

Gender Representation in Media

Course Syllabus

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“Gender inequality holds back the growth of individuals, the development of countries and the evolution of societies, to the disadvantage of both men and women.”

Course Description:

In this course, we will examine how gender differences and inequities are created and produced by the daily interactions between us and the media. We will take a closer look at magazine ads, music videos, and movies to deconstruct the stereotypes associated with gender. In doing so, we will challenge many taken-for-granted assumptions about both “feminine” and “masculine” behavior. This course, therefore, will be both a personal and intellectual endeavor - so get ready for an adventure!

The course is heavily discussion-based; 80% of our class time is spent discussing the terminologies, theories, and perspectives regarding gender stereotypes in media. The final project for this course will be a chance for you to demonstrate your knowledge - and teach others who have limited understanding of this topic.

Final project:

- Recreate a video ad
- Create a poster showing the differences between men and women's magazines
- Art exhibition
- Deconstruct a magazine ad + write an essay

Course Objectives:

Ask yourself, ‘What do I really want to take away from this course at the end of this program’?

As your instructor, I want YOU to be able to:

1. Identify and analyze how society and media shapes our perception of gender and how we behave according to its norms
2. Challenge the media's representation of men and women by deconstructing magazine ads, music videos, and movies
3. Examine and explain the real-life implications of gender stereotypes

Your 1st Assignment: Think about your goals for this course/program, come prepared to present it in class!

Course expectations:

I have only 3 expectations of you:

1. Come to class ready to challenge pre-existing beliefs
2. Contribute to the class discussions
3. Ask questions - I repeat - ASK QUESTIONS

Course Schedule:

Day 1

Who Are You?

1. Introduction + Icebreaker
2. Sociology of Gender: Introduction to the Theory of Social Constructivism
 - a. What is gender constructivism?
 - b. Why should we care?
 - c. How do we identify it?
 - d. Who are the participants?
2. Defining terms and phrases, e.g. gender binary, gender fluidity
 - a. Discuss whether there are more than two genders
3. Activity: Draw a box on the whiteboard and brainstorm words that describe man/woman

Day 2

Beyond Pink and Blue: Exposing Stereotypes of Gender in Media

1. Watch the documentary "The Code of Gender"
 - a. How does media portray men and women?
 - b. Where can we find these stereotypes?
2. Role play: Recreate a TV ad with/without the stereotypes
 - a. Discuss the differences
3. Activity: Explore the differences between men's and women's magazine

Day 3

Boys Don't Cry: Deconstructing Media Portrayals of Masculinity

1. Examine magazine and TV ads selling products geared towards men
 - a. What are the stereotypes?
 - b. How does it apply in real-life?
2. Case study: Analyze short clips from the movie "The Avengers"

Day 4

The Dream Woman: Analyzing Women's Representation in Music Videos and Magazine Ads

1. Examine magazine ads and music videos
 - a. What are the stereotypes?
 - b. How does it apply in real-life?
2. Case study: Examine popular Disney movies

Day 5

Impact of Gender Stereotypes in Real-life

1. Explore real-life examples and research-based findings to identify how gender stereotyping can have a negative impact on people
2. Case study 1: Watch the documentary “Two-Spirited”
3. Case study 2: Read a published research article on the epidemic of eating disorder among young women