

The background features a light blue gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across the surface. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. A dark purple rectangular box is centered on the page, containing the title text.

IDENTITY SEMIOTICS: GENDER AND SEXUALITY

SEX

- A BIOLOGICAL CATEGORY DETERMINED BY CULTURALLY ACCEPTED BIOLOGICAL CRITERIA (GENITALIA, REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS, HORMONES, AND CHROMOSOMES)

GENDER

SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES ASCRIBED TO THE SEPARATE SEXES. THESE ROLES/BEHAVIORS ARE OFTEN CONSIDERED TO BE “NATURALLY” TIED TO BIOLOGY BUT ARE ACTUALLY REFLECTIONS OF CULTURAL NORMS.

GENDER CODE

- “A *CULTURALLY CONSTRUCTED* SYSTEM THAT PRESCRIBES THE APPROPRIATE ROLES AND BEHAVIOR FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN SOCIETY” (MAASIK AND SOLOMON 492).
- ”ASSUMING BOTH A CONTINUITY BETWEEN YOUR BIOLOGICAL SEX AND YOUR GENDER AWARENESS OR IDENTITY, AS WELL AS A NORMATIVE HETEROSEXUAL ORIENTATION, SUCH CODES TELL YOU HOW TO CONDUCT YOURSELF AS A MALE OR A FEMALE” (MAASIK AND SOLOMON 492).

WHAT GENDER CODES ARE BEING CHALLENGED IN THIS PICTURE? WHICH ARE BEING REINFORCED?



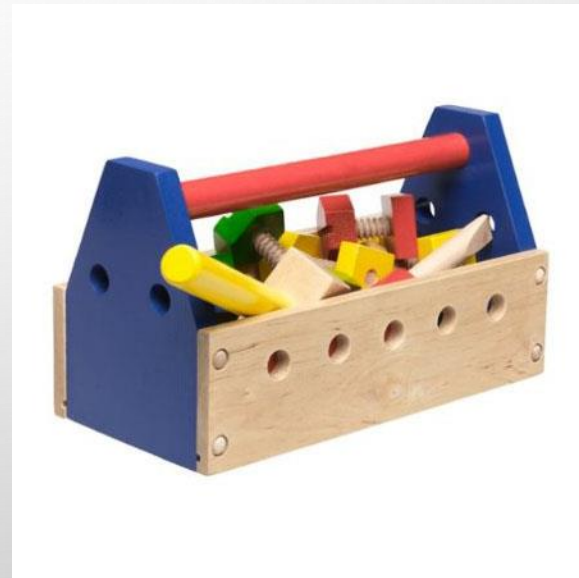
SEXUALITY/SEXUAL IDENTITY

- SEXUAL DESIRE, ATTRACTION, AND PRACTICE BASED ON SEXUAL OBJECT CHOICE.
- COMMON FORMS OF SEXUAL IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY WESTERN CULTURE INCLUDE HETEROSEXUAL, GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, PANSEXUAL, QUEER, AND ASEXUAL.

INDIVIDUALITY VERSUS CONSTRUCTION

- AMERICAN SOCIETY IS “INDIVIDUALISTIC”
 - WE BELIEVE THAT IDENTITY IS A MATTER OF INDIVIDUAL, NOT SOCIETAL, DETERMINATION
- BUT
 - IDENTITY IS AN INTERPLAY OF BETWEEN OUR INDIVIDUAL DESIRES AND OUR SOCIAL CONTEXT
 - GENDER NORMS ARE TAUGHT TO US BEGINNING THE MOMENT WE ARE BORN
 - FAMILY, RELIGION, EDUCATION, RACE, CLASS, AND ENTERTAINMENT CULTURE ALL SHAPE OUR INDIVIDUAL IDENTITIES AND DESIRES

DO TOYS SHAPE OUR GENDER IDENTITY?



WHAT ABOUT TELEVISION?



QUESTION BINARY OPPOSITIONS

- GENDER AND SEXUALITY ARE OFTEN ARRAYED ACROSS A SYSTEM OF BINARY OPPOSITIONS.
- WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF GENDER/SEXUALITY BINARIES?
- THESE OPPOSITIONS CAN BE BENT OR REVERSED *BECAUSE* THEY ARE SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED.
- PERHAPS WE SHOULD THINK IN TERMS OF A FLUID CONTINUUM RATHER THAN A RIGID OPPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE.