Exercise #2
Socialization? Development? Both?

How much of the difference that exists between men and women is learned through socialization and how much can be traced to biological roots?

There is debate about this topic. However, much of the research that is published ignores this question. Instead, academics frequently approach their research with unchallenged assumptions about gender. Many sociologists, for example, ascribe to the notion that gender roles are socially constructed and that biological differences have little, if anything, to do with male-female differences. They do not consider the role of biology when they examine gender differences, homosexuality, etc. Many biologists and medical researchers, however, believe that there are biological differences between men and women and pay little, if any, attention to gender-role socialization.

For this exercise you are going to select and read a recent journal article. Gender should be a key aspect of the research or theory presented in the article you select. You will prepare a 2 – 3 page analysis of the article.

In your analysis you should consider any of the following that apply:

Does the author or authors align themselves explicitly with a socialization or a developmental perspective? Which perspective? How does he/she defend that position (that is to say, is there any explanation as to why socialization is a better explanation than development or vice versa)? Please cite the page(s) of the article where this is most evident. Please note: a researcher can explicitly endorse the influence of both development and socialization.

If no explicit statement is made, read carefully to determine what the author(s) implicit assumption regarding gender differences may be. Please remember that an author may be neutral on this question. Point to at least 2 examples from the article (quote if it is possible but at least give the page #) supporting your assessment.

How does your reading of selections from As Nature Made Him affect your reaction to this article (Do you buy it? Do you think the explanations given by the researcher are the only possible explanation for what he/she found)? How does your reading of this article affect your reading of As Nature Made Him (for example, are there explanations besides biology that would account for David’s difficulty with his gender assignment)?

These are very broad sets of questions. I don’t expect you to get through all of them. Furthermore, if there is some other line of thought that you would prefer to follow that is fine. What I want to see in your assignments is evidence that you wrestled with the topics of biological gender and gender role socialization and thought critically about the
assumptions being made about gender in your selected article. However, PLEASE
MAKE SURE THAT YOU DO INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF As Nature Made Him

You should turn in bibliographic information for the article you are discussing (no
specific format is necessary). If you use an article that is not available online, please
make me a copy. Your analysis should be 2 - 3 pages, double-spaced. I prefer to practice
blind grading so please your use ID number instead of name.

Potential Articles

Most, if not all, of these articles are available online. Simply go to MadCat
(http://madcat.library.wisc.edu/) and search for the journal by title (the JOURNAL title,
not the article title). In the list of holdings, you should be directed to at least one database
where you can get the article.

You are also welcome to find an article on your own. If you want to actually go to the
library and look through journals that is fine. You can also do your research from the
comfort of home (or the computer lab). Go to the UW library web site
(http://www.library.wisc.edu/) choose Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers. From
there you can search databases by subject area or go by title. I recommend Jstor,
Academic Search Elite, Proquest, and Science Direct. Try searching by subjects like
gender and socialization, gender and biology, etc.

The gender system and interaction; Cecilia L Ridgeway; Annual Review of Sociology,
Palo Alto; 1999; Vol. 25; pg. 191, 26 pgs

Sitting on the fence: Biology, feminism and gender-bending environments; Lynda Birke;
Women's Studies International Forum, Oxford; Sep/Oct 2000; Vol. 23, Iss. 5; pg. 587

Studies of Women's Health Produce a Wealth of Knowledge on the Biology of Gender
Issue 42, pA19, 2p, 2c

Biology and environment: Montesquieu's relativist analysis of gender behavior; Chris
Nyland; History of Political Economy, Durham; Fall 1997; Vol. 29, Iss. 3; pg. 391, 22
pgs

Biology and destiny: The dynamics of gender crossing in Quantum Leap. By: Williams,
J.P.; Women's Studies in Communication, Fall96, Vol. 19 Issue 3, p273, 18p

Hormones, sex, and gender. By: Worthman, Carol M.; Annual Review of Anthropology,
The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female... By: Martin, E.; Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society, Spring91, Vol. 16 Issue 3, p485, 17p

Sex testing in international athletics. By: Wilson, J.D.; JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association, 2/12/92, Vol. 267 Issue 6, p853, 1p

THE GENDER POLICE. By: Phillips, Helen; New Scientist, 05/12/2001, Vol. 170 Issue 2290, p38, 4p, 5c

Mother Nature Is Not a Feminist. By: Sommers, Christina Hoff; Free Inquiry, Summer2000, Vol. 20 Issue 3, p14, 2p, 1c, 1bw


Gender differences in emotional closeness between preschool children and their mothers. By: Benenson, Joyce E.; Morash, Deanna; et al; Sex Roles, Jun98, Vol. 38 Issue 11/12, p975, 11p, 2 charts


Sexology, body image, foreskin restoration, and bisexual status. By: Money, John; Journal of Sex Research, Feb91, Vol. 28 Issue 1, p145, 12p, 3 charts