**Andersen (2009): The Social Construct of Gender**

**What is the POA?**

The objective of the article is to identify the differences between sex, gender, and sexuality and the differences between men, women, and the special cases in between, revolving around culture. The author starts off with discussing gender stereotyping by using examples of baby showers, childhood interactions, and the birthing process to get this point across. After this, the author explains the three definitions of sex, gender, and sexuality by defining them and using cultural references to explain this. Lastly, the author discusses special cases that do not fit into a male and female category by comparing different examples to this idea. The author discusses Native American (Navajo), Indian cultural history to explain this and ends the article on the concept of “gender-bending”.

 **How did they do it?**

The author did mostly historical and cultural research to get the point across to discuss a third gender. They research the history of the Berdaches in the Navajo Native American tribes and discusses the qualifications of what puts them this group and what the culture of these people were. They discusses the lifestyle they had (marriage) and how the other natives responded to them. The author then discusses the Hijra people of the Indian culture, which were males that chose to identify themselves as neither male or female. Then it discusses the lifestyle of these people and the rituals to make oneself a Hijra. The cultural research that was used also included the idea of toys being gender stereotyped and is difficult to find gender neutral toys due to the prominent gender stereotyping. This research is used to show that the concept of more than one gender dates back in history. It is a good tool to relate it to the LGBTQ+ movement that is rising in numbers during the 2000’s. If other people used this method, they would help others understand the difference between sex and gender and to realize that they are not the same thing and the commonality of a gender stereotyped society.

 **What did they find?**

They found that in certain cultures, a third gender is accepted and/ or worshipped within a certain group of people. Certain cultures are used to define sex and gender, so the author found that in certain countries and ethnicities in the past, there was more than two genders of just male and female. In Native American history, there was a group called berdaches that were defined as a different gender compared to women and men. These berdaches were anatomically men, but were considered to be intersex. This people would marry other men and it would be considered a homosexual relationship by today’s standards. The other example the article used was the Hijras of the Indian culture. Hijras were male at birth, but consider themselves as neither male or female. They also take part in marrying other men and going through rituals to dedicate themselves to this lifestyle. The only difference between the two examples is the Hijras choose to be who they were, thus proving that it was considered a gender by that society. The Berdaches were considered a third gender as well, but the Hijras provide the idea of it being another gender to be more accurate by the definition.

  **So what?**

This article is important to consider when referring to the LGBTQ+ movement. Many people do not consider that the idea of multiple genders dates back as far as it is. This article is useful to help others understand the history of gender and also to differentiate between sex, gender, and sexuality. It shows how culture affects gender and how it is not just something that appeared out of nowhere. Culture of a certain area changes the idea of gender due to how we separate the duties of men and women and if socially accepted, gender can be altered on a complete spectrum of different things.

 **What questions do I have about this article?**

I question why they chose those particular examples. Were there more cases similar to the topic? Did every cultural group accept third gender individuals? How does third genders of the past relate more to the future multiple genders. It talks about what we would call transwomen and “gender-less” people. Is there examples of gay and lesbian culture in the past? Why did it focus on more so historical than cultural in my opinion? Though it touches upon it, why does it not relate more to the present?