Reading

- Haslanger, Sally (2012). *Resisting Reality: Social Construction and Social Critique*.
- Mental Health Inequalities Factsheet:
  https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/publications/mental-health-inequalities-factsheet/

Identity

Your identity is who you are. In philosophy, lots of attention has been given to our social identities, such as gender identity. This has been a central area of enquiry in **feminist philosophy** – a branch of philosophy which applies the tools of philosophy to important social and political issues, with the aim of ending the oppression of women.

Social Construction

It makes sense to say that our social identities are **socially constructed.** But what does this mean?

- What is constructed? The concept or idea, or the reality behind it? Is it the concept of gender, or people insofar as they are *women, men,* or some other gender that is socially constructed?
- What do we mean by construction? Is it about causation, constitution, or something else?
- In what way is social construction *social* – what aspects of the social world are involved?
- What does social construction contrast with? The natural? The real?

Social Identity and Pathologization

- Pathologization or medicalization is when something is deemed a medical problem or disorder, unfairly or inappropriately.
- Can you think of examples of pathologization that are related to social identities? (For instance, identities such as *being gay*, *being a woman*, *being a trans women* etc)?

Social Identity and Mental Health

- There are various **mental health inequalities** associated with social identities:
  - People who identify as LGBT+ have higher rates of common mental health problems than heterosexual people.
  - Women are ten times more likely than men to have suffered physical and sexual abuse, which can lead to various mental health problems.
  - Black people suffer various mental health inequalities, such as increased likelihood of police rather than health service involvement, less support for psychosis, and differential treatment following hospitalization for mental health.
- How could we tackle these inequalities?
- How else does social identity relate to mental health?