

1: Autobiography And Questions Of Gender | Download eBook PDF/EPUB

With the tools of gender theory, the representation of hermaphroditism, masculinity and male bodies is analysed and the ways in which gender intersects with racial, sexual and class ideologies is also looked at, in seeing autobiography as a form of agency in self-construction.

However, it may be analyzed in terms of biology—a girl must pass puberty to become a woman—and sociology, as a great deal of mature relating in social contexts is learned rather than instinctive. In gender studies the term gender refers to proposed social and cultural constructions of masculinities and femininities. In this context, gender explicitly excludes reference to biological differences, to focus on cultural differences. Those who followed Butler came to regard gender roles as a practice, sometimes referred to as "performative". Hurst states that some people think sex will, "For example, Michael Schwalbe believes that humans must be taught how to act appropriately in their designated gender to fill the role properly, and that the way people behave as masculine or feminine interacts with social expectations. Schwalbe comments that humans "are the results of many people embracing and acting on similar ideas". Schwalbe believes that these distinctions are important, because society wants to identify and categorize people as soon as we see them. They need to place people into distinct categories to know how we should feel about them. Hurst comments that in a society where we present our genders so distinctly, there can often be severe consequences for breaking these cultural norms. Many of these consequences are rooted in discrimination based on sexual orientation. Gays and lesbians are often discriminated against in our legal system because of societal prejudices. He says that "courts often confuse sex, gender, and sexual orientation, and confuse them in a way that results in denying the rights not only of gays and lesbians, but also of those who do not present themselves or act in a manner traditionally expected of their sex". Andrea Dworkin stated her "commitment to destroying male dominance and gender itself" while stating her belief in radical feminism. She notes that a transition occurred when several feminist scholars, such as Sandra Harding and Joan Scott, began to conceive of gender "as an analytic category within which humans think about and organize their social activity". Feminist scholars in Political Science began employing gender as an analytical category, which highlighted "social and political relations neglected by mainstream accounts". However, Hawkesworth states "feminist political science has not become a dominant paradigm within the discipline". It may also demonstrate how gender differences, not necessarily corresponding precisely with sex, may "constrain or facilitate political" actors. Gender as a process has two central manifestations in political science research, firstly in determining "the differential effects of structures and policies upon men and women," and secondly, the ways in which masculine and feminine political actors "actively work to produce favorable gendered outcomes". Gendering is a socially constructed process based on culture, though often cultural expectations around women and men have a direct relationship to their biology. Because of this, Newman argues, many privilege sex as being a cause of oppression and ignore other issues like race, ability, poverty, etc. She also points out that other non-Western cultures do not necessarily have the same views of gender and gender roles. Newman believes this is problematic because there is no unified definition as to what equality means or looks like, and that this can be significantly important in areas like public policy. Sociologists generally regard gender as a social construct, and various researchers, including many feminists, consider sex to only be a matter of biology and something that is not about social or cultural construction. For instance, sexologist John Money suggests the distinction between biological sex and gender as a role. However, there are scholars who argue that sex is also socially constructed. It would make no sense, then, to define gender as the cultural interpretation of sex, if sex is itself a gender-centered category. Gender should not be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning based on a given sex a juridical conception; gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established. She argues that colonial powers used a gender system as a tool for domination and fundamentally changing social relations among the indigenous. She argues that male and female genitals were considered inherently the same in Western society until the 18th century. At that time, female genitals were regarded as incomplete male genitals, and the difference between the two was conceived as a matter of degree. In other

words, there was a gradation of physical forms, or a spectrum. Therefore, the current perspective toward sex, which is to consider women and men and their typical genitalia as the only possible natural options, came into existence through historical, not biological roots. She starts her argument with an example of the birth of an intersexual individual and maintains "our conceptions of the nature of gender difference shape, even as they reflect, the ways we structure our social system and polity; they also shape and reflect our understanding of our physical bodies. After describing how the doctors inform parents about the intersexuality, she asserts that because the doctors believe that the intersexuals are actually male or female, they tell the parents of the intersexuals that it will take a little bit more time for the doctors to determine whether the infant is a boy or a girl. Lastly, she maintains that the differences in the ways in which the medical professionals in different regions treat intersexual people also give us a good example of how sex is socially constructed. A group of physicians from Saudi Arabia recently reported on several cases of XX intersex children with congenital adrenal hyperplasia CAH , a genetically inherited malfunction of the enzymes that aid in making steroid hormones. A number of parents, however, refused to accept the recommendation that their child, initially identified as a son, be raised instead as a daughter. Nor would they accept feminizing surgery for their child. In this article, Fausto-Sterling states that Western culture has only two sexes and that even their language restricts the presence of more than two sexes. She argues that instead of having a binomial nomenclature for organizing humans into two distinct sexes male and female , there are at least five sexes in the broad spectrum of gender. These five sexes include male, female, hermaphrodite, female pseudohermaphrodites individuals who have ovaries and some male genitalia but lack testes , and male pseudohermaphrodites individuals who have testes and some female genitalia but lack ovaries. Fausto-Sterling additionally adds that in the category of hermaphrodites, there are additional degrees and levels in which the genitalia are developed; this means that there may be more intersexes that exist in this continuum of gender. Fausto-Sterling argues that sex has been gradually institutionally disciplined into a binary system through medical advances. She brings up multiple instances where gender in history was not split into strictly male or female, Fausto-Sterling mentioned that by the end of the Middle Age, intersex individuals were forced to pick a side in the binary gender code and to adhere by it. She emphasizes that the role of the medical community is that of an institutionalized discipline on society that there can only be two sexes: She finishes up her argument asking what would happen if society started accepting intersex individuals. Gender Intensification Revisited focuses on the work of Heather A. Lindberg, and Janet Shibley Hyde on whether or not girls and boys diverge in their gender identities during adolescent years. Authors of Unpacking the Gender System: The coauthors argue that daily people are forced to acknowledge and interact with others in ways that are related to gender. Ridgeway and Correll then shift their topic towards sex categorization. The authors define sex categorization as "the sociocognitive process by which we label another as male or female. Sexual differentiation and Sexual differentiation in humans In most cases, men and women and boys and girls are similar in behavior, with little gender difference, but some gendered behavior is influenced by prenatal and early life androgen exposure. This includes, for example, gender normative play, self-identification with a gender, and tendency to engage in aggressive behavior. These levels may also influence sexuality, with non-heterosexual persons exhibiting sex atypical behavior in childhood. One of the earliest areas of interest was what became known as "gender identity disorder" GID and which is now also described as gender dysphoria. Studies in this, and related areas, inform the following summary of the subject by John Money. The term "gender role" appeared in print first in The term gender identity was used in a press release, November 21, , to announce the new clinic for transsexuals at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. It was disseminated in the media worldwide, and soon entered the vernacular. The definitions of gender and gender identity vary on a doctrinal basis. In popularized and scientifically debased usage, sex is what you are biologically; gender is what you become socially; gender identity is your own sense or conviction of maleness or femaleness; and gender role is the cultural stereotype of what is masculine and feminine. Causality with respect to gender identity disorder is sub-divisible into genetic, prenatal hormonal, postnatal social, and post-pubertal hormonal determinants, but there is, as yet, no comprehensive and detailed theory of causality. Gender coding in the brain is bipolar. These extend from the exclusively biological "genetic" and "prenatal hormonal" differences between men and women, to "postnatal" features, some of

which are social, but others have been shown to result from "post-pubertal hormonal" effects. Although causation from the biologicalâ€” genetic and hormonal â€”to the behavioral has been broadly demonstrated and accepted, Money is careful to also note that understanding of the causal chains from biology to behavior in sex and gender issues is very far from complete. For example, the existence of a " gay gene " has not been proven, but such a gene remains an acknowledged possibility. These women usually have ordinary female appearances though nearly all girls with congenital adrenal hyperplasia CAH have corrective surgery performed on their genitals. However, despite taking hormone-balancing medication given to them at birth, these females are statistically more likely to be interested in activities traditionally linked to males than female activities. Psychology professor and CAH researcher Dr. Sheri Berenbaum attributes these differences to an exposure of higher levels of male sex hormones in utero.

2: Gender Biography, Guidelines - Sociology of Sex & Gender - Robert Max Jackson

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We have read three articles on gender roles and discussed them online. Actually, we practiced writing summaries of and paraphrases from the three articles. Discuss whether you think biological or social and cultural factors are more important in shaping gender roles. This one has promise and some interest for me. I think social and cultural factors are more important in shaping gender roles, so that would be my starting point. Finding sources on this question should be easy. Examine the degree to which gender roles and expectations have changed in your culture over the last thirty years. This, too, is an interesting topic. Gender roles and expectations in the United States in compared to today. By the radical ideas of the 60s faced reality, matured, and marched on. Would finding sources for this question be easy? No as easy as finding sources for topic 1. Consider whether females or males are more restricted by conventional gender roles. The article *Boys Will Be Boys* by Kantrowitz and Kalb, which we read suggest that boys have a narrower horizon than girls in terms of gender roles. I have no strong feelings one way or the other on this question, but it would be fun to research and find out. Focus on the ways in which you have been influenced, positively and negatively, by traditional gender roles and expectations. Explore one of the following topics in terms of gender roles and stereotypes: Title IX of the Education Act states that educational institutions must provide women with equal sports opportunities that it provides for men. This landmark legislation has had profound effects on women and on sports. The combination of interest in the topic and observations of its effects would make it interesting for me. Right now, this is the topic I plan to address in my essay. This entry was posted in Uncategorized by rcorio. Thanks for the informative article, it was a good read and I hope its ok that I share this with some facebook friends.

3: Autobiography and Questions of Gender: 1st Edition (Paperback) - Routledge

A new reading of the autobiographies via the lens of thanatos is presented with questions of gender in mind, and the nature of autobiography as genre is also explored more fully with particular attention paid to narrative voice.

The Gender Biography Guidelines How? Ask these questions over and over and over. Why did things happen as they did? How did a change occur? What were the effects of the processes or events? These are the ruling questions of our biographical reflections, as we seek to understand the role gender has played in our development and the gender identity we have gained through that development. No matter what subject grabs your interest, no matter what ideas in the readings you write about, the goal is always to understand how and why. Never let the other issues and concerns divert you from this focus. How to Use the Readings Each brief biographical piece must be thoughtfully connected to the relevant material from the course, and the final term paper must connect to a range of those materials. It is possible to write pieces - both short and long - that are thoughtful, insightful, or moving, yet not connected to the material we have examined. In general, that will not work. Let us be clear, however, about some room for exceptions. On occasions, we might be moved by the material or by a class discussion or simply by the progression of our own thinking, so that we feel a passionate need to write about some aspect of your biography that is not clearly linked to the materials, but that is important and that we can develop in a way we think relevant to our overall objectives. If this happens, we can go ahead, but we also should submit a cover note explaining that we have done this self-consciously, why we felt this was an appropriate choice, and indicating how we otherwise would have written something that was related to the material. This note should be brief but clear. The connections to the readings should concern the important ideas within them, not trivial or marginal points. It does not work to choose a single quote in a reading, take it out of context, and then suggest it has some vague relationship to what we write, claiming this shows our writing responds to the readings. Using quoted passages is a very good idea, but we should indicate how that quoted passage relates to the argument in the specific article and the overall material in the section and we should indicate how it and the arguments behind it relate to those biographical aspects you choose to examine. With regard to the readings, while it may seem like old hat, we must remember citations. Failure to cite properly will be considered a severe shortcoming at best; if this failing is repetitious, it will be judged plagiarism. As we connect our biographies to the scholarly materials from our class, we are vulnerable to making two major kinds of errors. To avoid both kinds of errors, we must know the class material well and we must carefully think through the relationships between our biography and this material. First, it is an error to refer to an argument or evidence if one misinterprets the content or implications of the material. For example, if we suggest that our socialization experiences are a good example where a theory "X" does not apply when actually the theory does apply, we have made a serious scholarly error. Second, it is equally an error to neglect to refer to an argument or evidence that is clearly relevant to the point one is making. This second type of error occurs if we overlook main ideas in the readings that apply to the point we are making, particularly if those materials contradict our arguments. We are obligated to refer and refer accurately to material that is directly relevant and we must avoid inappropriate citations or inaccurate interpretations of the materials. Let me construct an explanation around a partial example. So, in my biography I describe arrangements between my parents and then I describe some things about myself that I believe are related to these arrangements of my parents these might be aspects of my personality, or they might be the ways I acted under certain conditions, or something else. This will result in at least two causal questions I can discuss. First, why were my parents unlike the common pattern for parents? For the former, I might talk about the economic circumstances in which my parents found themselves or peculiarities of their social backgrounds or their ideological stands or something else, depending on what I thought was decisive. Now I can make the big step concerning the research and theories we have read. Ah, yes, we have read such things. So, I look back and ask what they argue about these causal connections. I might argue that the causal process was similar, but that the conditions surrounding my family were different e. In this fashion, I am not simply looking to see how my biographical experiences resemble or contrast with the common or uncommon experiences that appear in readings. Instead,

I am exploring how the causes of the experiences I faced and the causes of my responses to those experiences compare with the causal analyses in the literature on gender. I am connecting the hows and whys of my life to the research and theory on the hows and whys that make sense of gender and gender inequality. Thus, as we develop a central thesis or argument, it will normally connect our biography to some general issue, argument, or perspective concerning gender inequality. Our paper is a social, gender autobiography. It must be built on significant biographical material that reveals and makes sensible how the social treatment of gender has influenced our personal history and the evolution of our identity. If we try to focus our paper on a thesis that is too centered on academic studies while neglecting the biographical material, it will not work. If we try to focus our paper on a thesis that is too exclusively biographical while neglecting the academic material, it will not work. Throughout the semester, the key is to fuse the two. When done well, this fusion will use the ideas and research we have examined to illuminate the biography. And, at times, the biographical material will enrich the interpretation of the academic material, offering illustrations, showing exceptions, and raising unanswered questions. Focus on Oneself Autobiographies must be built from specific examples derived from our own lives. Sweeping claims or generalizations are all too often both vague and uninteresting. We want to avoid personal opinions or speculations that we cannot support with evidence. Biography is about oneself. In general, it does not work to write a piece in which we take the role of an observer or informant looking at the actions and experiences of others, such as parents or friends. This strategy may occasionally be appropriate, because our own identities, sense of the possible, and the like may be shaped by exposure to the experiences of others. In such cases, we still should show how the circumstances being described influence our life, not just how they are interesting of themselves. Otherwise, the strategy appears to be a distancing strategy, in which the gender experiences of others become the focus. Our goal is not to show that how the experiences of others have reflected or defied the arguments in the material we cover, but rather to show this with reference to our own biographies. Consequences Examine long-term implications of biographical events. When we recount a personal experience that seems revealing against the class material, we again strengthen our presentation by considering what lasting effect this has had in our life. Biography is not simply a catalog of experiences. We change, grow, and sometimes suffer a decline from the experiences we have. The identity we possess, the ways we act, who others see us to be, all these change in response to our past and to our perceptions of the future. Gender runs through all of this. The significance of our important past experiences influencing our gender identity are not limited to the way they felt at the time. Rather, they are important specifically because they have lasting effects. Because we are trying to identify the causes of our gender development, the how and why of the path to our gender identity, usually we are more concerned with experiences that are either recurring or enduring. Specific events, such as traumatic incidents, can have a lasting impact. But generally, gender identity is formed over time by the repeated impact of similarly or consistent influences. Avoid the Obvious The biographical pieces should seek some kind of insight. While much of our lives may seem ordinary, a simple rendition of the ordinary offers little insight and can be trying to read. For example, on reflection, we may be amazed how our lives consistently exhibit gender influences shared by most everyone such as boys and girls wearing different clothes. But the very commonality of such experiences dilutes them as biographical insights into gender formation. This does not mean that we cannot use such experiences, but it does suggest that if we want to use them effectively we must go considerably further than just mentioning that we, too, are creations of our society. Note that is fine to have some of the weekly pieces focused on the ordinary. However, this is not a good formula for the full gender biography. Breadth Avoid narrow thinking. Analyses become stronger when taking this into account. For example, some people report that their parents did not make any significant distinctions based on gender, leaving them perplexed how they, the children, still became nearly stereotypical in the way they fulfill norms about femininity or masculinity. Two possibilities stand out. First, they may have ignored how all the people besides their parents treated them. Usually, such accounts display both flaws. We should become suspicious of our memories and analyses when we find that our accounts of our life histories or of our current identity are overly consistent. We do want to abstract from specific events and specific characteristics enough to identify trends, overall impacts, and the ways things fit together. Still, we do not want to lose sight of the inconsistency, ambiguity, and contradiction that are the

common experience of life. The shape of our personality is usually not a reflection of unified experiences, but it is product of inconsistent, often conflicting influences, in which some have more effect than others. The critical insight is commonly not that there were influences consistent with the identity we develop, but it is the explanation why those influences had more impact than competing influences. Generalize Experiences To see the social meaning of experiences, we need to consider how the specific events are examples of general categories. When we examine our experiences, it is easy to get caught up in their concrete specificity. It helps to consider them in a wider context. We want to ask ourselves, if we had to put this experience into a category, to identify it as an example of a set of experiences that happen to others, what would that category be? Thus, whenever we describe some experiences in our biographies, we want to consider of what group or category of experiences it is an example, a group of experiences had by many people, then discuss and make sense of it as an example of this category. For example, we might describe an incident during adolescence when our parents treated us differently than our opposite sex sister or brother. Parents also treat same-sex children differently, so we must have a reason for distinguishing this incident. The social significance of the incident in our analysis will depend on which way we categorize it. Whenever we describe a biographical event, we want to assess what other events in our life or the lives of others we consider analogous, and how we can characterize this collection of events, giving them meaning as a social category. It is usually considerably easier to think about the social links and implications of experiences once we identify the category to which they belong. Using Comparisons While developing and revising our analytical biography, it is important to recognize how, like all efforts to explain, it hinges on comparisons. How well we select and use those comparisons decides the strength of our biographical exploration. Comparisons, properly used, are a key to investigating the hows and whys of biography. To be analytical, moving beyond simple description, we commonly want to provide comparisons.

4: Caster Semenya - Wikipedia

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