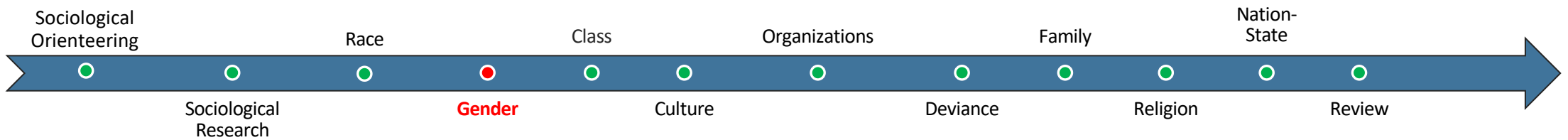


WEEK 4

Gender and Sexuality

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SC1101E Making Sense of Society



Girl Bosses



<https://youtu.be/jS3k89Ph2sw>

Engaging Society

- 1) Why do you think the video received so many dislikes (negative comments)?
- a. because we now have gender equality.
 - b. because it marginalizes men.
 - c. because it is a **bank advertisement**.
 - d. because people hate liberal ideas these days.



Sex

- a category of identity based on genetic and physical traits essential to reproduction.
- mainly biological

Gender

- is a category of identity based socially prescribed principles and practices associated with a person's conventional role in reproduction.
- mainly cultural

Sex and the Biological Bases of Identity

☐ Chromosomes

- mother carries X, father carries either X or Y
- if sperm is X = boy, if sperm is Y= girl

☐ **Intersexed** – a broad term used by medical profession to classify people with some mixture of male and female biological characteristics (e.g., Chinese *yingyangren*).

☐ Sex characteristics

- Primary – refers to anatomical traits essential to reproduction.
- Secondary – physical traits not essential to reproduction (breasts, voice, facial/body hair, and skeletal form) that result from the action of male [androgen] and female [estrogen] hormones.



Hermaphroditus, offspring of Greek deities, origin of the word “hermaphrodite”.

Gender and the Cultural Bases of Identity

❑ **Gender Polarization** – the organizing of social life around male-female ideals.

- How to dress, morning routines, etc.

+ expectations surrounding the

❑ **Masculinity** – the physical, behavioral, mental, and emotional traits believed to be characteristics of males.

❑ **Femininity** – the physical, behavioral, mental, and emotional traits believed to be characteristic of females.

❑ **“Other” genders** – (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, etc.) people see how the polarization of gender (male-female binary) limits choice and self-expression.

Morning Routines:
Male vs Female



<http://thedeucetwo.blogspot.com/2012/06/morning-routine-men-vs-women.html>

The Social Construction of Sex and Gender

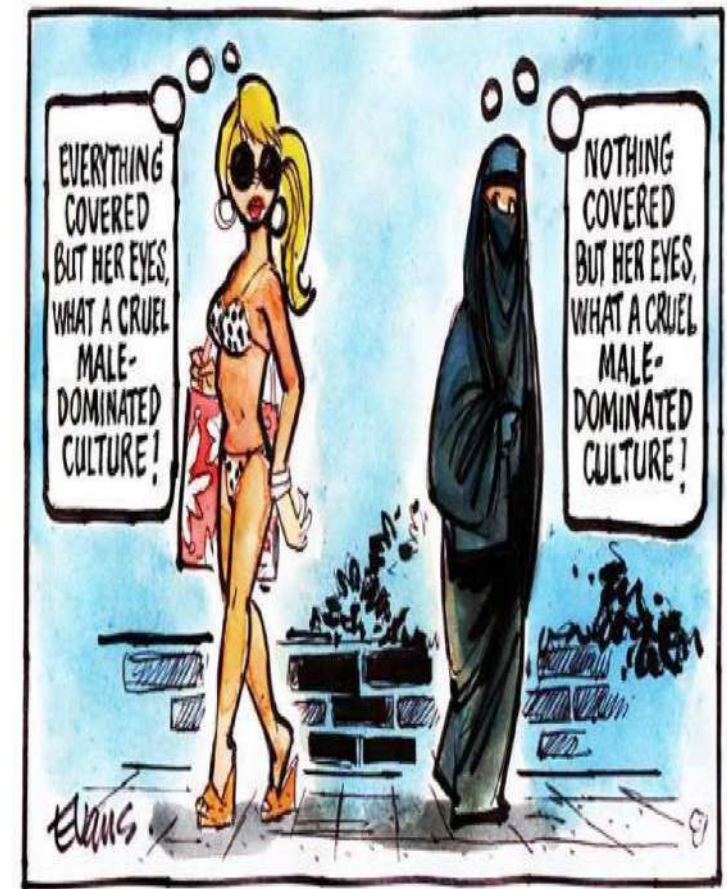
- ❑ **Gender socialization** – is the process by which social expectations regarding gender are taught learned.
 - we learn it from people and institutions.
 - we follow **sexual scripts** - blueprints that guide our sexual activities and encounters (Kimmel & Plante 2007).
 - “normal” sex was defined as reproductive, anything else was abnormal and perverse.
- ❑ **Gendered institution** – refers to an organization where gender-specific standards permeate through its ideologies, images, and practices.



The Hawkeye Initiative

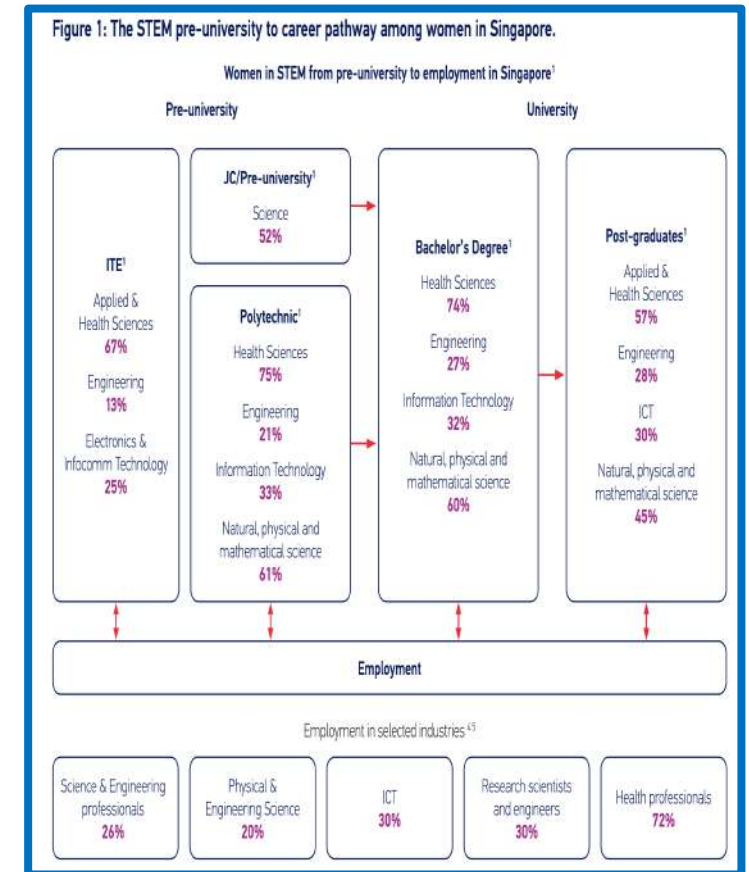
Sexuality as a Political Object

- The History of Sexuality (Michel Foucault)
 - The modern era saw professions (medicine, law, education, etc.) expand into sex.
 - Institutional power and the production of knowledge about sex became an instrument of its control.
 - we have **no true sexual selves**, we only come to develop it because of these institutions and their **discourses**.



What Gender is Science? (Charles 2011)

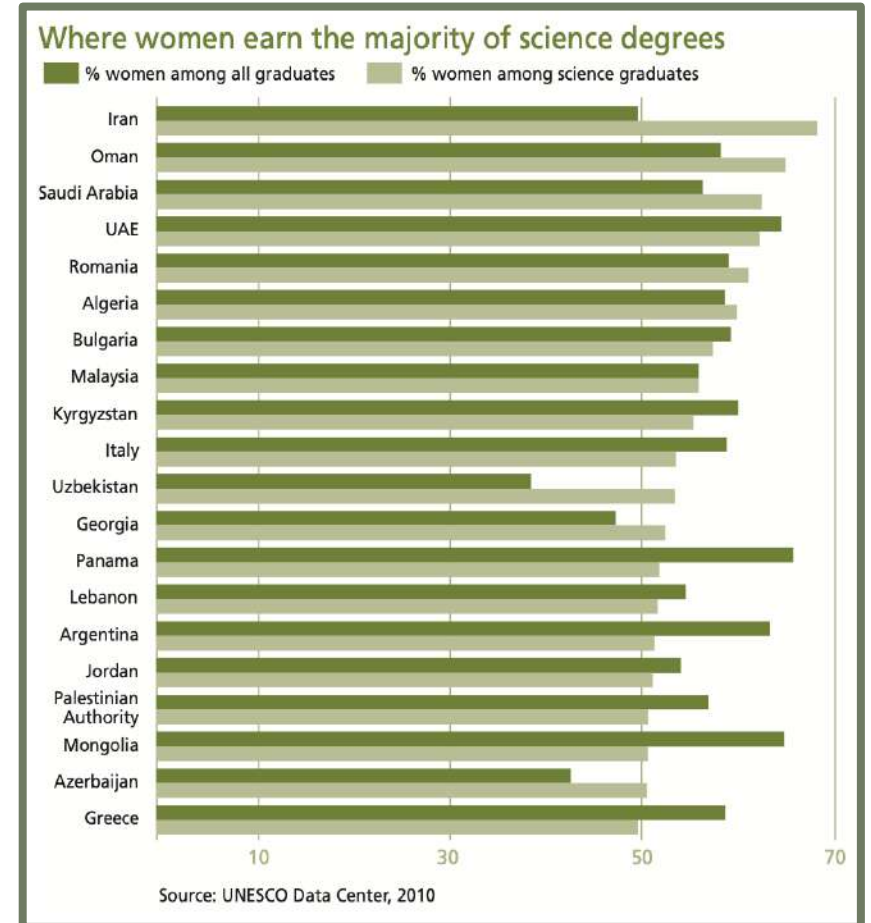
- ❑ American universities and firms lag behind those in many other countries with respect to women among STEM students and workers.
- ❑ In Singapore, women are also underrepresented in STEM
 - engineering education (21%)
 - IT education (29%)
 - research & development workforce (20%)
- ❑ **Sex segregation** describes the uneven distributions of women and men across occupations or fields of study.
 - discrimination - recruitment practices, “gendered” jobs
 - women preference for “human-centered” pursuits.



Source: Chua, Kline, & Lim, STEM & Gender Gap in SG, 2022.

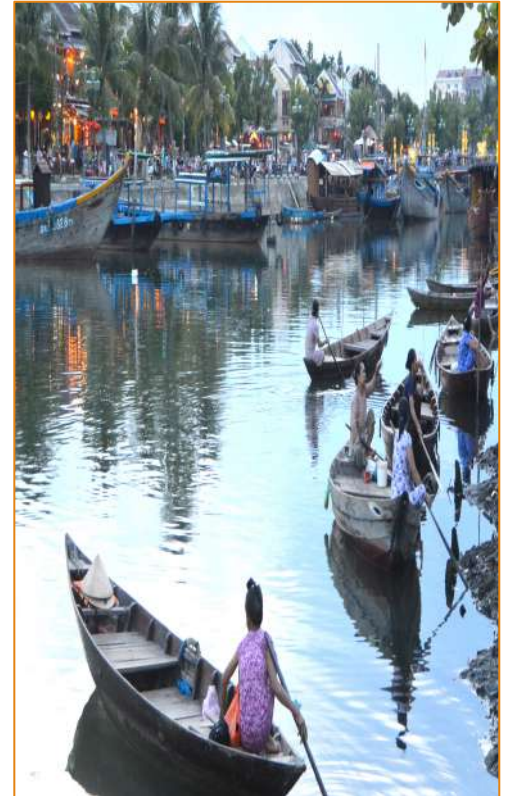
STEMming from Stereotypes

- ❑ Sex segregation is an especially resilient form of inequality because people so ardently believe in, enact, and celebrate cultural stereotypes about gender difference.
 - believing stereotypes – men and women are equal but inherently different (M-Mars, W-Venus)
 - enacting stereotypes – gender socialization, “doing gender”
 - celebrating stereotypes – postmaterialist values of individualism, “follow your passion,” (mass media, advertisement)



Gender Inequality

- ❑ **Sexism** – the belief that one sex is innately superior to another, justifying unequal treatment of the sexes.
- ❑ Patriarchy – the set of institutional arrangements which are based on beliefs and practices that privileged men over women.
- ❑ Gender stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.
- ❑ Gender Discrimination
 - glass ceiling – prevents women from professional advancement.
 - second shift – double responsibilities of full-time work and housework.
 - wage gap – average difference between the remuneration of men and women.



Boat women
Hoi An, Vietnam

Wage Gap and Women Construction Workers in Myanmar

❑ Social Background

- construction boom
- 25 percent of households have no men, moved for employment to urban areas or abroad.

❑ Wage gap

- men (5000 kyats), women (4500 = SGD4.30)
- driver's figure: men (10,000), women (5000)

❑ Our driver's comment:

“These women get low salary because they cannot follow instructions easily.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/jan/25/on-the-road-with-the-women-building-myanmar>



Construction Women, Constructing Women

The Feminist Response

□ Feminism – a perspective that advocates equality between men and women.

- First wave (1848-1920) – women's right to vote
- Second wave (1960s-80s) – legal and social equality, work discrimination
- Third wave (1990s) – self-expression, **intersectionality**
- Fourth wave (2012-) – use of social media, #me too movement

□ Intersectionality and IDENTITIES

- describes how race, gender, class, and many other factors play a role in the oppression faced by an individual.
- **System of Oppression** - There are many factors that contribute to difficulties in a person's life, which involves overlapping categories that define who we are and bestow upon us **privileges** or **penalties**.



Conclusion



Globalization enforce greater homogeneity (e. g. CEDAW, Beijing Declaration) while also leading to greater inequalities (e. g. sex tourism, online child pornography).



Ironically, the freedom of choice that's so celebrated in affluent Western democracies seems to help construct and give agency to stereotypically gendered "selves."