

6 Biological Sex 2

6.1 Mental Maps of Reality

- How we categorize the world around us
- How we assign value to different categories

6.2 Categories and Dualisms

- In order to understand and make sense of the world, we create categories
- By definition these are exclusionary and reductive, and thus rarely represent 'reality'
- Categories often come in binaries and set in opposition to one another (dualisms)
 - Nature/Culture
 - Sex/Gender
 - Homo/Hetero
 - Mind/Body

6.3 Cultural Narratives of the Body

- Our cultural beliefs about similarities/differences influence how we see the body and understand sex

6.4 Sexing the Body

- Gender ideology - set of cultural ideas about the essential character of different genders
 - Sex and gender as binary
 - Sex and gender as synonymous
- Gender ideology shapes concepts of biological sex and how the body works
- Popular and medical notions of biological sex often reflect our cultural beliefs rather than reality
- Scientific terminology and medicalization change the way we culturally understand the body

6.5 The Egg and the Sperm

- Traditional notion of conception is based on stereotypical male-female gender roles

6.6 Biopower

- The processes by which regimes of authority produce knowledge on human life and the power these systems of knowledge have on social institutions and individual lives