

Chapter 10
Sex & Gender
Chapter Summary

1. Sex refers to genetic, anatomical, and hormonal differences between males and females. Gender refers to the prescriptions for behaviors, characteristics, roles, and physical appearance that a culture encourages for members of each biological sex.
2. Hermaphrodites have both ovarian and testicular tissues; pseudohermaphrodites possess two gonads of the same kind, but their external genitalia and secondary sex characteristics do not match their chromosomal makeup.
3. Genetic inheritance is the most basic determinant of whether an individual is male or female. The 23rd pair of chromosomes determines a person's sex. A male has an X and a Y chromosome, whereas a female has two X chromosomes.
4. Early in development, the embryo's gonad (sex gland) can develop into either a testis or an ovary. The presence of a Y chromosome directs this undifferentiated gonad to develop into a testis. Exposure to excessively high levels of androgens during the fetal period can result in adrenogenital syndrome. Androgen insensitivity syndrome occurs when a male embryo does not respond to male hormones.
5. Genetic abnormalities include Klinefelter's syndrome (XXY), in which a male has smaller-than-normal genitals, is tall, and may be mentally retarded. Females with Turner syndrome (XO) do not achieve sexual maturation. Males with the XYY chromosomal pattern are usually tall, have below-average intelligence, and may be more likely to commit crimes.
6. The size of the Y chromosome is a significant factor in the inheritance of sex-linked disorders such as colorblindness. The smaller Y chromosome does not carry as many genes as the larger X chromosome.
7. Males are more vulnerable than females to developmental disorders and certain fatal diseases.
8. Hormonal factors are important determinants of sexual behavior in animals; they also play an important role in human behavior and in the development of the sex organs.
9. Sexual orientation is the tendency for an individual to be attracted to individuals of the same or opposite sex or both. Homosexuality may have a genetic basis.
10. Among the explanations for the development of gender distinctions are psychodynamic theory, social learning theory, cognitive developmental theory, and gender-schema theory.
11. Stereotyping is the tendency to view people in terms of a set of beliefs about the groups or categories of which they are members. Gender stereotypes based on the assumption that masculinity and femininity are opposite and cannot occur in the same person have been replaced by broader conceptions of gender such as the notion of androgyny.
12. Around the world, children learn gender stereotypes rapidly and at an early age. The mass media can influence the learning of gender stereotypes.
13. Apart from obvious differences in reproductive anatomy and genetics, there are few biological differences between men and women.
14. A wide range of behaviors have been investigated from the standpoint of male-female differences. Males and females do not differ in overall intelligence, in part because intelligence tests were designed to equalize the effects of possible differences.
15. In the past, females were reported to outperform males in verbal ability. The differences have narrowed to the point where they are essentially zero.

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16. Males seem to perform better than females on tasks involving mathematical and spatial ability, although the difference is narrowing rapidly. The difference in mathematical ability seems to be limited to nonclassroom tests; in class, girls obtain higher grades in mathematics than boys. Gender stereotypes and differential opportunities may have an impact on differences in mathematical and spatial ability.
17. There seem to be some differences between the ways in which males and females communicate. Differences in helping behavior seem to be related to gender stereotypes. Differences in levels of aggression are actually quite narrow if one recognizes that there are different types of aggression.
18. Continued reliance on gender stereotypes can result in sexism—differential treatment of individuals based on their sex.
19. Sexism has been noted in adults' interactions with toddlers in preschool settings. Observations of elementary school classrooms have found evidence that sexism pervades those settings as well. In schools, boys tend to be reinforced for assertiveness; girls are reinforced for politeness. These differences can also be seen in high school and college classrooms.
20. Sexism is also evident in the tendency to vote for political candidates whose behavior is gender-appropriate.
21. Sexual harassment is not a new phenomenon. Two forms of sexual harassment have been defined: coercion of sexual favors by means of promised rewards or threatened punishments and creation of a hostile environment.
22. Most studies reveal that more than half of working women have experienced some form of sexual harassment. Men and women differ in their interpretation of events as instances of sexual harassment.
23. Psychologists have applied what they have learned about gender stereotyping to claims of sex discrimination.
24. Women in leadership positions receive lower evaluations than men, although the difference is not large. However, there is evidence that when evaluation criteria are ambiguous and the evaluators are men, there is a greater likelihood that women's leadership abilities will be devalued.
25. Despite the increase in the number of women who have entered the labor force in recent decades, little evidence exists that men and women share household and child-care responsibilities more equally than they did in the past.
26. Some psychologists have focused on the positive benefits that women derive from juggling work outside the home with household and other responsibilities. These benefits include increased ability to cope with stress.