To begin….

- Gender, not something we are, rather something that we do.
- Gender is just one of the things we do that makes us who we are.
- When or how does gender get crowded out by all the other things we are/do?
  - Is that even possible?

It’s always right there (most of the time)

- Gender *inflects* all the other things we are/do.

A “Real” Man or Woman

- Middle-Upper middle class
- Heterosexual
- Able-bodied
- Christian
- Google search for “plain looking guy”; “plain looking lady”

Intersectionality

- We (Humans / Westerners / Americans / Californians / Bakersfieldians?) are complicated, unique, layered identities.
- We have many aspects of our identities.
- Where all of these identities intersect is called intersectionality.
**Intersectionality**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Know Your Intersections</th>
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- We occupy complex cultural maps.

**Gender Strategy**

- Doing gender in a way that works for us as unique individuals, shaped by all the other parts of our unique lives, and the culture that we are a part of.
- This adds up to many **familiar** masculinities and femininities that we **recognize** as conforming to or rebelling against gender binary in **predictable** ways.
- Conforming or rebelling come in recognizable stereotypes.

**Economic Position and Gender**

- Think back to first discussion on gender…
- There are different social classes.
  - Having more economic resources affords adults and their children greater opportunity to “shape their lives to match their ideals”.

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*RIESS*
Economic Position and Gender (Continued)

- Resources abound in larger cities and their surrounding suburbs.
- Smaller cities and towns have correspondingly fewer resources.
- In the poorest parts of any city or town resources are focused on meeting basic needs.
- “Economic class and place of residence intersect with gender, making certain strategies more available to some than others” (Wade & Ferree, 2015).

- Consider the breadWINNER

- Consider the Wonderful Wife and Mother

- Consider the Career Woman

- Consider the Supermom

- Economic circumstances, a willingness to adopt the Super Dad strategy, in spite of push back from culture, all have to line up for a Mr. Mom scenario.

- If the Breadwinner strategy does not provide economic security for the family then masculinity is constructed in terms of doing “real work” vs. “paper-pushing” in air-conditioned offices.

- We embrace strategies that are available to us.
- We embrace the strategies that help us feel most like ourselves.
- Gender strategies are shaped by individual personalities (in part) and the “constraints” and “opportunities” that come out of our class status and our environment.
Race

- Slavery - 1619 - 1856 (237 years).
- First Europeans to already inhabited Americas 1492.
- 237 years out of the 524 years, European settlers/New Americans have had African slaves (45%).
- 240 years since the signing of the constitution.
- 160 years since slavery was abolished.
- 80 years out of 240 years since we became an independent and “free” country (33.33%).
- 1856… long time ago…

Race - African American Men

- Black men were stereo-typed as “jolly buffoons”.
- White elites saw themselves as “care-takers”.
  - Slaves were like children that needed a “master”.
  - Slavery was framed as kindness.
- With emancipation the stereotype of black men as weak and ineffectual went away.
- New stereotype: aggressive, criminal, and sexually violent.
- Today: Stereotypes of hyper masculinity, super aggressive (athletes and criminals) and super sexual (players, philanderers, potential rapists).
- The threat of sexual violence is particularly powerful tool utilized in American culture.

Time out for Sexual Threats

- Sexual Threats / Violence are real and not exclusive to one race, gender, sexual orientation, or nationality.
- Using the threat of sexual violence as justification for control continues to be used against “invisible” populations.
Race - African American Men

- Ferguson observed how both white and black teachers interpreted bad behavior of white and black boys differently.
  - Young white males are innocent. They don’t misbehave out of malice. “Boys will be boys”.
  - When young black males misbehave it is seen as “criminal in the making”.
  - If young black males wanted to be seen as “good” they had to perform an “extreme degree of deference”.

- Ferguson saw this deference and docility as preparation for radicalized survival rituals.
- Some black men report adopting a Gentle Black Man strategy to manage the hyper masculine stereotypes.
- Journalist Brent Staples observed that “doing” upper-class invokes ideas of wealth and intelligence, two things that black men are assumed to lack.

Race - African American Women

- During slavery, the way slave women were treated conflicted with the cultural belief about feminine fragility and purity.

- Female slaves were expected to do hard labor and were subjected to sexual abuse.

- They were then characterized as hyper-sexual and physically tough.

- Post-slavery the same stereotype was used to differentiate black women from “pure and fragile” white women.

- Today, the perception is that black women are less feminine than white women regardless of how they act (Drucilla Cornell, 2000).

- Due, in part, to the historical prejudice and racism the “Girly Girl” strategy proves more difficult to pull off for some black women to “pull off”.
  - This is particularly true if they have tightly curled hair, darker skin, or features that appear more “African”.

- Black women must contend with “the need to overcompensate by doing more femininity”.

- Femininity is tied to whiteness.
Race - African American Women (continued)

- Black women may feel conflicted, doing femininity is framed as either a capitulation to or internalization of racism.
- Some black women embrace a “Black is Beautiful” strategy.
- Reframing characteristically black features as both feminine and beautiful.
- Black women who straighten their hair may be viewed as “sell-outs”.
- Embracing “Black as Beautiful” may be seen as less attractive or unprofessional.
- For black women both the “Girly Girl” and “Black is Beautiful” strategies come with potential costs as well as benefits.

Race - Asian American Men and Women

- Broadly, Asians are assumed to be smaller, lighter, less muscular and are often portrayed as passive, disciplined, and reserved.

Race - Asian American Men

- Tens of thousands of Chinese men forcibly brought to America during the gold rush in the 1800s.
- Living in all male groups they had to learn to perform domestic duties.
- Later they would open businesses offering domestic services to the wider population.
- Racial stereotypes interfere with ability to conform with gender expectations.
- Jeremy Lin competed in the very masculinized NBA.
- His abilities were so impressive (“for a Chinese American”) that it made people “insane”.

Race - Asian American Women

- Chinese and Japanese women were brought to the United States in the late 1800s as sex slaves.
- Asian prostitutes, along with the Japanese geisha stereotype, hyper feminized Asian women as demure, passive, and sexually available.
Race - Asian American Women (continued)

- From Japanese American, Karen Eng:
  
  "The fantasy Asian is intelligent yet pliable, mysterious yet ornamental. She’s also perpetually prepubescent-ageless and petite, hairless, high-pitched, girly… ‘tuckable’ under the arm."

- Asian American women can confirm to the stereotype employing an “Oriental Flower” strategy or an “Outgoing Asian” strategy.

Race - White American men and Women

- Racially unmarked.
- “American” and “white American” are synonymous in American society.
- “Normal” or normative.
- “Regular”, “plain”, “uninteresting”, “vanilla”, “white-bread”.
- Opposite of cool.
- Whites will look for a way to differentiate themselves from the mainstream.

Race - White Poor American Women

- Poor-white women who are marginalized by gender and class may adopt an “Urban White Girl” strategy.
- Less bound by the gender restrictions of middle- and upper-class women.
  - They can be tough and outspoken and openly sexual.
- This comes at the potential cost of being labeled a “wannabe”.
- “Wannabe” would be preferable to the alternative.

  White girls who “don’t know who they are.” They’re loud, annoying, always fighting, too proud of having sex. They wear the wrong clothes. They smoke the wrong cigarettes. They talk wrong, have the wrong attitudes, and have the wrong priorities. And they have the wrong boyfriends.
Race - in Sum

- We all carry radicalized physical features that are “read” by others trying to figure out who we are and simultaneously, who we should be.
- We all work to employ different strategies to fight against stigma.

Sexual Orientation

- The lives of sexual minorities are also shaped by gender.
- Gay men are stereotyped as effeminate.
- Lesbians are stereotyped as masculine.
- Some people profess to have a “gaydar”.
- “Gaydar” is not about sexual orientation.
  - Gaydar is calibrated to gender deviance.
    - “swishy men”
    - masculine women
- Due to homophobia, discrimination, and compulsory heterosexuality (heteronormativity) many sexual minorities are compelled to hide their sexual orientation.
- May adopt a “Heteronormative” strategy.
- People are increasingly more tolerant of sexual minorities… as long as they:
  - Are relatively gender-conforming.
    - “All but Heterosexual” strategy
  - Conform neatly to the sexual-orientation stereotype.
  - Follow the rules.
  - No ambiguity.
  - Don’t make things any more confusing than they are.
Sexual Orientation (Continued)

- Other sexual minorities may employ a “homonormative” strategy.
  - To disrupt.
  - To openly express.
  - To ward off unwanted attention.
  - To put self out there to find someone to date or marry.

Sexual Orientation and Race

- Asian women may have a harder time being recognizably lesbian or bi.
- Black women may feel more pressure to perform femininity, since appearing heterosexual may be one of their few non-stigmatizing identities.
- Black men may feel pressure to engage in hypermasculinity.

Immigration

- Cultural emphasis on group or national identity may disrupt sexual expression.
  - In the U.S. we want to know what “group(s)” you associate with.
- Downward mobility may result in reconfiguring familial roles.

Immigration - Asian American Women

- Study of sex workers in Ho Chi Minh City.
- Catered to Western travelers.
- Often would encounter their Western “knight in shining armor” strategist.
- They would have dreams of coming to America and living glamorous lives after having lived in poverty and as a sex worker.
- Brennan and Cabezas found in their research that sex workers feign love as a strategy to obtain visas and migrate abroad.
Immigration - Asian American Women (Continued)

- **Transnational Gender Vertigo - Hoang**
  - Hoang followed 30 such sex workers for 3-6 years.
  - 12 managed to obtain visas and land in the U.S., Australia, France, and Canada.
  - Of those 12, eight of the women ended up as their family’s primary bread-winner.
  - The men were looking for women to “rescue” and marry.
  - They were looking to marry docile, passive, traditional women…. something they felt was fast disappearing at home.
  - “Gender vertigo” - people, either by choice - taking a more egalitarian role sharing, or out of circumstance - switching roles becomes necessary.
    - In either case, the roles change faster than the occupants can adapt to or make sense of.
  - Men had depleted their economic resources on the women they were anticipating marrying and moving abroad.
    - Spousal support.
    - Immigration related costs.
  - The men end up experiencing guilt and shame that they can not provide in the manner they had hoped to.
  - They had also enjoyed greater status in foreign cities like Vietnam and Ho Chi Minh City.
  - The women did not end up living the life they had anticipated or hoped for.
    - Had to work
    - Not able to send money back home to their families.
    - Embarrassment.
  - They did appreciate how supportive their husbands were of their independence.
Ability and Disability - Masculinity

- “Still a Man” strategy to fight against the identity of being “less than” or “half a man”.
- Sports - competing or “playing” through their “disability” suggests an extraordinary degree of manliness.
- Independence - Enacting an “Able-Disabled” strategy.

Ability and Disability - Femininity

- Portrayed as unsexy.
- Portrays as asexual.
- Or… completely fetishized… kinky.
- Denied many strategies.
- Seen as the disability first.

Age and Gender

- As we age we are less able to pull off different gender strategies.
- We have to “act our age” as culture dictates.
- As we age we are seen as less and less sexual… less and less a gender and increasingly more an age.

Age and Masculinity

- Blue-collar work takes a toll on the body.
  - Compromises ability to “work” for a living.
  - To “work” for masculine identity.
- Upper-class jobs require mental ability.
  - Has not taken a toll on the body.
  - Can continue to earn a living.
- Men can exchange their youth for a Distinguished Gentleman identity.
Age and Femininity

- Beauty is tightly tied to youth.
- Women are pushed to preserve youthfulness in order to preserve attractiveness.
- Consider the ages when we start to say “she looks good for her age” vs. when we say “he looks good for his age.”

In sum

- All of the intersections we have explored intersect upon and through one another in an innumerable number of permutations.
- We don’t all have the same choices for gender expression.