Sex and Gender Roles Exam

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

Sex and Gender Roles Exam

1. **What are examples of gender role messages and age-related messaging that negatively impacts our view of elderly sexuality and relationships?**

The stereotyped view of aging and the associated prejudice has created a notion that older adults are generally asexual or very disinterested in sex (Heidari, 2016). However, sexual desires persist even in old age, yet the current focus of studies and research in the elderly seeks to mainly address sexual functioning from a medical perspective and erectile dysfunctions in older men. Sexual research and demographic data narrow the scope to study adults qualifying under the reproductive age bracket f 15-49 years. Women beyond their childbearing years are even more disadvantaged and treated as non-existent, with the intersection of ageism and sex neglecting them entirely. This norm trickles own to older gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex men, with hardly any accurate information about them. The scanty nature of education, information, and research on sexuality among the elderly has inculcated biases in society, impacting our view of elderly sexuality.

1. **What do we mean by the term transgender, and what are some social and psychological ways people can provide support to transgender people?**

The term transgender refers to individuals with a gender identity conflicting with the assigned sex at birth. Some members who are transgender undergo corrective medical surgery to change their physical appearance to reflect the gender that they identify with (Pflum, Testa, Balsam, Goldblum & Bongar, 2015). Some of the social and psychological ways that society can support the transgender community include speaking out to support their identity to do away with discrimination. People can also be cautious of the gender-binary terms used in everyday conversation. Also, we should integrate public spaces to accommodate the transgender, such as tailoring basic official forms and documents, extending bathroom distinctions beyond stereotyped binary gender classes, and pushing for their inclusivity in leadership positions.

1. **What does it mean to be intersex, and how is that different than being transgender?**

To be intersex means to have a group of conditions setting one apart from the typical binary classes of gender, which are male and female. Intersex individuals tend to have a discrepancy between their internal and external genitalia. The sexual variation may be through an abnormality in chromosomes, sex hormones, or gonads. Intersex and transgender are entirely different populations. Being transgender truncates from a cognitive conflict between one's sexual physique and internal gender knowledge (National Centre for Transgender Equality, 2021). Being intersexual is the result of morphing in the reproductive anatomy.

1. **Patricia Hill Collins discusses interlocking oppression in her book Black Feminist Thought, what is this concept, and why is it important for everyone, not just Black women?**

The interlocking matrix of oppression is a concept founded on the principle that certain characteristics and attributes of an individual are a basis for their discrimination (Tisdell, 1993). Without possessing these qualities, one would not be a victim of stigmatization whatsoever. They include race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, among others. It stems from interlocking systems within a society where, for instance, one would not be discriminated against for being black without systems supporting white supremacy existing in society. It is essential to be educated about this principle to ensure that one becomes conscious of the world around them and does not, in any way, use such attributes as a basis of discrimination. It incorporates different inclusions and categories, and by being aware of one's environment and the society they are in, members of society avoid using misplaced stereotypes to guide their thinking.

1. **How is queer theory different than just studying the lives of LGBTQ people?**

Being queer means not qualifying under any of the classes of gender and sexual orientation. The queer theory, in general, is a principle that exists to counter the dominant norms dictating what one can and cannot do. In sexuality, queer people do not classify under any of the classes of sexual identity (Johnson, 2014). Therefore, it is essential to study the lives of these individuals in research and consider them in data collection since it is the ultimate embodiment of sexual freedom. It translates to one not having to conform to any of societal norms and categories and not having to succumb to pressure, and one can simply do as they pleas in matters regarding sexuality.

1. **What is gender performativity, is it the same thing as being a drag queen or king and getting on stage? why/why not?**

The philosopher Judith Butler birthed the theory of gender performativity. Gender performativity is a philosophical concept that gender is developed and founded socially through everyday acts and non-verbal cues (Wald, 2007). These two are performative and exist to define and maintain an identity in society as either male or female. In a nutshell, behavior creates gender. Therefore, when it comes to gender identity and orientation, the nurture factor supersedes the nature element within the society. However, gender performativity is not the same as being a drag king or queen. Being a drag king or queen is more often than not some performance act to fit into a character and embody their traits. It is like a switch button, where one can quickly revert to the usual self. However, gender performativity becomes so engraved in someone that they subconsciously perform acts related to their identity and feel uncomfortable trying to change this routine.

1. **Why might someone not leave an abusive (sexually or otherwise) relationship?**

It might be difficult for someone to leave an abusive relationship for a number of reasons. One is shame and prejudices from friends and family, making victims of abusive relationships remain. Secondly, children may tie one down (Focht, 2021). A parent may opt to put their child's happiness fast and not deny them the opportunity to have a father or mother close by. They, therefore, stomach the abuse rather than leaving. Another reason may be finances. A couple may have invested a lot of things together, and leaving the relationship would cost them financially. It is more difficult when the victim is financially unstable and would struggle to sustain a healthy lifestyle. Religion can also bind someone to an abusive relationship, where divorce is considered a sin. Immigration status may also limit one's ability to leave a relationship. Termination of such a marriage would make one an immigrant illegally, and they may get deported. These are some of the reasons why people opt to stay in abusive relationships.

1. **Do men and women engage in developing romance and intimacy in the same way, why/why not? Also, make sure your answer covers whether these differences/similarities are due to biology or something else.**

Men and women perceive, interpret and engage in developing romance and intimacy in different ways. The differences stem from the different manner in which men and women have been raised (Lewis, 1978). Therefore, the two populations have somewhat different dialects entirely. Women seek connection and intimacy while men are after status, independence, and dominance. Men struggle more with intimacy than women do as they communicate using facts while women use their emotions. They also perceive relationships and intimacy as a goal that they need to achieve and succeed in. Women value the relationship more and become more emotionally attached faster. The other difference is that men believe that this can be achieved through physical activity while women seek emotional connections to get developed first. These differences between men and women are a result of how they have been nurtured and brought up. Men have been taught to take up authority positions in marriages and relationships, and women have been cultured to act as a support system. However, the differences complement the flaws of the other partner, making it easy for a relationship to work when the attributes are conflicting.

1. **From your reading by Niobe Way on "Emotionless Boys" and resistance, what were some of the main, or most important, findings that she discusses from her work?**

From the reading on Emotionless Boys by Niobe Way, I did find that the author made several important points. From her work, the research proved that resistance is more common in boys residing in urban environments and who attend public schools (Way et al., 2014). Resistance to masculinity norms is more encouraged there in comparison to more socially conservative areas. However, it cannot be concluded whether or not they translate the same resistance to relationships with girls as compared to how they willingly do it among other masculine friends. Emotionless boys and resistance have been a culture repeatedly inculcated in men, where they tend to be indifferent and not attached easily, thinking less through emotions and more through facts.

1. **From your reading "The sexual victimization of men in America" what were some of their main findings that challenged previous assumptions about rates of sexual assault?**

Sexual victimization has often painted women as the victims, and men have been branded as the perpetrators. Therefore, in research and the creation of advocacies and support groups, society has stereotypically focused on protecting women, assuming that they are the victims and they suffer more traumatic experiences. However, from the journal on the sexual victimization of men in America, the under looked gender has had its fair share of troubles. In America, the focus by the governments and media ignores the vast cohort of male victims of sexual abuse (Stemple & Meyer, 2014). The main finding was that society needs to move from the male perpetrator-female victim notion and mentality and change the face of sexual victimization. The biases created have made it more difficult for men to seek justice and find a voice after being abused, where they are seen as weaklings.

References

Focht, F. (2021). "Why Doesn't She Just Leave?" Barriers to Getting out of Abusive Relationships | National Center for Health Research. Retrieved 8 May 2021, from https://www.center4research.org/doesnt-just-leave-barriers-getting-abusive-relationships/

Heidari, S. (2016). Sexuality and older people: a neglected issue. *Reproductive Health Matters*, *24*(48). doi: 10.1016/j.rhm.2016.11.011

Johnson, K. (2014). Queer Theory. *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology*, 1618-1624. doi: 10.1007/978-1-4614-5583-7\_592

Lewis, R. (1978). Emotional Intimacy among Men. *Journal of Social Issues*, *34*(1), 108-121. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.1978.tb02543.x

National Centre for Transgender Equality. (2021). Frequently Asked Questions about Transgender People. Retrieved 8 May 2021, from https://transequality.org/issues/resources/frequently-asked-questions-about-transgender-people

Pflum, S., Testa, R., Balsam, K., Goldblum, P., & Bongar, B. (2015). Social support, trans community connectedness, and mental health symptoms among transgender and gender nonconforming adults. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, *2*(3), 281-286. doi: 10.1037/sgd0000122

Stemple, L., & Meyer, I. (2014). The Sexual Victimization of Men in America: New Data Challenge Old Assumptions. *American Journal of Public Health*, *104*(6), e19-e26. doi: 10.2105/ajph.2014.301946

Tisdell, E. (1993). Interlocking Systems of Power, Privilege, and Oppression in Adult Higher Education Classes. *Adult Education Quarterly*, *43*(4), 203-226. doi: 10.1177/0741713693043004001

Wald, C. (2007). Introduction: Theatrical Performance, Gender Performativity, and the Drama of Performative Malady. *Hysteria, Trauma and Melancholia*, 1-25. doi: 10.1057/9780230288614\_1

Way, N., Cressen, J., Bodian, S., Preston, J., Nelson, J., & Hughes, D. (2014). "It might be nice to be a girl... Then you wouldn't have to be emotionless": Boys' resistance to norms of masculinity during adolescence. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, *15*(3), 241-252. doi: 10.1037/a0037262