

## Sex and Gender: Studyguide and Review Notes#2

This quiz will cover readings through Draper and Maccoby, not Weisfeld and Hill and Hurtado.

### Gender Identity

- People initially believed that gender identity (identifying oneself as a male or female) remained plastic until age 2. However various accidents and “experiments of nature” have been used to argue this point. Review the following, and consider what they say about development of gender identity:
  - The identical twin (“John/Joan”) whose penis was accidentally cut off at 8 months in a surgical accident. What happened to her?
  - A more recent report (discussed in class) of a similar surgical accident, where reassignment happened several months earlier. Was this reassignment successful? Is she a typical female?
  - Individuals with 5-alpha reductase deficiency (“balls at 12”).
- Review the different societies in Martin and Voorhies. Which ones have “supernumerary” genders, and what are those genders like? Are there any societies that are as inflexible as our own – or more so – in finding a place for transgendered individuals?
- How do childrens’ concepts of gender change as they get older?
- Are men who cross-dress uncomfortable with their own gender (sometimes, never, always)? Are they gay (sometimes, never, always)?

### Sexual Orientation

- Recall that that sex-typical behaviors don’t necessarily vary together (for example, gay men are more similar to heterosexual men, and less similar to women, in many aspects of mating behavior, such as interest in uncommitted sex, importance of physical attractiveness of a partner, etc.).
- Sexual preference is more fluid for women than men. What does this mean (in what ways is it more fluid)? And even men with a heterosexual orientation may engage in sex with men (when?)
- Is there a genetic basis to sexual orientation? How do we know? How strong is the effect? (depending on the study, concordance for sexual orientation in identical twins is about 20% to about 50%). What does this mean? Why are the estimates so different?
- Does gender non-conformity in childhood predict adult sexual orientation? Is it a weak or a strong predictor?
- What is the relationship between birth order and sexual orientation? Is it a weak or strong effect? Could it be due to socialization (different environments in families with many older brothers)?
- LeVey and others have found some differences in the brains of gay men and heterosexual men, including in one nucleus of the hypothalamus (what did he find, and why did he look at that area?). Note that this doesn’t mean that brain differences are genetically based; experience modifies the brain too.
- Evidence from CAH girls suggests that levels of fetal androgens can affect later sexual orientation in women. It is plausible that fetal androgens affect male sexual orientation too, but the literature on this, while voluminous, remains unclear.

- The traditional view was that male homosexuality resulted from childhood experiences, especially interactions between a boy and a weak, hostile, or distant father, and a close, domineering mother. Why might one be skeptical of this claim?
- What factors have been shown to affect homophobia? culture (3rd genders), personality (“social dominance orientation” and authoritarianism), possibly concern about own sexual orientation. Adams et al. studied sexual response to erotic videos among homophobic and non-homophobic men. What did they find?

## Infants and Children

- Know something about sex differences in the following behaviors in newborns and infants: reflex smiling, social responsiveness in infants, and eye contact with mom (and its relationship to testosterone).
- It was suggested (Draper and lecture) that these differences may elicit different socialization from caretakers, and that this could cause small innate differences to become larger. Explain.
- Name at least one other way in which infant boys and girls differ.
- Boys range farther than girls. What implications does this have for their socialization and for possible other behaviors?
- Whiting and colleagues observed children in a variety of societies. What sex/gender differences did they find? A sex difference in nurturance was found only in the older children; how might it develop?
- the greatest sex differences they found were in societies where children work, presumably because the jobs are sex-typed and this gives them different experiences. The U.S. was one of their societies; how does it compare in this regard?
- Ember looked at boys who had no sisters of the appropriate age to do indoor chores; what did she find?
- Maccoby: She notes that sex differences are minimal in children when you look at individuals, but are striking when you see them in groups. Review how girls interact with girls, boys interact with boys, and what happens when the two finally get together in adolescence.
- As Kung Bushmen moved from mobile hunting/gathering to sedentary agriculture and animal husbandry, sex differences in some areas got larger. What were some of these changes, and why might they have occurred?