (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010). And yet, WEIRD people constitute only 12% of the world's population. Furthermore, WEIRD samples consist mostly of White, American, undergraduate college students (Arnett, 2008), making them unrepresentative of the racial, ethnic, and class diversity within the United States. This suggests that we should be cautious about generalizing psychological findings to all people in the United States and worldwide. It also indicates a strong need for research on more diverse people.

WHAT MAKES SEX AND GENDER SO COMPLICATED?

As you have likely realized by now, sex and gender are far more complicated than they may appear at first. In this section, we discuss some complexities in how individuals and cultures think about sex and gender, and we examine the tendency for sex and gender to fall out of consciousness and become invisible.

Complexity and Change

While several non-Western cultures have long recognized third and fourth categories of sex and gender, most Western cultures recognize only two sexes. However, this is gradually changing, as understandings of sex and gender become more complex. Consider the cases of Alex MacFarlane and Norrie May-Welby in Australia. In 2003, Alex MacFarlane became the first Australian (and likely the first person in the world) to indicate a third sex ("X") identity on a passport ("Ten Years of 'X' Passports," 2013). MacFarlane has Klinefelter syndrome, an intersex condition in which the individual's sex chromosomes are XXY, rather than the more common XX (female) or XY (male). In Western cultures, people with Klinefelter syndrome are typically assigned male at birth and accordingly develop a male gender identity, but MacFarlane identifies as nonbinary.

Between 2003 and 2011, the Australian government offered the third sex option on passports only for intersex individuals like MacFarlane. From 2011 to 2014, Australia gradually broadened its policies to allow nonbinary individuals to specify a third sex/gender option on official documents as long as they provided a letter signed by a medical doctor. This change came about largely due to the efforts of Norrie May-Welby. Assigned male at birth, May-Welby had **genital reconstructive surgery** in 1989 but subsequently came to identify as both male and female simultaneously. In 2014, the High Court of Australia ruled that May-Welby had the legal right to register as gender nonspecific, which paved the way for other nonbinary Australians to do the same (Rawstron, 2014). Now, this third gender is recognized by the Australian census.

Genital reconstructive surgery Surgery that alters the appearance, location, or function of genital tissue. People seek genital reconstructive surgery for a wide range of reasons; transgender individuals may seek such surgery to bring the appearance or function of their genitalia into greater alignment with their psychological gender identity.

Between 2007 and 2015, several other countries (e.g., Bangladesh, Denmark, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, and New Zealand) followed suit and added a third sex/gender option on various official documents (Byrne, 2014; Macarow, 2015). In the United States, no third sex/gender option was offered on official documents until recently, when New York City issued the first intersex birth certificate in late 2016 to Sara Kelly Keenan (Scutti, 2017). In 2017, Oregon became the first state to allow a third gender option on identity cards such as driver's licenses (A. Ferguson, 2017). By 2019, nine U.S. states recognized a nonbinary gender status on driver's licenses (Lang & Sosin, 2019).

Why is this important? Cases like those of Alex MacFarlane and Norrie May-Welby illustrate not only the complexity of sex and gender but also the powerful roles of social and cultural factors in shaping our understandings of sex and gender. Some social understandings of sex and gender have remained remarkably similar across time and cultures, while others change quite rapidly. For example, the tendency to view women as warmer and more moral than men remains steady across time and culture (Glick et al., 2000). In contrast, beliefs about the existence and acceptability of third sex/gender options show a great deal of cross-cultural variability and, in some cultures, have changed substantially over the past 15 years.

Toddler Fashion Flashback

Sex-typed styles of dress have changed a lot over time. For example, take a look at this image of a famous American. Who do you think this is? In fact, this is a 2-year-old Franklin D. Roosevelt (the 32nd president of the United States) in 1884. In the late 19th century, Americans considered this outfit gender neutral rather than feminine. At the time, people dressed girls and boys similarly—in dresses—until age 6 or 7 years (Paoletti, 2012).

Who is this famous American?

Getty Images / Bettmann / Contributor

Regardless of this change, sex and gender are powerful *schemas*—or mental frameworks—through which most people process their social worlds. At the same time, we do not always notice their influence. Let's examine this paradox further.

Ubiquity and Invisibility

Sex and gender play pervasive roles in many aspects of life, from our appearance and dress, occupations, educational and political outcomes, and physical health to our interpretations of basic constructs like colors and food. For example, across cultures, people typically associate red meat (especially steak and hamburgers), potatoes, and beer with men and salad, pasta, yogurt, fruit, and chocolate with women (Sobal, 2005). In the United States, people tend to associate pink with girls and blue with boys (Paoletti, 2012). Around the world, about 55% of all languages are gendered, with nouns designated as masculine, feminine, or gender neutral (Prewitt-Freilino, Caswell, & Laakso, 2012). A quick Internet search for "gender in the news" reveals hundreds of stories about topics such as gender stereotypes ("Gender Stereotypes Banned in British Advertising"; Safronova, 2019), gender and parenting ("Couple Raises Child as Gender-Neutral 'They-by'"; Ritschel, 2018), and the gender wage gap ("U.S. Women's Team and U.S. Soccer Agree to Mediate Gender Discrimination Lawsuit," 2019). At the same time, because the influence of gender on our everyday interactions and behaviors is so routine and normalized, we sometimes fail to notice it. While de-emphasizing gender can be positive, sociologist Judith Lorber (1994) argues that we should make gender even more visible in certain situations, as a way of

challenging norms, beliefs, and institutions that reinforce gender inequality. But how can we make sex and gender more visible?

One way is by flipping gender norms for men and women to expose how they operate. For example, in a 2015 video created by the Cover the Athlete campaign, reporters asked world-class male athletes questions routinely asked of female athletes. Examples included the following: If you could date anyone in the world, who would you date? How has your weight gain affected your mobility? Could you give us a twirl and tell us about your outfit? Male athletes responded with disbelief and open irritation to these questions, illustrating the absurdity of gender norms that make topics such as appearance and sexuality acceptable fodder for interviews with female athletes.

People can also make the influence of sex and gender more visible by discussing it directly. To this end, we will regularly ask you in this book to reflect on and evaluate how sex and gender shape people at individual, interpersonal, and societal levels. It is perhaps not surprising that the extent to which people recognize the influence of sex and gender depends on the groups to which they belong. For example, the more dominant and privileged the group (as with male or cisgender individuals), the less group members tend to recognize the influence of sex and gender in their daily lives (Case, Hensley, & Anderson, 2014; McIntosh, 2012). Conversely, less privileged groups (female and transgender individuals, for example) tend to more readily recognize the influence of gender in their lives.

Privilege is an automatic, unearned advantage that accompanies membership in certain social groups. In many Western cultures, privilege is associated with being male, White, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, and wealthy. Because privilege often comes with an absence of certain experiences (e.g., an absence of discrimination or an absence of stressful identity-based encounters), it can be difficult to recognize when one has it. Inspired by an essay about White privilege by Peggy McIntosh (1989), some educators use "privilege lists" to encourage members of dominant groups to recognize how their group status shapes their experiences (Killermann, 2013). See Table 1.2 for examples of cisgender, male, and heterosexual privilege lists. Interestingly, exposure to videotaped discussions of male and heterosexual privilege can reduce sexist attitudes among cisgender men and women (Case et al., 2014).

STOP AND THINK

Do you fall into any of the categories of privilege listed in Table 1.2? McIntosh (1989) asserts that members of privileged groups should reflect on the automatic advantages that their group memberships afford them. What are the pros and cons of this sort of reflection? What are some additional ways to encourage people to think about their privileged statuses?