

## INFLUENCES ON IDENTITY

### STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

1. Critically analyze how 'sex' and 'gender' are socially constructed
2. Challenge gender norms and stereotypes
3. Acknowledge limitations of binary categories we have placed on human sexuality (which is much more complex than 2 categories)
4. How are people treated when they don't fit into rigid categories created by society
5. Affirm and celebrate the diversity of identities, expressions, and orientations

### USE THE FOLLOWING INFO TO UNDERSTAND:

- A. What can have influence our sexuality? (sexuality is our gender identities, expressions, norms, orientations, and relationships with others)
- Norms, stereotypes, expectations
    - How we are raised
    - What messages we get through the media, television, movies, our friends
    - Our family's faith
    - Our own experiences
    - Our culture
    - Our values
    - Who we are in relationships with
  - Our sexuality education
  - Our biology, DNA, chromosomes, hormones, how we develop in the uterus determines much of our sexual identity:
    - Sex assigned at birth (anatomy)
    - Gender identity (our deep sense of who we are in our brain/self)
    - Orientation (our sex drive and attraction towards others stimulated during puberty/hormones)
- B. What is sexual identity (including 'sex', orientation, gender, expression)
- 'Sex' assigned at birth: socially constructed categories of whether genitals and sex organs are typical male, typical female or intersex. In reality there human anatomy has many variances determined by chromosome combinations and adrenal sensitivities for example
  - Orientation: who someone **is sexually attracted to**
    - research suggests is determined by numerous factors including **hormonal, genetic, and environmental** influences (Public Health Agency of Canada)
  - Gender: is **socially constructed** and in many cultures is binary and static over time. It refers to the way we categorize people as **masculine and feminine**, or binary (as man or woman)

even though this is not the reality of how gender is experienced (identity) or shown (expression)

- Gender norms (presented as an expectation)
  - Unwritten rules and scripts, roles prescribed by societal notions of masculinity and femininity including the notion of a gender binary that have been socially constructed and are reinforced by the dominant culture
    - In the 'western world' what's feminine vs what's masculine, what 'real men' do what 'real women' **are supposed to be like**
      - Showing affection is feminine so women should show affection
      - Being tough is masculine so boys should be tough
    - Gender norms limit us from being our real selves
      - How does sexism and misogyny limit males ability to challenge norms of masculinity
- Gender stereotypes
  - A belief or assumption about a different group/type of person: **rigid belief about how a group should behave** (presented as a fact)
  - Often done because person does not know a lot about that group, they are afraid, or they think it's easiest /most convenient thing to do
    - They reduce people into categories and are harmful
    - All women cook, all boys like to play sports, boys don't cry, girls don't fart
  - All people who are tall play basketball, all old people are weak, all large people are lazy

### Resources

- Sex assigned at birth (male, female, intersex) Video: first 10 min  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/alice\\_dreger\\_is\\_anatomy\\_destiny?utm\\_campaign=tedspread--a&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_source=tedcomshare](https://www.ted.com/talks/alice_dreger_is_anatomy_destiny?utm_campaign=tedspread--a&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)
- Sources (Beyond the Basics: Action Canada, and the Public Health Agency of Canada)
- <https://www.genderspectrum.org/quick-links/understanding-gender/>
- The Gender Revolution Documentary with Katie Couric, and short videos  
<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/gender-revolution-a-journey-with-katie-couric/>