

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SEX AND GENDER

Typical insults:

“Women belong into the kitchen”

“All men are assholes”

“Transmen are no real men”

“Gay people are sick”

Introduction:

This is how people, who are not seen as “normal”, are sometimes treated in our society. “Normal” are considered those, whose gender identity is congruent with the biological sex. But what is “normal”? That a person with male genitals identifies as a man and a person with female genitals identifies as a woman? That males have short hair and like ball-sports and cars? That females have long hair, use make-up and play with dolls. And that men love women and women love men? These sexual identities and orientation may be seen as “normal”, but they are not the only ones...

1. Biological sex

The biological sex is, as was explained before, defined by hormones and chromosomes. Against popular belief there are not only two sexes but also a disorder of sex development can lead to a lot of different variation of sexes between man and woman. As there are different types of DSD, the experiences and reactions of the affected persons are very different. Some may still live a happy life, but others suffer from great confusion, depression and discrimination. Being called intersex and hermaphrodite is very offending to them and sometimes they even undergo more severe physical and psychological abuse.

2. Gender identity

The gender identity is defined as what sex a person wants to live and be accepted as in society. The biological sex and the gender identity don't have to be congruent. If they aren't, that person is transsexual. An example would be a biologically born man, who has male genitals and all other outer male characteristics, but still defines as a woman. Transsexuals have a big problem of being accepted in society. Their intent and feelings are often doubted and even after hormone therapy and a surgery, they may not become accepted as members of the sex they adapted.

3. Gender expression

The gender expression follows the gender identity. If you feel like and want to be a woman, you dress and act as such. Hereby it is important to mention that society shapes and develops what kind of role the gender has to fulfill. These so called gender roles differentiate between men and women. Some of those were mentioned before in the presentation, like man having short hair and loving cars.

4. Sexual orientation

The sexual orientation describes one's own feelings to other persons. If one person identifies as a man and is attracted to woman, he is heterosexual, but if he feels attracted to the same sex, he is homosexual. Bisexual people feel attracted to both

sexes and pansexual people feel attraction for all genders there are. There are a lot more and different sexualities but these are the well-known ones.

People in the LGBTI-Community (lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals, intersexed) often get a lot of hate from society. They are often insulted and attacked for their preferences and feel the need to hide who they are. A friend can fast become an enemy if they find out that you are part of the community. A lot of that hate comes from religious people, who are convinced that those feelings and acts are a sin. Sometimes it is the upbringing that leads to people not understanding LGBTI-people and therefore discriminating them. Of course it is different in every country and every part of the world and it has become better in the last decade.

In a nutshell the LGBTI-community is a topic that is often not known enough and that leads to hate and discrimination. Due to schools teaching children and the youth about this theme, the treatment of this community has improved.