Sex:

- Sex is the division of a species into either male or female, especially in relation to the reproductive functions. Whatever else sex is, it is about the ability of species to reproduce.
- Either the male or female division of a species, especially as differentiated with reference to the reproductive functions.
- the sum of the structural and functional differences by which the male and female are distinguished, or the phenomena or behavior dependent on these differences.

Sexuality:

- "Sexuality refers to a fundamental component of personality in and through which we, as male or female, experience our relatedness to self, others, the world, and even God" (USCCB, 1991, p. 9).
- "Sexuality especially involves the powers or capacities to form deep and lasting bonds, to give and receive pleasure, and to conceive and bear children. Sexuality can be integral to the desire to commit oneself to life with another, to touch and be touched, and to love and be loved. Such powers are complex and ambiguous. They can be used well or badly. They can bring astonishing joy and delight. Such powers can serve God and serve the neighbour. They also can hurt self or hurt the neighbour. Sexuality finds expression at the extreme ends of human experience: in love, care, and security; or lust, cold indifference, and exploitation.
- Sexuality consists of a rich and diverse combination of relational, emotional, and physical interactions and possibilities. It surely does not consist solely of erotic desire" (ELCA, 2009, section 3).

Gender

The modern English word gender comes from the Middle English gender, gendre, a loanword from Anglo-Norman and Middle French gendre. This, in turn, came from Latin genus. Both words mean "kind", "type", or "sort". They derive ultimately from a widely attested Proto-Indo-European (PIE) root gen-, which is also the source of kin, kind, king, and many other English words. It appears in Modern French in the word genre (type, kind, also genre sexuel) and is related to the Greek root gen- (to produce), appearing in gene, genesis, and oxygen. The Oxford Etymological Dictionary of the English Language of 1882 defined gender as kind, breed, sex, derived from the Latin ablative case of genus, like genere natus, which refers to birth. The first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED1, Volume 4, 1900) notes the original meaning of gender as "kind" had already become obsolete.

- Either of the two sexes (male and female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones. The term is also used

more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female.

- Sexologist John Money introduced the terminological distinction between biological sex and gender as a role in 1955. Before his work, it was uncommon to use the word gender to refer to anything but grammatical categories. However, Money's meaning of the word did not become widespread until the 1970s, when feminist theory embraced the concept of a distinction between biological sex and the social construct of gender. Today, the distinction is followed in some contexts, especially the social sciences and documents written by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Let's now examine some statements about gender from Harriet Bradley's book, *Gender*.

- Gender refers to the relations between women and men. (2007, p. 1)
- [G]ender is a social construct; it is a category used by human beings as a way of dividing up the world they perceive around them and making sense of it. (2007, p. 3)
- Gender affects every aspect of our personal lives. Whether we identify as a man or a woman determines how we look, how we talk, what we eat and drink, what we wear, our leisure activities, what jobs we do, how our time is deployed, how other people relate to us. (2007, p. 6)
- [A]ll the institutions which make up our society (marriage, families, schools, workplaces, clubs, pubs, political organizations) are themselves gendered and are locations in which the gendering of individuals and relationships takes place. (2007, p. 6)

The statements confirm that relations of gender are universal. They are constructed, like the discourse of gender that analyzes them. They are pervasive, percolating down to habits of dress and speech. And they are mediated by institutions. (They are also conveyed by class and what sociologists call worlds of production, reproduction, and consumption. See Bradley, 2007, pp. 88–167.)

Gender was defined and linked to sex, power, and language, and to the power of institutions to convey gendered messages.

MODERN APPROACH TO GENDER AND SEX

JUDITH BUTLER questions the belief that certain gendered behaviours are natural, illustrating the ways that one's learned performance of gendered behaviour (what we commonly associate with femininity and masculinity) is an act of sorts, a performance, one that is imposed upon us by normative heterosexuality. Butler thus offers what she herself calls "a more radical use of the doctrine of constitution that takes the social agent as an object rather than the subject of constitutive acts" ("Performative", 270). In other words, Butler questions the extent to which we can assume that a given individual can be said to constitute

him- or herself; she wonders to what extent our acts are determined for us, rather, by our place within language and convention. She follows postmodernist and poststructuralist practice in using the term "subject" (rather than "individual" or "person") in order to underline the linguistic nature of our position within what Jacques Lacan terms the symbolic order, the system of signs and conventions that determines our perception of what we see as reality. Unlike theatrical acting, Butler argues that we cannot even assume a stable subjectivity that goes about performing various gender roles; rather, it is the very act of performing gender that constitutes who we are (see the next module on performativity). Identity itself, for Butler, is an illusion retroactively created by our performances: "In opposition to theatrical or phenomenological models which take the gendered self to be prior to its acts, I will understand constituting acts not only as constituting the identity of the actor, but as constituting that identity as a compelling illusion, an object of belief" ("Performative" 271). That belief (in stable identities and gender differences) is, in fact, compelled "by social sanction and taboo" ("Performative" 271), so that our belief in "natural" behavior is really the result of both subtle and blatant coercions. One effect of such coercions is also the creation of that which cannot be articulated, "a domain of unthinkable, abject, unlivable bodies" (Bodies xi) that, through abjection by the "normal" subject helps that subject to constitute itself: "This zone of uninhabitability will constitute the defining limit of the subject's domain; it will constitute that site of dreaded identification against, which—and by virtue of which—the domain of the subject will circumscribe its own claim to autonomy and to life" (Bodies 3). This repudiation is necessary for the subject to establish "an identification with the normative phantasm of 'sex'" (Bodies 3), but, because the act is not "natural" or "biological" in any way, Butler uses that abjected domain to question and "rearticulate the very terms of symbolic legitimacy and intelligibility" (Bodies 3). By underlining the artificial, proscribed, and performative nature of gender identity, Butler seeks to trouble the definition of gender, challenging the status quo in order to fight for the rights of marginalized identities (especially gay and lesbian identity).

Indeed, Butler goes far as to argue that gender, as an objective natural thing, does not exist: "Gender reality is performative which means, quite simply, that it is real only to the extent that it is performed" ("Performative" 278). Gender, according to Butler, is by no means tied to material bodily facts but is solely and completely a social construction, a fiction, one that, therefore, is open to change and contestation: "Because there is neither an 'essence' that gender expresses or externalizes nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires; because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender creates the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all. Gender is, thus, a construction that regularly conceals its genesis" ("Performative" 273). That genesis is not corporeal but performative (see next module), so that the body becomes its gender only "through a series of acts which are renewed, revised, and consolidated through time" ("Performative" 274). By illustrating the artificial, conventional, and historical nature of gender construction, Butler attempts to critique the assumptions of normative heterosexuality: those punitive rules (social, familial, and legal) that force us to conform to hegemonic, heterosexual standards for identity.

Butler takes her formulations even further by questioning the very distinction between gender and sex. In the past, feminists regularly made a distinction between bodily sex (the corporeal facts of our existence) and gender (the social conventions that determine the differences between masculinity and femininity). Such feminists accepted the fact that certain anatomical differences do exist between men and women but they pointed out how most of the conventions that determine the behaviors of men and women are, in fact, social gender constructions that have little or nothing to do with our corporeal sexes. According to traditional feminists, sex is a biological category; gender is a historical category. Butler questions that distinction by arguing that our "gender acts" affect us in such material, corporeal ways that even our perception of corporeal sexual differences are affected by social conventions. For Butler, sex is not "a bodily given on which the construct of gender is artificially imposed, but... a cultural norm which governs the materialization of bodies" (Bodies 2-3; my italics). Sex, for Butler, "is an ideal construct which is forcibly materialized through time. It is not a simple fact or static condition of a body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialize 'sex' and achieve this materialization through a forcible reiteration of those norms" (Bodies 2). Butler here is influenced by the postmodern tendency to see our very conception of reality as determined by language, so that it is ultimately impossible even to think or articulate sex without imposing linguistic norms: "there is no reference to a pure body which is not at the same time a further formation of that body" (Bodies 10). (See the Introduction to Gender and Sex for Thomas Laqueur's exploration of the different ways that science has determined our understanding of bodily sexuality since the ancient Greeks.) The very act of saying something about sex ends up imposing cultural or ideological norms, according to Butler. As she puts it, "'sex' becomes something like a fiction, perhaps a fantasy, retroactively installed at a prelinguistic site to which there is no direct access" (Bodies 5). Nonetheless, that fiction is central to the establishment of subjectivity and human society, which is to say that, even so, it has material effects: "the 'I' neither precedes nor follows the process of this gendering, but emerges only within and as the matrix of gender relations themselves" (*Bodies* 7). That linguistic construction is also not stable, working as it does by always re-establishing boundaries (and a zone of abjection) through the endlessly repeated performative acts that mark us as one sex or another. "Sex" is thus unveiled not only as an artificial norm but also a norm that is subject to change. Butler's project, then, is "to 'cite' the law in order to reiterate and co-opt its power, to expose the heterosexual matrix and to displace the effect of its necessity" (Bodies 15).

[THE NAMES IN THETHIRD BRACKETS ARE NAMES OF BUTLER’S BOOKS/ARTICLES]

Social assignment and gender fluidity

According to gender theorist Kate Bornstein, gender can have ambiguity and fluidity. There are two contrasting ideas regarding the definition of gender, and the intersection of both of them is definable as below:

The World Health Organization defines gender as the result of socially constructed ideas about the behaviour, actions, and roles a particular sex performs. The beliefs, values and attitude taken up and exhibited by them is as per the agreeable norms of the society and the personal opinions of the person is not taken into the primary consideration of assignment of gender and imposition of gender roles as per the assigned gender. Intersections and crossing of the prescribed boundaries have no place in the arena of the social construct of the term "gender".

The assignment of gender involves taking into account the physiological and biological attributes assigned by nature followed by the imposition of the **socially constructed conduct**. Gender is a term used to exemplify the attributes that a society or culture constitutes as "masculine" or "feminine". Although a person's sex as male or female stands as a biological fact that is identical in any culture, what that specific sex means in reference to a person's gender role as a woman or a man in society varies cross culturally according to what things are considered to be masculine or feminine. These roles are learned from various, intersecting sources such as parental influences, the socialization a child receives in school, and what is portrayed in the local media. Learning gender roles starts from birth and includes seemingly simple things like what colour outfits a baby is clothed in or what toys they are given to play with. However, a person's gender does not always align with what has been assigned at birth. Factors other than learned behaviours play a role in the development of gender.

Social categories

Mary Frith ("Moll Cutpurse") scandalized 17th century society by wearing male clothing, smoking in public, and otherwise defying gender roles.

Sexologist John Money coined the term gender role in 1955. The term gender role is defined as the actions or responses that may reveal their status as boy, man, girl or woman, respectively. Elements surrounding gender roles include clothing, speech patterns, movement, occupations, and other factors not limited to biological sex. In contrast to taxonomic approaches, some feminist philosophers have argued that gender "is a vast orchestration of subtle mediations between oneself and others", rather than a "private cause behind manifest behaviours".

Non-binary and third genders

Historically, many if not most societies have recognized only two distinct, broad classes of gender roles, a binary of masculine and feminine, largely corresponding to the biological sexes of male and female. When a baby is born, society allocates the child to one gender or the other, on the basis of what their genitals resemble.However, some societies have historically acknowledged and even honoured people who fulfil a gender role that exists more in the middle of the continuum between the feminine and masculine polarity. For example, the Hawaiian māhū, who occupy "a place in the middle" between male and female, or the Ojibwe ikwekaazo, "men who choose to function as women", or ininiikaazo, "women who function as men". In the language of the sociology of gender, some of these people may be

considered third gender, especially by those in gender studies or anthropology. Contemporary Native American and FNIM people who fulfil these traditional roles in their communities may also participate in the modern, two-spirit community, however, these umbrella terms, neologisms, and ways of viewing gender are not necessarily the type of cultural constructs that more traditional members of these communities agree with.

The hijras of India and Pakistan are often cited as third gender. Another example may be the muxe (pronounced [ˈmuʃe]), found in the state of Oaxaca, in southern Mexico. The Bugis people of Sulawesi, Indonesia have a tradition that incorporates all the features above.

In addition to these traditionally recognized third genders, many cultures now recognize, to differing degrees, various non-binary gender identities. People who are non-binary (or gender queer) have gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine. They may identify as having an overlap of gender identities, having two or more genders, having no gender, having a fluctuating gender identity, or being third gender or other-gendered. Recognition of non-binary genders is still somewhat new to mainstream Western culture, and non-binary people may face increased risk of assault, harassment, and discrimination.

Joan Roughgarden argues that some non-human animal species also have more than two genders, in that there might be multiple templates for behaviour available to individual organisms with a given biological sex.