

Chapter 1--The Study of Communication, Gender, and Culture

Student: _____

1. Rick was born with male and female sex organs. Which of the following is the best term to describe Rick as a person with biological qualities of a male and a female?
 - A. transsexuals
 - B. intersexed
 - C. transgendered
 - D. gender rebels
 - E. dualsexed
2. Symbols are _____.
 - A. subject to interpretation
 - B. correctly defined in the dictionary
 - C. agreed upon by all members of a culture
 - D. concrete
 - E. fixed
3. Gender is _____.
 - A. learned
 - B. stable
 - C. fixed
 - D. determined by biological sex
 - E. none of the above
4. Which of these chromosomal patterns has/have been found in people our society labels male?
 - A. XXX
 - B. XX0
 - C. XYY
 - D. X0
 - E. none of these
5. The term *patriarchy* literally means _____.
 - A. oppression of females.
 - B. from male standpoint.
 - C. rule by the fathers.
 - D. government by men.
 - E. all of the above.

6. Your *Gendered Lives* book includes a text box outlining transgendered activism on college campuses. Students emphasized the connection between language and identity by creating ways of identifying themselves and others that did not specify gender. The word "ze" is:
- A. a pronoun representing masculine and feminine people.
 - B. a verb representing transformation.
 - C. a description of a person who is transgendered.
 - D. a description of a person who is androgynous.
 - E. a description of a person who is transsexual.
7. Yan Bing and Dianna are college students discussing how they each define "cheating" in a romantic relationship. Yan Bing considers flirting during an IM conversation cheating, but Dianna thinks cheating only involves physical contact. Later, they continue the discussion with friends over dinner. This scenario best describes which of the following?
- A. Communication is a dynamic and contextual.
 - B. Communication is gendered.
 - C. Yan Bing and Dianna are exhibiting feminine styles of communication.
 - D. Content level of meaning and relationship level of meaning are not the same thing.
 - E. All of the above.
8. A professor says to a student, "I will not accept your paper after 5 pm today." The content level of meaning in this message is that
- A. the professor is open to negotiation.
 - B. the professor feels s/he has to explain the policy to the student.
 - C. the professor can exercise power over the student.
 - D. the professor feels s/he has greater status than the student.
 - E. the professor won't accept the paper after 5 pm today.
9. Which of the following is true of biology's role in development?
- A. Biology determines one's gender.
 - B. Biology determines one's sex and may play a role in gender development.
 - C. Biological differences are the primary reason men and women communicate differently.
 - D. Biology does not play a role in sex or gender.
 - E. All of the above.
10. Item drawn from class business

To use this question, highlight this question, then click "Question" in the toolbar. Next, click on the "Info..." button and uncheck "Don't use question on test." Finally, save the bank file and proceed with building the test.

- A. Option not provided.
- B. Option not provided.

11. Researchers have found that views of gender generally remain consistent over the average person's life-span.
- True False
12. Society, family, and friends teach us what it means to be male and female.
- True False
13. Biological features determine a person's sex
- True False
14. Hermaphrodite is the preferred word for people who have male and female sex organs.
- True False
15. You and your roommate do not get along. Your roommate asks you to do the dishes. The content level meaning of this statement is that your roommate thinks you are a lazy slob.
- True False
16. There are two distinct genders, female and male.
- True False
17. People who are gender queer challenge binary ways of thinking about sex and gender.
- True False
18. Gender identity is the same thing as one's biological sex.
- True False
19. Androgyny is a term describing individuals who "feel their biological sex is wrong^{3/4}that they are really women trapped in men's bodies or men trapped in women's bodies."
- True False

20. Identify the following:

Content and relational levels of meaning

21. Identify the following:

Sex

22. Identify the following:

Androgyny

23. Identify the following:

Symbols

24. Identify the following:

Intersexed

25. Identify the following:

Transsexual

26. Identify the following:

Patriarchy

27. Identify the following:

Gender identity

28. Identify the following:

Sexual orientation

29. Popular psychology books often profile the behaviors and characteristics of the "opposite sexes." Based on your understanding of material from chapter 1, how would you critique this labeling of men and women? Make sure your answer demonstrates your understanding of essentializing, androgyny, and sex and gender.

The framework for the answer to this essay may be found throughout chapter 1.

30. The author of your *Gendered Lives* text states, "Gender, culture, and communication are interlinked.... Because this is so, we cannot study any one of them without understanding a good deal about the other two." Explain what Wood means by this statement. How do these elements mutually influence one another?

31. Define levels of meaning in communication and provide a concrete example of each level of meaning.

32. Unlike sex, gender is a relational concept. Explain what this means and the implications of it, and give an example that illustrates your point.
33. What is the difference between being transgendered and transsexual?
34. What does it mean to say, "meanings are constructed through human interaction with symbols"? Why is this significant for our understanding of gender?

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Key

1. B
2. A
3. A
4. C
5. C
6. A
7. A
8. E
9. B
10. AB
11. FALSE
12. TRUE
13. TRUE
14. FALSE
15. FALSE
16. FALSE
17. TRUE
18. FALSE
19. FALSE
20. Communication includes the content level of meaning, which is the literal or informational message, and the relational level of meaning, which defines the relationship between communicators. Both levels must be understood to interpret communication. Dimensions of the relational level are liking, responsiveness, and power. Example, C = "I'll meet you at the thing over by the place." R = liking/familiarity between communicators.
21. Sex is an individual quality determined by biology (chromosomes and hormones). Sex is biological; gender is socially constructed. Sex is innate; gender is learned. Sex is unchanging, or stable (possible exception-sex change surgery.)
22. Coined in the 1970s, androgyny is the combinations of the Greek words *aner/andros* (man) and *gyne* (woman). Androgynous people reject rigid sex roles and embody dualities that the culture considers masculine and feminine. For example, an androgynous person may be both strong and sensitive.
23. Symbols are what humans use to communicate. They include signs (i.e., "\$" signifies dollar) and words. Symbols are abstract, arbitrary, and ambiguous. Symbols require mediation or interpretation of thought. Humans create meaning because symbols are not innate. People differ in how they perceive and interpret communication.
24. Intersexed individuals are born with ambiguous genitals and may differ from most people in hormonal, chromosomal, and physiological ways. Intersexuals, for many years, routinely underwent "clarifying surgery," which reconstructed genitals to appear more typically masculine or feminine. Concerning intersexed people, doctors have routinely decided which sex the child was "meant to be" and advised parents to authorize "clarifying surgery" that then allowed parents to bring the child up as the sex it was "meant to be."

25. Transsexual is a term that usually refers to someone who has changed their physical sex to more closely align with their sexual identity. This is done through hormones and surgery. Transsexuals are often referred to as post-transitional males to females (MTF) or post-transitional females to males (FTM).

26. Patriarchy is a term that literally means "rule by fathers." To say that a culture is patriarchal means that it is primarily focused on men's goals, needs, and realities. Men are given preference over women as ideologies, structures, and practices are defined by and for men.

27. A person's identification as male or female.

28. Sexual orientation refers to a person's preferences for romantic and sexual partners. People who have heterosexual orientations are attracted to members of the other sex while gays and lesbians are attracted to members of their own sex. Bisexuals are attracted to members of both sexes.

29. Answers should:

- Explain the difference between the definitions of sex and gender (pages 20-30)
- Explain the tendency of these books to essentialize or presume that all members of a sex are alike in certain respects (page 19) and focus on these as key opposing differences between sexes
- Reference that many men and women have androgynous characteristics, or qualities associated with both masculine and feminine ideals (page 26)

Students may also note that men and women have many similarities (page 19) and how societal definitions of gender are in a constant state of change.

30. Our conceptions of masculine and feminine behaviors are influenced by culture and they change over time. Different cultures have differing expectations for masculine and feminine behaviors. We learn gendered identities through communication, which is dynamic and systemic. Context, culture, and history are systems that influence how we understand and construct gender. Therefore, gender is influenced by culture. Through communication, we both reinforce or challenge these ideals. Using communication as a dynamic process, we may change cultural meanings of gender. For instance, some challenge the traditional view of gender as dualities and consisting of only two possibilities and researchers have recognized androgynous characteristics in men and women. We may influence ideas about gender during personal interactions. By communicating these ideas, conceptions of gender change.

31. Communication has two levels of meaning: content and relationship. Content level of meaning is the denotative, or literal, meaning of communication. Relationship level of meaning defines the relationship between communicators. Dimensions of relationship level meaning are power, liking, and responsiveness. Example: "You will do what I say." Content level of meaning is that the receiver of this message will do what the sender says. Relationship level of meaning is that the sender has the power to tell the receiver what to do.

32. Gender is a relational concept because we can only understand femininity compared and contrasted with masculinity. Likewise, we cannot understand masculinity without the concept of femininity. We socially construct these two to be opposites; for example, if we see masculinity as being about strength, then femininity is seen as weakness. This concept is important because it means that when we change our ideas about one gender, we necessarily change the way we think about another gender.

33. While some people may define these terms differently, generally a transgendered person is someone who feels that his or her gender identity does not match his or her biological sex. For instance, a transgendered person may have been born female but feel male or very masculine. A transsexual person is someone who has taken hormones or had surgery to change one's biological sex. Some transgendered people never want to have surgery to become a different biological sex.

34. This statement means that the meaning of ideas, concepts, and things are not inherent. They are built culturally through interactions that produce a shared understanding. For example, red roses are not inherently connected to love, but in the U.S., we have decided that giving someone red roses is a gesture of romantic love. This idea is important for our understanding of gender because it points out that what we agree is masculine or male and feminine or female is socially agreed upon but not the inherent truth. It may change across cultures, over time, and in different contexts.