Sex vs. gender

- Sex: biological maleness or femaleness
- Gender: psychological, social, and cultural aspects of maleness and femaleness
- A central part of our gender ideology is the sexual dichotomy
  - Sexual dichotomy: Belief that two biological sex categories, male and female, are permanent, universal, exhaustive, and mutually exclusive (p. 128)
- 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?
- Three important pieces of evidence:
  - Cross-cultural variation
  - Transsexuals: People who identify with a different sex and sometimes undergo hormone treatment and surgery to change their sex (p. 128)
  - Intersexuals: Individuals in whom sexual differentiation is either incomplete or ambiguous (p. 128)