

Night to his day the social construction of gender



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of the of the 14 May Flexibility towards Gender Ascription in African, American Indian and Some other Societies In the source under consideration, Judith Lorber touches upon an interesting theme; the ascription of gender to an individual in a society does not automatically follow from the genitalia or reproductive organs that a person is endowed with (2). Thus gender tends to be more of a construction and ascription of a specific social status to an individual in a society, and the sexuality in many cases does not tend to be a direct source of a specific social status. In that context, Lorber mentions that some African, American Indian and other societies do have a provision for a third gender in their social system (3). Hence, in comparison, the Western societies seem to be comparatively rigid in the sense that they have only two genders that are ' man' and ' woman' (Lorber 3). What is also interesting is that some American Indians have a third gender that is ' female men' and the individuals who are affiliated to this gender are not required to imitate the ways of men in the matters of dress or in other obvious ways to acquire the social status of a man (Lorber 3). Rather it is often their economic potential and abilities that lead to them being ascribed the status of a man. In contrast, in Western societies, there also exist transsexuals and transvestites. However, there is no provision for the ascription of a third gender to them. Rather such individuals are required to imitate the persona of the gender to which they aspire for, either through surgery or in superficial aspects like dress up, way of talking, makeup, etc. So the Western societies are in a way, more rigid than the already discussed African or American Indians societies. Works Cited Lorber, Judith. "" Night to his Day": The Social Construction of Gender". Paradoxes of Gender. 14 May 2011 .