

7. Elizabeth Janeway, *Man's World, Woman's Place: A Study in Social Mythology* (New York: Dell, 1971), 37.

8. See, for example, P. Kollock, P. Blumstein, and P. Schwartz, "Sex and Power in Interaction," *American Sociological Review* 50, no. 1 (1985): 34-46; N. Henley, M. Hamilton, and B. Thorne, "Womanspeak and Manspeak: Sex Differences and Sexism in Communication," in *Beyond Sex Roles*, ed. A. G. Sargent (New York: West, 1985), 168-185; and L. Smith-Lovin and C. Brody, "Interruptions in Group Discussions: The Effect of Gender and Group Composition," *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 3 (1989): 424-435.

Gender Socialization

The gender system, embedded in other institutions, ensures its continuance through systematic socialization of children, adolescents, and adults. Even though there is substantial variation in how different cultural groups and families within the United States and throughout the world teach their children to be girls or boys, and even though men and women are more alike than they are different, the presence of gender training persists, and larger institutional structures reinforce it. Sociologist Michael Messner, for example, in a telling account of white male socialization in childhood, describes the day he attended his first Little League practice and was told by his father that he threw like a girl. A week later, after careful coaching by his father and intense fear of being thought a sissy, he had learned to throw like a man.¹ In a study of Black and white elementary school children, Jacqueline Jordan Irvine concluded that teachers systematically encouraged Black girls to act submissive and that by upper elementary school, both Black and white girls are rendered relatively invisible in classrooms, receiving significantly less attention from teachers than boys of both races receive.²

From the time we are born until we die, gender socialization is a constant part of our lives. Although the genes that determine sex come in several combinations (not just two), and although the hormonal makeup and physical characteristics of human beings fall along a continuum defined as masculine at one end and feminine at the other, allowing for many combinations and permutations that define one's biological sex, the social contexts in which infants are assigned a gender do not allow for more than two categories in mainstream U.S. society. Based on examination of its genitalia, an infant will almost always be defined as female or male, whatever its chromosomal and hormonal makeup. Within this powerful system of gender assignment, women and men work to define their individual identities. Because gender is a socialized aspect of life rather than a purely genetic/biological one, and because it is largely "socially constructed" rather than instinctual, there is flexibility in how it is expressed.

In a distressing illustration of how girl and boy children are treated differently from very early in their lives, authors of a study of infants with abusive head trauma found that most of the infant victims were boys (60.3 percent). Both women and men tended to abuse boys more than girls in ways serious enough to inflict head injury via shaken baby syndrome or impact trauma. The majority of perpetrators were men in the infants' lives—most typically fathers, stepfathers, or the mother's partner. The authors of the study suggest that perhaps adults have different expectations of male and female infants. If the latter is the case, it could be that tolerance for crying in girl babies is higher than it is for boys. These authors and others call for better parenting training, especially focused on men and boys.³ The resistance of parents to

give dolls to boys seems to be part of the failure to teach boys to care for children. The fact that more women than ever before are involved in the paid workforce means that more men and boys are spending time with children, either because the parents are working split shifts, or because men and boys are serving as babysitters more often.

A push toward gender equality in recent years in some aspects of schooling has led to higher math scores and greater success in science among girls. It has also led to higher rates of smoking, drinking, and drug use according to a report sponsored by the National Council for Research on Women.⁴

The field of gender socialization is currently facing some redefinition related to the role of hormones and genitals in human development. Since 1972, many academics and medical professionals have been arguing that gender is primarily socialized, independent of genes and hormones—that infants are psychologically undifferentiated at birth. In short, they argued that any baby could be raised in either gender if the family and community gave the child consistent messages. This conclusion was based on a single case reported by psychologist John Money concerning a biological male whose penis was accidentally destroyed in a routine circumcision at seven months of age. The parents, following the advice of Money and his medical team, decided to raise the child as a girl a year or so later, and the child's testicles were surgically removed.⁵ The early reports on this boy/girl's life claimed that "Joan" had made a successful adjustment as a girl. In 1997, however, psychologist Milton Diamond and psychiatrist Keith Sigmundson reported that Joan had rejected the sex reassignment treatments at age 14 and decided to live as a heterosexual male from then on. He eventually married a woman with children. Adamantly rejecting the notion that gender must be based on genital appearance, size, and function, he stated, "If that's all they think of me, that they gotta justify my worth by what I have between my legs, then I gotta be a complete loser."⁶ Diamond and Sigmundson concluded that the early gender reassignment had been a mistake and later the same year offered guidelines for how to address situations in which children had unusual or injured genitals.⁷ Later journalist John Colapinto wrote a book about this case, describing in detail the experiences of David Reimer (his real name) and exposing what he believed were serious ethical breaches in Money's treatment of both Reimer and the readers of his publications.⁸ Sadly, David Reimer committed suicide in 2004. This case suggests that the extent to which gender is hardwired to physical sex is still unclear, especially because many people raised in a gender that matches their sex feel as though they are in the wrong body and choose to change genders.

Sex reassignment seems most successful when chosen by the person him- or herself. The negative aspects of forced gender reassignment surgery have been made especially clear by members of the Intersex Society of North America (www.isna.org) who argue that forced gender and sex assignments that contradicted their bodily truths have been destructive. They recommend assigning a gender to an infant, avoiding any unnecessary surgery, and

allowing the child to choose how to express her/himself once s/he is old enough to understand what version of intersexuality or disorders of sexual development (DSD) are present. An example from the Dominican Republic illustrates how this is handled relatively successfully in one unusual situation. Children in three villages inherited a syndrome that produced somewhat ambiguous genitalia at birth but that later became male genitalia at puberty. These children were raised as girls who knew that they might become boys at puberty. They received a third gender label, "male genitalia at 12." Of 18 children originally raised as girls, 16 successfully assumed male genders after their penises developed.⁹ At least one chose to remain female, even though her body had masculinized, because she enjoyed living as a girl/woman.

The potential for gender resocialization is clearly illustrated by adults who become transsexuals or transgendered, making a choice to resocialize themselves, to varying degrees, into the gender in which they were not raised. This resocialization process is often accompanied by a new sexual orientation as well. Many people who have gone through this kind of transition have written firsthand accounts describing what convinced them to do it and what it was like.¹⁰ (See Ben Barres, Part VII.)

Research literature on adult development suggests that expressions of gender shift in various ways throughout the life cycle.¹¹ Men and women frequently grow more similar in midlife. Socialization patterns and expectations for male and female behavior also change over time, related to the historical context. For example, many women were needed in factories during World War II but were sent home when men, returning from the war, were given priority in hiring; these women were then encouraged to be housewives and mothers, forced to resocialize themselves to match prior expectations. Those who had to continue to work outside the home, however, ended up with lower-paying jobs because the jobs with higher wages were given to men returning from the war.

Socialization as soldiers or fighters, increasingly obvious to people in the United States as we grapple with the aftermath of September 11, 2001, affects millions of young men (especially) and women worldwide. Recruitment of boys and men into national armies or resistance movements has an impact on not only the young men themselves but also their families and communities.¹² Turning people into fighters takes an intensive socialization process for which state armies and militias are famous. The effects of militarism on women as well are widespread and well documented.¹³ Both men and women returning from combat have high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder, making resocialization into civilian life particularly difficult. Recent attention to the mental health effects on soldiers returning from the war in Iraq has highlighted the different experiences of women and men and suggests that the combination of combat stress and sexual assault within the armed services make the war experience even more stressful for some women than it is for men.¹⁴ (See Helen Benedict and Cynthia Enloe, Part IX.)

This part of the book looks at selected aspects of gender socialization. A recurring theme in the study of gender socialization is the presence of homophobia overtly expressed against boys and girls who don't fit gender stereotypes and internalized by gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people as fear of ostracism or as self-hatred. The essays included here address the social construction of gender and gender inequality (Judith Lorber), pressures for gender conformity (Tommi Avicoli, Linnea Due, and Michael Kimmel), and gender socialization in varied cultural/racial/class contexts in the United States (Michael Messner and Jill Nelson).

These articles urge us to become more conscious of various aspects of gender socialization and to consider ways to change what limits people of both genders from being fully human in their own right. There are policy implications here regarding how we accept people who don't fit the norms of masculinity and femininity, regarding the negative effects of limited economic options for poor and working-class children, and regarding the intersections of racism, homophobia, elitism, and sexism as they affect people's lives.

As you read the articles in this section, you might find it interesting to ask yourself what your life might have been like if you had been born a different sex. Then make your imagined experience more complex by varying your cultural group or your social class or your sexual orientation or all of these. Explore both pros and cons of these imagined new experiences as you invented self.

NOTES

1. Michael A. Messner, "Ah, Ya Throw Like a Girl!" in Michael A. Messner and Donald F. Sabo, eds., *Sex, Violence and Power in Sports: Rethinking Masculinity* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1994), pp. 28-32. Messner also reports that his way of throwing is so unnatural and injurious to the shoulder that few pitchers in childhood survive as pitchers into adulthood, having permanently injured their shoulders.
2. Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, "Teacher Communication Patterns as Related to the Race and Sex of the Student," *Journal of Educational Research* 78, no. 6 (1985): pp. 338-45; Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, "Teacher-Student Interactions: Effects of Student Race, Sex, and Grade Level," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 78, no. 1 (1986): pp. 14-21.
3. Suzanne P. Starling, James R. Holden, and Carole Jenny, "Abusive Head Trauma: The Relationship of Perpetrators to Their Victims," *Pediatrics* 95, no. 2 (February 1995): 259ff; Alisa Valdés-Rodríguez, "Shaken Baby Deaths Typically Involve Fathers: Young Males Need Infant-Care Training, Abuse Prevention Activists, Doctors Say," *The Boston Globe*, 22 September 1998, pp. B1, B8.
4. Lynn Phillips, *The Girls Report: What We Know & Need to Know about Growing Up Female* (New York: National Council for Research on Women, 1998).
5. John Money and Anke A. Ehrhardt, *Man & Woman, Boy & Girl: The Differentiation and Dimorphism of Gender Identity from Conception to Maturity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972).
6. Milton Diamond and H. Keith Sigmundson, "Sex Reassignment at Birth," *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 151, no. 3 (March 1997): 301.

7. Milton Diamond and H. Keith Sigmundson, "Management of Intersexuality. Guidelines for Dealing with Persons with Ambiguous Genitalia," *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 151, no. 10 (October 1997): 1046-50.
8. John Colapinto, *As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl* (New York: Harper Collins, 2000).
9. Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Myths of Gender* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), pp. 86-87.
10. For discussions of the experiences of transsexuals and gender benders, see the *Journal of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Identity*, Jennifer Finney Boylan, *She's Not There: A Life in Two Genders* (New York: Broadway Books, 2003); Paul Hewitt, *A Self-Made Man: The Diary of a Man Born in a Woman's Body* (London: Headline, 1995); Richard Elms, *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-Dressing and Sex Changing* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Max Wolf Valerio, *The Testosterone Files: My Hormonal and Social Transformation from Female to Male* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006); Dhillion Khosla, *Both Sides Now: One Man's Journey through Womanhood* (New York: Jeremy Tarcher/Penguin, 2006); Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, eds., *The Transgender Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006). For a critical look at solving gender confusion via transsexual surgery, see Janice Raymond, *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1994).
11. Margaret L. Andersen, *Thinking about Women: Sociological Perspectives on Sex and Gender*, 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1993), p. 44.
12. David Filipov, "Afghan Boys Take Up Rifles to Become Men," *Boston Sunday Globe*, 28 October 2001, p. A20.
13. Cynthia Enloe, *Manneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000); Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Dafna N. Izraeli, "Paradoxes of Women's Service in the Israel Defense Forces," in *Military, State and Society in Israel*, eds. Daniel Mannan, Eyal Ben-Ari, and Zeev Rosenhek (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001), pp. 203-38.
14. Helen Benedict, "The Private War of Women Soldiers," March 7, 2007, www.Salon.com; Sara Corbett, "The Women's War," *The New York Times Magazine*, 18 March 2007, 42ff.

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER

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Talking about gender for most people is the equivalent of fish talking about water. Gender is so much the routine ground of everyday activities that questioning its taken-for-granted assumptions and presuppositions is like thinking about whether the sun will come up.¹ Gender is so pervasive that in our society we assume it is bred into our genes. Most people find it hard to believe that gender is constantly created and re-created out of human interaction, out of social life, and is the texture and order of that social life. Yet gender, like culture, is a human production that depends on everyone constantly "doing gender" (West and Zimmerman 1987).

And everyone "does gender" without thinking about it. Today, on the subway, I saw a well-dressed man with a year-old child in a stroller. Yesterday, on a bus, I saw a man with a tiny baby in a carrier on his chest. Seeing men taking care of small children in public is increasingly common—at least in New York City. But both men were quite obviously stared at—and smiled at, approvingly. Everyone was doing gender—the men who were changing the role of fathers and the other passengers, who were applauding them silently. But there was more gendering going on that probably fewer people noticed. The baby was wearing a white crocheted cap and white clothes. You couldn't tell if it was a boy or a girl. The child in the stroller was wearing a dark blue T-shirt and dark print pants. As they started to leave the train, the father put a Yankee baseball cap on the child's head. Ah, a boy, I thought. Then I noticed the gleam of tiny earrings in the child's ears, and as they got off, I saw the little flowered sneakers and lace-trimmed socks. Not a boy after all. Gender done.

Judith Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender" from *Paradoxes of Gender*. Copyright © 1994 by Yale University. Reprinted with the permission of Yale University Press.

Gender is such a familiar part of daily life that it usually takes a deliberate disruption of our expectations of how women and men are supposed to act to pay attention to how it is produced. Gender signs and signals are so ubiquitous that we usually fail to note them—unless they are missing or ambiguous. Then we are uncomfortable until we have successfully placed the other person in a gender status; otherwise, we feel socially dislocated. In our society, in addition to man and woman, the status can be *transvestite* (a person who dresses in opposite-gender clothes) and *transsexual* (a person who has had sex-change surgery). Transvestites and transsexuals construct their gender status by dressing, speaking, walking, gesturing in the ways prescribed for women or men—whichever they want to be taken for—and so does any "normal" person.

For the individual, gender construction starts with assignment to a sex category on the basis of what the genitalia look like at birth.² Then babies are dressed or adorned in a way that displays the category because parents don't want to be constantly asked whether their baby is a girl or a boy. A sex category becomes a gender status through naming, dress, and the use of other gender markers. Once a child's gender is evident, others treat those in one gender differently from those in the other, and the children respond to the different treatment by feeling different and behaving differently. As soon as they can talk, they start to refer to themselves as members of their gender. Sex doesn't come into play again until puberty, but by that time, sexual feelings and desires and practices have been shaped by gendered norms and expectations. Adolescent boys and girls approach and avoid each other in an elaborately scripted and gendered mating dance. Parenting is gendered, with different expectations for mothers and for fathers, and people of different genders work at different kinds of jobs. The work adults do as mothers and fathers and as low-level workers and high-level bosses, shapes women's and men's life experiences, and these experiences produce different feelings, consciousness, relationships, skills—ways of being that we call feminine or masculine.³ All of these processes constitute the social construction of gender.

Gendered roles change—today fathers are taking care of little children, girls and boys are wearing unisex clothing and getting the same education, women and men are working at the same jobs. Although many traditional social groups are quite strict about maintaining gender differences, in other social groups they seem to be blurring. Then why the one-year-old's earrings? Why is it still so important to mark a child as a girl or a boy, to make sure she is not taken for a boy or he for a girl? What would happen if they were? They would, quite literally, have changed places in their social world.

To explain why gendering is done from birth, constantly and by everyone, we have to look not only at the way individuals experience gender but at gender as a social institution. As a social institution, gender is one of the major ways that human beings organize their lives. Human society depends on a predictable division of labor, a designated allocation of scarce goods, assigned responsibility for children and others who cannot care for themselves,

common values and their systematic transmission to new members, legitimate leadership, music, art, stories, games, and other symbolic productions. One way of choosing people for the different tasks of society is on the basis of their talents, motivations, and competence—their demonstrated achievements. The other way is on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity—assigned membership in a category of people. Although societies vary in the extent to which they use one or the other of these ways of allocating people to work and to carry out other responsibilities, every society uses gender and age grades. Every society classifies people as “girl and boy children,” “girls and boys ready to be married,” and “fully adult women and men,” constructs similarities among them and differences between them, and assigns them to different roles and responsibilities. Personality characteristics, feelings, motivations, and ambitions flow from these different life experiences so that the members of these different groups become different kinds of people. The process of gendering and its outcome are legitimated by religion, law, science, and the society’s entire set of values.

Gender as Process, Stratification, and Structure

As a social institution, gender is a process of creating distinguishable social statuses for the assignment of rights and responsibilities. As part of a stratification system that ranks these statuses unequally, gender is a major building block in the social structures built on these unequal statuses.

As a process, gender creates the social differences that define “woman” and “man.” In social interaction throughout their lives, individuals learn what is expected, see what is expected, act and react in expected ways, and thus simultaneously construct and maintain the gender order: “The very injunction to be given gender takes place through discursive routes: to be a good mother, to be a heterosexually desirable object, to be a fit worker, in sum, to signify a multiplicity of guarantees in response to a variety of different demands all at once” (J. Butler 1990, 145). Members of a social group neither make up gender as they go along nor exactly replicate in rote fashion what was done before. In almost every encounter, human beings produce gender, behaving in the ways they learned were appropriate for their gender status, or resisting or rebelling against these norms. Resistance and rebellion have altered gender norms, but so far they have rarely eroded the statuses.

Gendered patterns of interaction acquire additional layers of gendered sexuality, parenting, and work behaviors in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Gendered norms and expectations are enforced through informal sanctions of gender-inappropriate behavior by peers and by formal punishment or threat of punishment by those in authority should behavior deviate too far from socially imposed standards for women and men.

Everyday gendered interactions build gender into the family, the work process, and other organizations and institutions, which in turn reinforce

gender expectations for individuals.⁴ Because gender is a process, there is room not only for modification and variation by individuals and small groups but also for institutionalized change (J. W. Scott 1988, 7).

As part of a stratification system, gender ranks men above women of the same race and class. Women and men could be different but equal. In practice, the process of creating difference depends to a great extent on differential evaluation. As Nancy Jay (1981) says: “That which is defined, separated out, isolated from all else is A and pure. Not-A is necessarily impure, a random catchall, to which nothing is external except A and the principle of order that separates it from Not-A” (45). From the individual’s point of view, whichever gender is A, the other is Not-A; gender boundaries tell the individual who is like him or her, and all the rest are unlike. From society’s point of view, however, one gender is usually the touchstone, the normal, the dominant, and the other is different, deviant, and subordinate. In Western society, “man” is A, “wo-man” is Not-A. (Consider what a society would be like where woman was A and man Not-A.)

The further dichotomization by race and class constructs the gradations of a heterogeneous society’s stratification scheme. Thus, in the United States, white is A, African American is Not-A; middle class is A, working class is Not-A, and “African-American women occupy a position whereby the inferior half of a series of these dichotomies converge” (P. H. Collins 1989, 770). The dominant categories are the hegemonic ideals, taken so for granted as the way things should be that white is not ordinarily thought of as a race, middle class as a class, or men as a gender. The characteristics of these categories define the Other as that which lacks the valuable qualities the dominants exhibit.

In a gender-stratified society, what men do is usually valued more highly than what women do because men do it, even when their activities are very similar or the same. In different regions of southern India, for example, harvesting rice is men’s work, shared work, or women’s work: “Wherever a task is done by women it is considered easy, and where it is done by [men] it is considered difficult” (Mencher 1988, 104). A gathering and hunting society’s survival usually depends on the nuts, grubs, and small animals brought in by the women’s foraging trips, but when the men’s hunt is successful, it is the occasion for a celebration. Conversely, because they are the superior group, white men do not have to do the “dirty work,” such as housework; the most inferior group does it, usually poor women of color (Palmer 1989). Freudian psychoanalytic theory claims that boys must reject their mothers and deny the feminine in themselves in order to become men: “For boys the major goal is the achievement of personal masculine identification with their father and sense of secure masculine self, achieved through superego formation and disparagement of women” (Chodorow 1978, 165). Masculinity may be the outcome of boys’ intrapsychic struggles to separate their identity from that of their mothers, but the proofs of masculinity are culturally shaped and usually ritualistic and symbolic (Gilmore 1990).

The Marxist feminist explanation for gender inequality is that by de-meaning women's abilities and keeping them from learning valuable technological skills, bosses preserve them as a cheap and exploitable reserve army of labor. Unionized men who could easily be replaced by women collude in this process because it allows them to monopolize the better-paid, more interesting, and more autonomous jobs: "Two factors emerge as helping men maintain their separation from women and their control of technological occupations. One is the active gendering of jobs and people. The second is the continual creation of sub-divisions in the work processes, and levels in work hierarchies, into which men can move in order to keep their distance from women" (Cockburn 1985, 13).

Societies vary in the extent of the inequality in social status of their women and men members, but where there is inequality, the status "woman" (and its attendant behavior and role allocations) is usually held in lesser esteem than the status "man." Since gender is also intertwined with a society's other constructed statuses of differential evaluation—race, religion, occupation, class, country of origin, and so on—men and women members of the favored groups command more power, more prestige, and more property than the members of the disfavored groups. Within many social groups, however, men are advantaged over women. The more economic resources, such as education and job opportunities, are available to a group, the more they tend to be monopolized by men. In poorer groups that have few resources (such as working-class African Americans in the United States), women and men are more nearly equal, and the women may even outstrip the men in education and occupational status (Almquist 1987).

As a *structure*, gender divides work in the home and in economic production, legitimates those in authority, and organizes sexuality and emotional life (Connell 1987, 91–142). As primary parents, women significantly influence children's psychological development and emotional attachments, in the process reproducing gender. Emergent sexuality is shaped by heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and sadomasochistic patterns that are gendered—different for girls and boys, and for women and men—so that sexual statuses reflect gender statuses.

When gender is a major component of structured inequality, the devalued genders have less power, prestige, and economic rewards than the valued genders. In countries that discourage gender discrimination, many major roles are still gendered; women still do most of the domestic labor and child rearing, even while doing full-time paid work; women and men are segregated on the job and each does work considered "appropriate"; women's work is usually paid less than men's work. Men dominate the positions of authority and leadership in government, the military, and the law; cultural productions, religions, and sports reflect men's interests.

In societies that create the greatest gender difference, such as Saudi Arabia, women are kept out of sight behind walls or veils, have no civil rights, and often create a cultural and emotional world of their own (Bernard 1981).

But even in societies with less rigid gender boundaries, women and men spend much of their time with people of their own gender because of the way work and family are organized. This spatial separation of women and men reinforces gendered differences, identity, and ways of thinking and behaving (Coser 1986).

Gender inequality—the devaluation of "women" and the social domination of "men"—has social functions and social history. It is not the result of sex, procreation, physiology, anatomy, hormones, or genetic predispositions. It is produced and maintained by identifiable social processes and built into the general social structure and individual identities deliberately and purposefully. The social order as we know it in Western societies is organized around racial, ethnic, class, and gender inequality. I contend, therefore, that the continuing purpose of gender as a modern social institution is to construct women as a group to be the subordinates of men as a group.

The Paradox of Human Nature

To say that sex, sexuality, and gender are all socially constructed is not to minimize their social power. These categorical imperatives govern our lives in the most profound and pervasive ways, through the social experiences and social practices of what Dorothy Smith calls the "everday/evernight world" (1990, 31–57). The paradox of human nature is that it is *always* a manifestation of cultural meanings, social relationships, and power politics; "not biology, but culture, becomes destiny" (J. Butler 1990, 8). Gendered people emerge not from physiology or sexual orientations but from the exigencies of the social order, mostly, from the need for a reliable division of the work of food production and the social (not physical) reproduction of new members. The moral imperatives of religion and cultural representations guard the boundary lines among genders and ensure that what is demanded, what is permitted, and what is tabooed for the people in each gender is well known and followed by most (C. Davies 1982). Political power, control of scarce resources, and, if necessary, violence uphold the gendered social order in the face of resistance and rebellion. Most people, however, voluntarily go along with their society's prescriptions for those of their gender status, because the norms and expectations get built into their sense of worth and identity as [the way we] think, the way we see and hear and speak, the way we fantasize, and the way we feel.

There is no core or bedrock in human nature below these endlessly looping processes of the social production of sex and gender, self and other, identity and psyche, each of which is a "complex cultural construction" (J. Butler 1990, 36). *For humans, the social is the natural*. Therefore, "in its feminist senses, gender cannot mean simply the cultural appropriation of biological sexual difference. Sexual difference is itself a fundamental—and scientifically contested—construction. Both 'sex' and 'gender' are woven of multiple,

asymmetrical strands of difference, charged with multifaceted dramatic narratives of domination and struggle" (Haraway 1990, 140).

NOTES

1. Gender is, in Erving Goffman's words, an aspect of "Felicity's Condition": "any arrangement which leads us to judge an individual's . . . acts not to be a manifestation of strangeness. Behind Felicity's Condition is our sense of what it is to be sane" (1983:27). Also see Bem 1993; Frye 1983, 17-40; Goffman 1977.
2. In cases of ambiguity in countries with modern medicine, surgery is usually performed to make the genitalia more clearly male or female.
3. See J. Butler 1990 for an analysis of how doing gender is gender identity.
4. On the "logic of practice," or how the experience of gender is embedded in the norms of everyday interaction and the structure of formal organizations, see Acker 1990; Bourdieu [1980] 1990; Connell 1987; Smith 1987.

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12

BOYHOOD, ORGANIZED SPORTS, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MASCULINITIES

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The rapid expansion of feminist scholarship in the past two decades has led to fundamental reconceptualizations of the historical and contemporary meanings of organized sport. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, modernization and women's continued movement into public life created widespread "fears of social feminization," especially among middle-class men (Hantover, 1978; Kimmel, 1987). One result of these fears was the creation of organized sport as a homosocial sphere in which competition and (often violent) physicality was valued, while "the feminine" was devalued. As a result, organized sport has served to bolster a sagging

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