List of Gender Stereotypes

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Simply put, gender stereotypes are generalizations about the roles of each gender. Gender roles are generally neither positive nor negative; they are simply inaccurate generalizations of the male and female attributes. Since each person has individual desires, thoughts, and feelings, regardless of their gender, these stereotypes are incredibly simplistic and do not at all describe the attributes of every person of each gender.

While most people realize that stereotypes are untrue, many still make assumptions based on gender. There are many stereotypes we may all be guilty of, such as assuming that all women want to marry and have children, or that all men love sports. The following is a list of some of the most common gender stereotypes as they pertain to either men or women. Remember that these are stereotypes because they claim to apply to all men or women.

**Female Gender Stereotypes**

Gender stereotypes begin the second a baby’s gender is found out. As soon as we find out it’s a girl, we immediately begin decorating a pink nursery filled with soft décor and butterflies and flowers. We assume that our daughter will be very "girly" and fill her closet with frilly dresses and her toy box with tea sets and dolls. What this is essentially doing, even though many parents don’t realize it, is setting our child up to be the "perfect lady," and teaching her how to be the stereotypical woman. We are teaching her that girls are supposed to wear dresses, serve food, and take care of babies; the biggest and most common stereotype put on women.

Have you ever watched a little girl playing house? Even as young as five or six, she is well aware that she is supposed to stay home with the baby while the husband goes to work, and she has dinner ready when he gets home. Here is another stereotype; women stay at home while men go to work. While there are a million gender stereotypes about females, these are definitely the biggest, and the most debated by feminists of today. Some other stereotypes include:

* Women are supposed to have "clean jobs" such as secretaries, teachers, and librarians
* Women are nurses, not doctors
* Women are not as strong as men
* Women are supposed to make less money than men
* The best women are stay at home moms
* Women don’t need to go to college
* Women don’t play sports
* Women are not politicians
* Women are quieter than men and not meant to speak out
* Women are supposed to be submissive and do as they are told
* Women are supposed to cook and do housework
* Women are responsible for raising children
* Women do not have technical skills and are not good at "hands on" projects such as car repairs
* Women are meant to be the damsel in distress; never the hero
* Women are supposed to look pretty and be looked at
* Women love to sing and dance
* Women do not play video games
* Women are flirts
* Women are never in charge

**Male Gender Stereotypes**

Stereotyping is no different when it’s found out that a boy is on the way. The nursery is decked out in blue, his closet is filled with tiny jeans, polo shirts, and boots, and the theme is usually something like jungle animals or dinosaurs; something tough. Boys’ toys consist of trucks, dinosaurs, action figures, and video games. From the beginning boys are taught to be tough, to be protective, and to defend themselves. Boys are taught that daddy’s go to work and mommy’s stay at home; from their point of view, boys have fun and girls do all the work.

Are you surprised to hear that most parents admit that they do not teach their sons how to do chores such as washing dishes or folding laundry? Instead, they teach them to take out the trash and mow the lawn; from the get-go boys are made to think that certain household chores are "women’s work." This is a major stereotype, but the majority of American households today would prove this to be true. Men are supposed to do the dirty jobs and anything that requires muscle, they are also supposed to go to work and provide for the family. Little boys see this and the stereotype continues.

Other gender stereotypes that inaccurately try to describe all men are:

* All men enjoy working on cars
* Men are not nurses, they are doctors
* Men do "dirty jobs" such as construction and mechanics; they are not secretaries, teachers, or cosmetologists
* Men do not do housework and they are not responsible for taking care of children
* Men play video games
* Men play sports
* Men enjoy outdoor activities such as camping, fishing, and hiking
* Men are in charge; they are always at the top
* As husbands, men tell their wives what to do
* Men are lazy and/or messy
* Men are good at math
* It is always men who work in science, engineering, and other technical fields
* Men do not cook, sew, or do crafts

Can you see how many of these actually are true of many men or women that you know? They may even be true for you personally, but they do not apply to every single man or woman alive. That is what makes them stereotypes; the fact that these things are considered, "the norm" and expected of every male or female. Each person is an individual and it is perfectly normal for a woman to run her own business while a man stays home with the kids. On the other hand it is also perfectly acceptable for a man to be a nurse or hate sports, or enjoy cooking.

Men and women are individuals; they are more than just male or female. Our gender is only part of who we are; it does not define us as people.