The Sociology of Emotions
The Social Construction of Sex

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The sociology of emotion

Common-sense belief: Our emotions represent our "true" self, not social rules
Sociology of emotions studies how culture shapes the way we feel
Arlie Hochschild: pioneered sociology of emotions
People do "emotion management": attempting to make feelings correspond to feeling rules
• Emotion evocation: bringing about desired feeling
• Emotion suppression: stifling undesired feeling
Organizations may demand emotion management from workers

Emotion management in an animal shelter

Arnold Arluke (1994): participant observation in animal shelter
How can society both treat animals with affection and kill them?
Institution of animal shelter deals with this contradiction
Employees must accept premise that sometimes it is necessary to kill animals
Employees must be socialized to manage uncomfortable feelings about killing

Strategies of emotion management

1. Transforming shelter animals into virtual pets
   • Workers learned not to treat animals as pets
   • "Shelter mascots" served as surrogate pets
2. Focusing on the animal
   • Workers frame killing as eliminating suffering
3. Resisting and avoiding euthanasia
   • Workers may avoid killing animals they become attached to
4. Focusing on the owner
   • Workers feel angry at bad owners who are responsible for killing
5. Dealing with others
   • Workers avoid discussing job with outsiders
   • Workers neutralize criticism by defining as ill-informed

Sex vs. gender

Sex: biological maleness or femaleness
Gender: psychological, social, and cultural aspects of maleness and femaleness
The two sexes are assumed to be
• Universal (found in all cultures throughout history)
• Exhaustive (there's no third sex)
• Mutually exclusive (a person can't be both)
Recently, sociologists have been questioning the taken-for-grantedness of the categories "man" and "woman"
• Do the two sexes belong to the physical world or the world of meaning?
Two important pieces of evidence:
• Cross-cultural variation
• Existence of intersexuals (and our reaction to them)