GENDER ROLES IN THE MEDIA AND DEBUNKING SOCIETY’S STEREOTYPES:

GLEE AS A POP-CULTURE REFLECTION

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Abstract

Gender stereotyping is commonly used in media to enhance character traits and create humorous situations. When stereotypes are overwhelmingly present in popular television shows, viewers internalize those messages of gender, making it difficult to counter stereotypical behavior. This paper focuses on gender roles in popular media, specifically those portrayed on the television show *Glee*, and why it is important for counselors and educators to recognize stereotypical portrayals. Using feminist theory as a lens for critical analysis and therapy, media depictions can be understood and analyzed as learning material for helping young people understand and accept themselves as individuals rather than giving in to societal pressure of conformity.
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Gender Roles in the Media and Debunking Society’s Stereotypes:

*Glee* as a Pop-Culture Reflection

Boys will be boys. Girls shouldn’t get dirty. These are just a couple common misconceptions of gender commonly heard in our society. As individuals, young people are constantly bombarded by messages – subtle or intentional – that reflect society’s expectations of gender. Media is “deeply implicated in the process of defining and framing gender,” (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007, p. 21) and is often the main culprit behind the perpetration of gender stereotypes. Media consumers process the messages therein and create attitudes regarding what is appropriate and what is not for males and females.

The first section of this paper reviews literature on sex versus gender, the influence of media on gender development, and applies feminist theory to the discussion. The second section uses the television program *Glee* (Murphy, Falchuk, Brennan, & Di Loreto, 2009-2010) as a current example of popular culture’s influence on gender development, and discusses how school counselors can debunk the stereotypes typified on the show and help create healthy, realistic ideals for future generations. *Glee* was chosen because it is a newly popular and acclaimed show, with unique characteristics of humor, drama, song, and dance, and piques the interest of a variety of viewers. Limitations include limited access to the current season, author bias when selecting and critiquing stereotypes depicted on the show, and possible opposition faced within schools when implementing new programs.
Review of Literature

Throughout the lifespan, men and women develop differently and mold to particular expectations of gender. It is important to understand the difference between sex and gender before discussing the feminine and masculine stereotypes inflicted by society. The literature reviews the male and female stereotypes portrayed in media, the influence of those portrayals on viewers, and how the television show *Glee* is an appropriate example of popular culture.

Gender & Stereotyping

**Gender vs. Sex.** The definition between sex and gender is often confused as the same thing. While gender is a psychological and cultural term, sex pertains to biological and physical characteristics. The sex of an individual is determined by the X and Y chromosomes: XX is female while XY is male (Sigelman & Ryder, 2006; Wood & Reich, 2006). Gender categorizes the difference between masculinity and femininity and is “created through on-going social interactions,” (Morris, 2006, p. 5). Society enlists particular expectations for each gender, rendering what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior for males and females. Research indicates that we are raised into our gender roles through a process called gender-typing (Sigelman & Ryder, 2006). As children, we absorb behaviors and ideologies assumed appropriate by our culture for each biological sex.

The development of gender identity begins as early as two or three years of age. Parents, teachers, peers, and media are social influences on a growing individual (Harrison & O’Neill, 2002). Adult treatment of infants plays a role in gender development when clothing is selected, when toys are purchased, and when television shows are viewed (Sharf, 2008). As children grow, they gain a sense of being a male or female and associate various activities and objects with their
gender. Toddlers may refuse to participate in an activity or play with a toy associated with the 
opposite gender (Sigelman & Ryder, 2006), and adolescent boys continue to be harassed for 
partaking in activities and interests considered feminine (McClure, 1999). Through games, boys 
are taught to gain attention, status and power, while girls are taught to be cooperative, loyal, and 
intimate (Morris, 2006).

According to Taylor (2003), society directs behavior and helps shape individual’s lives. 
While some choose to believe they have chosen their behaviors based on individual 
characteristics, Taylor would beg to differ, arguing that behavior is socialized rather than by 
natural occurrence. He also suggests that individuals should recognize their group identity and 
understand the male and female role expectations maintained by society.

**Media Stereotypes.** Previous literature has successfully examined gender roles in many 
popular forms of media, including television advertisements (Eisend, 2010; Rouner, Slater, & 
Domenech-Rodriguez, 2003), prime-time television (Elasmor, Hasegawa, & Brain, 1999; Ellis & 
Armstrong, 1989; Glascock, 2003; Glascock, 2001; Lauzen, Dozier, & Horan, 2008; Xiaonquan 
& Gantz, 2003), teen movies (Behm-Morawitz & Mastro, 2008); music television (MTV) videos 
(Seidman, 1999; Signorielli & McLeod, 1994), children’s television programming (Aubrey & 
Harrison, 2004; Barner 1999) and children’s books (Taylor, 2003), radio advertisements (Eisend, 
2010; Neto & Santos, 2004), political candidates (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007), televised sports 
coverage (Koivula, 1999), video games (Dill & Thill, 2007), and magazines (Morris, 2006; 
Willemsen, 1998).

Gender roles are prevalent in media, often portraying women as nurturing, gentle, 
cooperative, concerned with appearance, and sensitive to others; while men are viewed as
logical, competitive, independent, assertive, financial providers, skilled in business (Foss, 1989; Wood & Reich, 2006), and dominant over women (Morris, 2006). Women in media tend to be represented more negatively than men (Rouner et al., 2003). While men are perceived as hard workers, amusing (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004), directive, and physically aggressive, women are displayed as likeable, warm, submissive, (Dill & Thill, 2007) passive, and weak (Ellis & Armstrong, 1989). Women are also more likely than men to display empathic behaviors such as affection, sharing, giving, and concern for others (Glascock, 2001).

Women are likely to be portrayed as sex objects in media (Morris, 2006). By having adolescents evaluate advertisements based on gender, Rouner et al. (2003) found unnecessary displays of the female body and unrealistic images of women. Video games highly sexualize women by featuring large-breasted, attractive, females who are rarely main characters (Dill & Thill, 2007). Other research revealed pressure on women not only to have beautiful bodies, but to also be attractive, young, and single (Elasmair et al., 1999; Signorieli & McLead, 1994). Compared to men, women are often dressed provocatively (Glascock, 2001; Signorieli & McLead, 1994) and high emphasis is placed on appearance (Rouner et al., 2003). Teenage girls portrayed on television displayed passiveness, an obsession with superficial topics such as shopping, appearance, and relationships, and the idea of out-casting those who choose more serious topics such as academics and careers (Morris, 2006).

Occupational status among men and women in media is clearly unequal. Not only are males portrayed in higher paying and more prestigious jobs than women, but they are also depicted in higher social status situations (Ellis & Armstrong, 1989; Glascock, 2001). Morris (2006) found that men were twice as likely as women to be portrayed in a career setting in popular interest magazines worldwide; women were portrayed in more ambiguous, domestic,
and decorative scenes. Similarly, women in prime-time TV shows were more likely to be portrayed in marital roles while men were portrayed in occupational roles (Lauzen et al., 2008). Contradictory to this research is single women, who are more likely to have professional careers than married women (Elasmar et al., 1999). It is possible that these changes are due to more women pursuing advanced degrees and entering the workforce than before (Glascock, 2003). It is also important to note that the marital status of women is more widely known than men and women are more likely to have parental responsibilities (Glascock, 2001). As main characters, women are likely to be involved in a romance or family (Butsch, 1992), or are shown as young, single, independent, and free of work and family issues (Elasmar et al., 1999).

**Effects of Media Exposure.** Media plays a large role in influencing the younger generation. When exposed to multiple gender messages, children are more likely to endorse the stereotype than if presented with a counter-stereotype (Aubrey & Harrison, 2004). Such stereotypes can negatively impact and restrict opportunities, especially for women, by lowering self dignity and body satisfaction, as well as career and self development (Eisend, 2010). It is possible that media only reinforces gendered-attitudes regarding male and female behaviors; thus deepening society’s embedded cultural values and interpretations of gender. Shrum (1999) studied the relation between television viewing and attitude strength, concluding that television can certainly reinforce viewers’ attitudes. Consistent messages not only reinforce existing beliefs, but may generate new attitudes and a resistance to counter information. Thus, more exposure leads to higher likelihood of TV-cultivated attitudes and judgments. McClure (1999) suggests viewers see the world through a cultural lens, believing that behaviors, characteristics, and attitudes are constructed by society. Lafky & Duffy (1996) use the term “gendered lenses” as a means of cognitively processing and interpreting messages. Stereotypical gender roles can
guide and shape behavior by affecting the audience’s perception of social reality (Lafky & Duffy, 1996). Kolbert (1995) also observes the broad consensus among social scientists that there is indeed a connection between popular culture and behavior, noting that among parents surveyed, they noticed direct evidence of the connection via imitated behavior and language from their children.

Adolescence is a critical developmental period when individuals change physically and socially, and experience role transitions. Behm-Morawitz and Mastro (2008) found that college-age students held negative stereotypical beliefs and attitudes about female relationships and gender roles after viewing teen movies during adolescence. The study documented gender portrayals in teen movies and linked the exposure of the images to beliefs and attitudes among young adults. As teenagers move through adolescence and emerge into adulthood, gaining freedom and independence, they search for individual identity (Behm-Morawitz & Mastro, 2008). Physical changes also play a role in how an individual is seen among peers. A boy who matures early is likely to be seen as socially competent, attractive, and self-assured, while a boy who matures late is more likely be unsure of himself and experience adjustment or behavior problems (Sigelman & Rider, 2006).

Many societies strive for equal life opportunities for each gender, and conclude that gender roles are mainly determined by social environment because biological factors have not changed (Eisend, 2010). While women are allowed more leniency than men when displaying emotion (Foss, 1989), permitting men the same leniency may prove beneficial to equalizing gender role perceptions and toning down masculinity on television (Glascock, 2003). However, Tragos (2009) believes that with any change in gender perceptions (for example: women being powerful and men being sensitive) the media backlashes with gender specific television channels
such as WEtv (Women’s Entertainment Television) and Spike (a network for men); thus creating further resistance to changing stereotypes.

It is no mystery that advertising uses gender roles as a means of promoting products (Eisend, 2010); however, it is arguable whether it is advertising that impacts societal expectations of gender or if societal norms themselves shape how gender is portrayed. Previous literature notes that advertising may be moving away from stereotypical portrayals of men and women while other studies suggest role portrayals as getting worse. Eisend suggests that even though it is possible that advertisements mirror societal ideals, gender role portrayals can still have consequential notions of reinforcement of social and gender stereotypes on society.

One study (Peirce, 1993; in Willemsen, 1998), looking at the content in girls’ magazines, discovered the main topics to be fashion, beauty, food and decorating, and relationships with the opposite sex. He later concluded that the magazines promoted looking good, having a significant other, and taking care of the house. When a heroine was mentioned, it was generally a male, indicating that women are dependent and need a man to help solve problems. It is important to note that not all females read these magazines, but avid readers are consistently overwhelmed by these stereotypical images and texts.

Boys are confused by society’s mixed messages and expectations for being male (Pollack, 1998). Kimmel (2008) states that males feel the need to suppress their ability to express compassion and empathy in order to achieve society-appropriate masculinity and to not appear vulnerable or weak. By suppressing feelings that already exist, boys are more prone to depression, suicidal behaviors, and fighting than girls are. Kimmel (2008) also argues that boys are more likely than girls to drop out of school, are four times more likely to be diagnosed as
emotionally disturbed, and are six times more likely to be diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Males do not necessarily maintain ideals sustained by society to impress women, but rather “to be positively evaluated by other men,” (Kimmel, 2008, p. 47). Kimmel explains that men view women very low on the social ladder, thus, eliminating the need for their approval. Males, “…need guidance. They need the adults who orbit their world – their parents, teachers, counselors, bosses, coaches, administrators – to understand what is happening in their lives, the pressure they feel to live up to unattainable ideals of masculinity, and the feelings of doubt, anxiety, and shame that often accompany that quest,” (Kimmel, 2008, p. 42). By putting on a mask of masculinity, boys disconnect from themselves and their families, leaving them feeling alone, helpless, hardened (Pollack, 1998), and disconnected from society (Kimmel, 2008). Kimmel believes that by performing to please others, boys exhibit little self awareness and a low capacity for self-reflection.

Advertising provides a model for young women, indicating that if they do certain things or act certain ways, they will be sexually attractive (Reichert, 2001); however, by advertising thinness and perfection so frequently, viewers believe that with enough effort and self-sacrifice, they can achieve this unattainable goal. Pipher (1994) believes that today’s music, television, movies, and advertising limits girls’ development, leaving them traumatized.

Media images can be seen as inspirational or distressing, all depending on whether the ideal is perceived to be attainable (Polivy & Herman, 2004). Kilbourne (1999) found the following:
The culture, both reflected and reinforced by advertising, urges girls to adopt a false self, to bury alive their real selves, to become ‘feminine,’ which means to be nice and kind and sweet, to compete with other girls for the attention of boys, and to value romantic relationships with boys above all else. (p. 130)

Adolescents may adhere to traditional gender roles, via pressure from peers, in an effort to attract the opposite sex (Sigelman & Rider, 2006). By viewing sexy ads, females are urged to express themselves through their bodies (Kilbourne, 1999). Research shows that females who view media as a means of comparison for body image are likely to experience body dissatisfaction (Ata, Ludden, & Lally, 2007; Aubrey, 2007). “Even girls who are raised in loving homes by supportive parents grow up in a toxic cultural environment, at risk for self-mutilation, eating disorders, and addictions,” (Kilbourne, 1999, p. 141). According to Kilbourne (1999), “at least one-third of twelve to thirteen-year-old girls are actively trying to lose weight by dieting, vomiting, using laxatives, or taking diet pills,” (p. 134). Essentially, girls know something is wrong, but rather than looking for the problem within a culture, they search within themselves and their families (Pipher, 1994).

**Feminist Theory**

Gender roles and stereotypes are relevant topics that apply to many situations in human development. Feminist theory examines the effects of sociological factors on individual development while recognizing differences in the development of male and female work roles, child-raising practices, and social and sexual adolescent maturation (Sharf, 2008). Feminist theory encourages self understanding in relation to societal influences. Grosz (2010) discusses feminist philosophy as creation of new concepts associated with “women, men, femininity,
masculinity, and their historical and conceptually associated values, practices, and objects, including identity, sexuality, work, the state,” and other oppressed categories such as race, class, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation (p. 100). Feminist theory is about addressing and transforming wrongs in society to create a better social system through new ideas (Grosz, 2010). Once social factors are recognized, individuals can learn how to effectively deal with those factors.

Several approaches or goals for redefining gender roles are recommended through the use of feminist therapy. The basic idea is to advocate for change (rather than adjustment) by recognizing how factors are related (Sharf, 2008). Self-nurture and self-esteem is important when understanding personal needs despite social influences of friends, family, and media. One must feel reliant upon one’s own idea of self rather than what others think. It is also important to declare independence and develop meaningful relationships with others. By declaring independence and strengthening relationships, one can deter from manipulative dependence of others’ influences and improve “relationships by being more direct and assertive with others,” (Sharf, 2008, p. 447).

Other goals of feminist therapy include body image and sensuality, affirming diversity, and empowerment and social action (Sharf, 2008). The image of a woman is often defined by society, putting emphasis on physical attractiveness. But what is physically attractive? What may have been attractive in the 1950’s is not the idealistic image today. Over the past thirty years, female role models have gone from a size-twelve Marilyn Monroe to the size-two Teri Hatcher (Schneider, 1996). By not accepting these social standards, individuals can begin to accept their bodies and sexuality. Affirming diversity pertains to valuing other’s cultural differences and understanding attitudes that may differ from feminist beliefs.
Used as a lens for critical analysis, feminist theory may critique social relations and gender inequalities, including gender roles (Berger, 1995). Although feminist theory mostly applies to women, it is possible to just as effectively apply the same ideologies to men (Sharf, 2008). Male stereotypes are just as prevalent as female stereotypes and can be just as burdening and destructive.

**Introduction to *Glee***

The television show *Glee* (Murphy et al., 2009-2010) is a musical comedy about a group of high school student misfits who find their niche in a glee club through song and dance. The characters include Will, a young, talented male teacher; Rachel, a overly-ambitious girl who strives for perfection and popularity – whatever the cost; Finn, a football quarterback who has all the girls’ attention; Kurt, a small-statured gay boy who loves fashion; Mercedes, a sassy girl with a powerful voice; Artie, a quiet boy who was physically bound to a wheelchair following an accident in his youth; Tina, a punk-rock girl who fakes a stutter to be left alone; Noah (nicknamed Puck), a bad-boy football player who is arrogant and conceited; Quinn, the popular head cheerleader who becomes pregnant during the first season; Sue, the rude, intentionally cruel cheerleading coach who thrives on creating conflict; Teri, Will’s wife (now ex-wife) with a superficial personality and materialistic agenda; Emma, a soft-spoken school guidance counselor with a phobia of germs and obsession with cleanliness; Principal Figgins, the school principal who is fair yet stern and is insecure with his own personal strengths, Coach Ken Tanaka, the first season football coach who doesn’t like football; and Coach Beiste, a female football coach who is rough around the edges, but has a soft heart (Murphy et al., 2009-2010).

Having debuted in September 2009, *Glee* had 9.91 million viewers by December 2009 (Steinberg, 2010), and drew an estimated 13.5 million viewers during its Britney Spears themed
episode in September 2010 (“Britney Spears-themed,” 2010). Glee is the highest-rated new
tested series of the season and has been nominated for and won multiple awards, including 19
Emmy nominations – becoming the most nominated series of 2010. The show won a Golden
Globe for Best Television Series – Comedy or Musical, a Screen Actors Guild Award for an
Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series, and the People’s Choice Award
for Favorite New TV Comedy (“About the Show,” n.d.). The cast has also performed for
President Barack Obama and the First Lady at the White House, has appeared on “The Oprah
Winfrey Show,” sang the national anthem at the World Series, and appeared on magazine covers
such as Entertainment Weekly and Rolling Stone.

The music in Glee has two certified Gold albums, having sold more than 2.8 million
albums (Trust, 2010). It also has sold more than 10 million song downloads and recently broke
the Beatles’ Billboard Hot 100 record for most appearances among non-solo acts. While the
Beatles tallied their 71 Hot 100 titles over 30 years, Glee accumulated 75 Hot 100 titles in less
than 15 months. The Glee cast shares the honor of most appearances with talented acts such as
Elvis Presley, James Brown, Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, the Beatles, Elton John, and Stevie
Wonder (Trust, 2010). Glee has also drawn attention by guest-starring celebrities such as
Gwyneth Paltrow, Britney Spears, Josh Groban, John Stamos, and Olivia Newton-John.

As discussed above, previous research has documented gender roles and stereotypes in
media from television to advertisements, from magazines to radio. It is important to recognize
and understand the gender stereotypes found in mass media. Adolescents need guidance and
direction when facing incessant media exposure. “Children are growing up in a society where
adults have higher expectations of them, but provide less support, where many communities
offer little sense of community, where the media glorify violence, sex, and alcohol, then tell kids
to abstain,” (Marcus, 2005, p. 312). The inaccurate portrayals of men and women are not only prevalent in popular television shows such as *Glee*, but are often used as a means of humor, while disregarding the negative effects bestowed upon viewers. *Glee* has yet to be studied and published as a source of academic review, creating the opportunity to observe and critique it as a textual example of gender roles and stereotyping seeing that the show has clearly carved its way into pop-culture.
Discussion

Analysis of the television show *Glee* (Murphy et al., 2009-2010) raises questions about gender roles in media and its influence on viewers. Often, the gender stereotypes are used as comical relief, but even so, the repeated portrayals only continue to reinforce existing gender roles rather than attempting to move away from societal expectations. Young people who view this material are continually subjected to subliminal messages of male dominance and female submission. When behavior does not match that of stereotypical portrayals, individuals may be bullied, experience low self-esteem, or feel like an outcast. By recognizing gender stereotypes in media (and on popular television shows such as *Glee*), society can begin to debunk stereotypical behaviors and promote individuality and acceptance. A key role in the process is school counselors who provide guidance and support to the young population.

*Glee as Popular Culture*

**Gendered Jobs.** Males and females are typically stereotyped into gender-role careers. Emma is the school counselor and is always dressed in a skirt or dress and heels, showing off her legs. Will’s wife (now ex-wife), Teri, is employed at “Sheets and Things,” and only works three days a week. During one episode, Teri gets a second job as the school nurse (even without credentials) to spy on Will and his relationship with Emma. While working her two jobs, she complains about not being built to work five days a week. Will is the Spanish teacher at school and coaches glee club. He also takes on a custodial job at the school after hours to make extra money when Teri claims to be pregnant. Even though society may consider teaching a feminine position, Will still has a more masculine job than his wife (and also works twice – if not three times – as much as she does). In the first season, the football coach is a male (Ken Tanaka). In
the second season, the football coach is a female (Coach Beiste). Even though she is a female, she is large in stature, has a deep voice, and is stern with her players – imitating prominently masculine characteristics. The most powerful position at the school, the principal, – although a minority – is also male. The most dominant female character is Sue, the coach of the cheerleading squad the Cheerios. She does not appear to work in any other position while students are in classes. Although she is quite talented in her position, she thrives on gossip and is known for her conniving abilities. Kurt’s dad, Burt, works as a car mechanic and dates Finn’s mom, Carol. Although it is unknown what she does for a job, she is often shown carrying a basket of laundry. The television news anchors include a man and a woman; however, the male is the lead anchor. Extras on the show include a female nurse, a male doctor, a female acupuncturist, a female waitress, and a male store manager. Overall, Glee clearly shows men in higher paying and more prestigious jobs than women.

**Defending Masculinity.** Throughout season one the glee club performs multiple songs by a wide variety of artists, including Madonna, Lady Gaga, Britney Spears, Kiss, The Beatles, Journey, Rihanna, and Billy Idol. However, when strong female artists are performed (Madonna and Lady Gaga), the male students show resistance toward performing their music. What is it about our culture that makes a male not want to sing Lady Gaga or Madonna? Although they are in glee club, where members sing and dance, they still feel the need to defend their masculinity and separate themselves from the girls. In the episode “Theatricality,” the female characters (with the exception of Kurt – a student who is gay) perform “Bad Romance” by Lady Gaga. Their male peers remain seated during the performance and clap politely afterword. A few smile and a few barely bring their hands together for applause. When the males perform “Shout It Out Loud” by Kiss, the girls can hardly contain themselves as they jump out of their seats, scream
with excitement, and swoon over their male peers. Although both genders support one another, it is obvious that there is a glass ceiling for women. Even with a knock-out performance, the females do not raise as much attention as the male performers. It is also important to note the positioning of the props during the Kiss performance. The guitars and microphones are conveniently positioned to symbolize phallic prominence, suggesting that if men sing and dance onstage, it needs to be clear that they are still men.

Referring to things as “gay” is a recurring theme on the show. Glee club and football is a continuous battle among the male characters. From the very first episode where Will speaks with the football team about joining glee club, it is seen as a joke and not taken seriously – even referring to the club as a “homo explosion.” In order to recruit Finn – the quarterback – Will forces him to join as a means of escaping punishment for drug possession. Throughout the season, Finn, Puck, and other male glee club members receive continuous ridicule from their football teammates. Finn is attacked by paintballs when the team discovers he has joined glee club. Even Finn’s girlfriend, Quinn (who eventually becomes a glee club member also), tells him classmates think he is gay since he joined the club. It’s funny how something immediately becomes “gay” when it’s not the popular choice. Even within the club it isn’t acceptable to perform with another male. Finn and Kurt are assigned to be partners to sing a Ballad. Finn’s immediate response to the situation is, “I can’t sing to a dude!” It’s a double standard that girls can sing together but boys cannot, otherwise it is viewed as sexual.

Even the few males not originally on the football team (Artie and Kurt) have experience wanting and becoming football players. Artie is in a wheelchair due to a childhood car accident. He still wants to be a part of the football team to feel more accepted among his peers. Kurt comes out as gay early in the first season. When caught by his dad dancing and singing to
“Single Ladies” by Beyoncé, Kurt defends his masculinity by claiming it’s a conditioning routine for football. Following this encounter, Kurt decides to try out for the football team to please his father. He insists on having “Single Ladies” played while he kicks off the football. The team laughs and teases him until they realize he can kick the ball far and accurately. He is offered the role of kicker. As a result of Kurt joining football, Finn wants the team to learn how to dance in hopes of improving their play and cohesion as a team. Puck’s response is, “coming together as a gay team. A big gay team of dancing gays,” – only furthering the attitude that dancing is not masculine enough for the football team. However, after learning the dance routine, the football team wins their first game by creating a distraction for the opposing team. Even after the win, the football team insists that in practice it may be ok to learn dance but on the field, where they are displayed in public, dancing is not ok. Even after the football dance routine, the boys in glee still appear uncoordinated. One scene shows Will teaching Finn and Puck a dance routine for glee club. Until he uses a metaphor for baseball, they don’t understand what he’s trying to say. Suddenly the dance move is easy, now that they can pretend they are playing a “masculine” sport rather than dancing.

**Embracing Femininity.** Recurring patterns of thinness, overall appearance, vanity, and sexual appeal emerge throughout the first and beginning of the second seasons. In the second episode “Showmance,” Rachel is caught by Emma throwing up in the bathroom. She claims she wishes to be thin and beautiful like Quinn – the head cheerleader. Beautiful females are usually shown in popular roles and viewed as role models for less popular individuals. The popular are seen as ideals for what it means to be feminine. Rachel is a beautiful, intelligent girl, but she only sees what she’s not. In an attempt to get Finn’s attention, Rachel gets a makeover from Kurt. Kurt tells her that if she were thinner and more desirable, she’d be in Finn’s arms right now.
Rachel decides to dress provocatively and suddenly gets attention from every guy in the school when walking down the hallway. The message is that in order to be found attractive, women must change their look, objectifying their bodies, otherwise they won’t be noticed or liked.

In the Britney Spears episode, the club is ecstatic about performing her songs. Brittany performs “I’m a Slave for You,” which is probably her most offensive song. The students claim Britney Spears is the definition of pop culture. Sue refers to her as a “genius pop culture provocateur.” Throughout the episode, students have Britney Spears fantasies, suddenly believing that she gives them confidence – further embracing the idea that pop-culture icons are highly influential among adolescents. Again, Rachel changes her look and dresses provocatively again. All eyes are on her with a new look and comments are shouted such as: “You can hit me as many times as you want, as long as you got that on!” Rachel claims she is now dressing like a “pretty girl” because she didn’t feel like one before. Her comment would suggest that in order to be pretty, one must dress provocatively. Toward the end of the episode, it’s not confidence that convinces Rachel to embrace herself for who she is, it’s her relationship with Finn that changes her mind about provocative dress. She credits her change to Finn, who doesn’t like the new look, and asks her to change it so he can feel “safe and happy” again. This doesn’t sound like confidence, but rather an attempt to please those of interest.

When Mercedes joins the Cheerios, she refuses to wear a skirt because she isn’t as slim as the other girls. Sue ridicules her for not wearing a gender appropriate uniform and demands that she lose weight in order to stay on the team. Mercedes begins skipping lunch when she realizes that the other Cheerios don’t eat lunch. Sue defends her behavior by claiming that every girl in America is obsessed with vanity. Mercedes ends up in the nurse’s office after fainting from lack of food. Quinn bonds with her over her own fears of caloric intake. Although it’s a
great bonding moment for two very different girls, it also promotes the fact that dieting is common among females and they all struggle with their weight and image.

Embracing sexuality and using it to one’s advantage is also prevalent among the females. Before Quinn joins glee club, she tries to entice Finn to quit by suggesting she will let him touch her breast if he leaves glee. As president of the celibacy club (ironic as she becomes pregnant), Quinn announces to her fellow members that it’s “all about the teasing and not about the pleasing.”

Women are often shown as being dependent on men. Quinn is pregnant and insists Finn is the father at first (even though they haven’t had sex) since he would make a better father than Puck, who is the real father, but also very irresponsible. Quinn makes it very clear that she expects Finn to get a job to support her and the baby; however, Quinn doesn’t have a job herself and hasn’t done anything to support the child. Once it comes out that Puck is the real father, Quinn decides to give up the baby so she doesn’t have to raise it with Puck. The option of raising the baby alone isn’t even on the table. Apparently without a man by her side, she isn’t capable of motherhood. When Rachel is questioning her relationship with Jesse St. James (a student from a rival school), she is told that if she doesn’t pursue the relationship, she may never find love again. Given it’s a malicious attempt by Sue to end glee club, it still sends the message of dependency to young women exploring relationships for the first time. Even adult females are portrayed as needing men in their lives. Finn’s mother Carol, who is a widow, begins dating Kurt’s father Burt, who is a widower. Finn is uncomfortable with the arrangement at first and claims their family (he and his mother) is just fine the way it is. Carol tries to explain to Finn that their family isn’t normal but he thinks it is because that’s all he’s ever known. Although companionship is only natural, Carol’s message is that a family isn’t normal without a man.
Another example is Emma and Ken. Emma accepts Ken’s proposal for marriage even though she isn’t interested in him. It is clear that she accepts out of desperation and feels the need to settle for Ken.

**Boys vs. Girls.** A battle of the sexes is common in glee club. Besides the Lady Gaga vs. Kiss episode, there are multiple other examples throughout the show. In the episode “Vitamin-D,” the boys perform a mash-up song by male artists, performing in black leather and giving the appearance of being tough and aggressive. The girls perform a mash-up song by female artists, dressed in yellow dresses and giving a performance of hair flipping and air-headedness. The show provides an unspoken rule of expected gender differences by separating the males and females. Later in the show, the girls are asked to perform a traditional male song while the boys are asked to perform a traditional female song. This time it’s the females who wear leather, but instead of performing like the singer, they make the song about seduction with skin tight clothing and body exploitation. The males simply perform a non-aggressive number but still hold tight to their confident stance and toughness.

**Image.** The females on the show are usually shown wearing stereotypical feminine attire such as tight, feminine clothing (usually dresses or short skirts), even when asked to step out of their comfort zones and perform as the opposite gender. The exceptions are Mercedes, who is overweight, and Sue, who is often portrayed as more masculine than feminine. She wears an athletic suit every day, has short hair, and rarely displays emotion. When it is time for school photos, Sue gets an eyelift – noting that she always chooses to get a little work done before having portraits taken. When it comes to relationships, Sue falls very quickly for a man and suddenly is a ray of sunshine instead of her natural cruel self. She is devastated when she catches him cheating on her. Later in the season, Will leads Sue to believe he is interested in her, only to
stand her up. Sue refuses to get out of bed when she realizes that she is alone and was embarrassed that she let her guard down and jumped at the opportunity to be with someone. Sue’s behavior suggests that even the most masculine women still “need a man.” Another example is Coach Beiste, who appears rough around the edges, but finally expresses her insecurities in “Never Been Kissed.” As a very unfeminine woman (stereotypically speaking), Coach Beiste has never been kissed by a man, thus feeling undesirable. Will gives her a quick kiss and pep talk, convincing Coach Beiste to continue teaching at the school. Although circumstantial, the idea suggests that a woman’s confidence is defined by her ability to attract men.

Aside from stereotypical dress, the females partake in vain activities. While preparing for performances, the girls are often shown on their cell phone, tweezing their eyebrows, or painting their fingernails. When getting ready for school photos, the girls are applying makeup, smoothing their clothes, and brushing their teeth. Although these may be common behaviors for some people, showing it on a television show only reinforces that vanity is an important trait of being female.

In contrast to the females, the males prepare for photos by fixing their ties, combing their hair, and lifting weights. These actions send the message that attending to appearance is alright as long as masculinity can be defended by strengthening muscles. Finn and the new guy, Sam, discuss the necessity to work out and look good in order to get girls and stay popular, emphasizing the muscular ideal of male attractiveness. When Kurt uses his skin care products, he claims they are a part of a football ritual, concluding that it’s not appropriate for men to use beauty products. The males are usually shown in stereotypical masculine attire such as loose pants, T-shirts, and button-up collared shirts. All the males have short hair as well with the
exception of two students. In one episode, Sue cuts off the boy’s pony tail and says, “You no longer confuse me with your shemale looks.” The other long-haired male has his rear grabbed by a boy who thinks he is a girl. This suggests that men who have long hair are confused as women and in order to gain back masculinity, the hair must be cut short. When the boys come together to discuss the issue, it is discovered that it’s ok for a girl to look like a boy, but not ok for a boy to look like a girl. They conclude that it’s degrading for a boy to look like a girl because it is being a girl is degrading in itself.

When being independent, women are often viewed as “bitches.” The episode focusing on Madonna quotes her as saying, “I’m tough, I’m ambitious, and I know what I want. If that makes me a bitch, then ok.” The message here is that independent and motivated women are a bad thing; however, when men are independent and motivated, they are viewed as leaders. In short, this leads viewers to believe that women should not be leaders. Even Mercedes identifies her personality as sassy, but it is viewed as anger. In the same episode, the glee club is asked what immediately comes to mind when they hear the name Madonna. The girls (including Kurt) mention words such as icon and independence. The boys focus on her looks and ability for seduction. This suggests that even independent women are unable to portray an image of success without first being viewed as sexual objects.

**Relationships.** On *Glee*, females and males view relationships quite differently. The women expect emotional feedback and intimacy, while the men simply want to get physical. Teri fakes a pregnancy with Will in an attempt to keep the relationship going. Will doesn’t have a clue that she’s faking until several months into the pregnancy. This indicates that, as a man, Will doesn’t understand pregnancy. In fact, when he tries to be physically intimate with Teri, she pushes him away and says that if he wanted to be intimate, he would ask how she feels being
pregnant – still not having put two-and-two together that Teri’s body hasn’t changed. Finn admits that he doesn’t always listen to Rachel and can often be seen watching her chest rather than her face when she talks. Puck briefly dates Mercedes and when asked to stop talking about video games and to start learning more about her, he says, “Ok, but I’ve never done that with a girl before.”

In relationships, emotional expression is difficult for the male characters. In the middle of the first season, Finn and Quinn seek guidance from Emma about being cool. She suggests wearing sunglasses inside. Instead of discussing those feelings more, Finn blurts out that wearing sunglasses is a great idea because he can stare at girls’ breasts without them knowing. Men in media already have difficulty expressing emotion, and when placed in a situation where he is receiving guidance from a counselor – a woman – Finn feels the need make the situation humorous in an attempt to deter the discussion from feelings. For the brief time Emma and Ken are engaged, they are looking for first dance songs for their wedding. Emma suggests “I Could Have Danced All Night” from My Fair Lady. In contrast, Ken suggests “The Thong Song.” Although quite comical, it isn’t surprising as media tends to portray women as emotional beings and men as emotionally detached.

Also in the first season, Finn confesses that males must not admit their vulnerability. Ken gives a glowing example of this when he gets emotional about his singing group breaking up. He appears as if he is about to cry, but quickly covers it up emphasizing his need to lift weights. His behavior is not only a stereotypical male response to emotion – avoidance – but also changes the subject from emotion to a physical activity – a stereotypical bonding method for males. When Ken is close to tears while talking to Teri, she gets uncomfortable and cuts him off, indicating that even women are uncomfortable with men expressing emotion.
An interesting relationship on the show is that of Kurt and his father, Burt. In earlier episodes, Kurt always tries to hide the fact that he is gay, although viewers find out later that his father always knew his sexual orientation. Both Burt and Kurt deal with ridicule and harassment on a daily basis, but when Burt gets a phone call saying, “You’re son is gay,” he doesn’t know how to handle it. He tells Kurt he wishes his mom were there, since she was better at handling “things like this” – that is, better at handling emotional situations. When Burt starts dating Finn’s mother Carol, he looks for a way to bond with Finn. They end up bonding over sports. Kurt confronts his father about his newfound relationship with Finn, but Burt says Finn needs a father figure and he can talk “guy talk” with him. Kurt responds with, “I’m a guy…” This statement further emphasizes the role of men and stresses Kurt’s lack of manhood by being gay. Kurt clearly feels unsure of himself as a person. Does he belong with the women or with the men? As mentioned earlier, Glee often has battles between the sexes, and Kurt always tries to side with the women, while Will signals that he needs to be with the men. In an attempt to gain attention from his father, Kurt starts dressing like him, listening to his music and pretending to be interested in girls. His father finally steps in and says he loves him for who he is and he shouldn’t try to be someone he’s not. Burt finally stands up for Kurt when Finn uses the word “faggot.” As Burt leaves the room, he places his hand on Kurt’s shoulder, who grabs his father’s hand. Burt then continues to walk up the stairs while Kurt is clearly looking for a hug from his father.

At one point, Rachel has a crush on Will (her teacher). Based on previous experience, Will admits that he can’t be honest with Rachel about the inappropriateness of the crush because girls “these days” are too fragile. He then asks Emma to sit in while he tries to sing Rachel a song about how he feels. Instead of backing him up, Emma is too awed by his performance and forgets what she was supposed to say. This example shows that even men who are in-touch with
their feelings have difficulty expressing them when necessary. Rachel ends up figuring it out for herself and apologizing to Will for her “crazy” behavior.

In relationships, the women on the show are often shown as insecure. Although Will and Teri are married and have been together since high school, she is still insecure when Rachel has a crush on Will. She reminds Will that he is surrounded by younger, perkier women, and asks him how that’s supposed to make her feel. Even the body language suggests insecurity. Rachel dates Finn for a majority of the show. Given there is a drastic height difference between the two, Rachel is always bending a knee, tilting her head to the side, and gazing up at Finn with a questionable look on her face. Finn on the other hand, always has a strong stature with both feet on the ground. In the beginning on the second season, Rachel asks Quinn to try and seduce Finn into dating her again. Finn turns her down, but the interesting part is that Rachel needed Quinn to seduce Finn in the first place. The women are rarely secure in their relationships, and the men often give the women reason to question the security.

With the exception of Santana and Brittany, the men are promiscuous in relation to the women. While dating Rachel, Finn is seduced into a date with Santana and Brittany – with the promise that the two girls will make out with each other as long as Finn pays for dinner. Immediately after leaving his wife, Will pursues Emma, while also making out with another music director and allowing another woman – an old high school girl friend – to sleep in his bed. Emma on the other hand, is loyal to Will and is extremely hurt by his behavior. Puck agrees to babysit with Quinn one night. Quinn is hoping to reconnect with Puck – the father of her baby – and feels the connection after night is over, only to discover that he has been sexting (sexy text messaging) with Santana all evening. When Quinn confronts Puck, he claims to be a “dude with needs.” He continues to mention that Quinn hasn’t “given it up” to him since he got her
pregnant, suggesting that to men, sex is as necessary as breathing, and it doesn’t matter who is willing to provide that need.

When it comes to sex, it is clearly a bigger deal to women than it is to men. Rachel and Emma are virgins. Rachel dates Jesse and Finn and both of them attempt to get her into bed. She talks about not being ready, but still feels the need to please her man. Although she doesn’t feel as much pressure as Rachel, Emma considers being with Will when she clearly isn’t ready for such a physical relationship. Even though the males say sex and losing one’s virginity isn’t a big deal, women counter the argument that it is a big deal to women. Finn is also a virgin, but instead of being presented as not being ready for sex; his virginity is viewed as something he needs to lose – fast. Santana offers to help him get it over with – as if a man without sexual experience is undesirable. Overall, the contrast between the expectations for male and female chastity offers yet another example of gender stereotyping in mainstream media.

Education Efforts

Although media is believed to play a large role in gender identity and development of stereotypical ideals; teachers, parents, and peers also contribute to gender expectations (Wood & Reich, 2006). School counselors can use feminist theory to address oppression and gender concerns within the school by encouraging individual expression and acceptance. Hipolito-Delgado and Lee (2007) believe communities remain oppressed by the existence of racism, classism, homophobia, and ableism. Educators should strive to “expose stereotypes, help students learn to recognize them, and encourage students to move past them to see each individual’s strengths, interests, and characteristics,” (Lightbody, 2002, p. 42). By empowering students to recognize oppressive behavior and other societal influences, students can identify
personal behavior - thus understanding the connection between personal thoughts and behaviors and societal messages (Hipolito-Delgado & Lee, 2007). Empowering students leads to a collective empowerment within a community and paves the way to social and political change (Hipolito-Delgado & Lee, 2007).

Psychoeducational group counseling is an excellent way to use feminist theory. Group activities encourage personal growth, conflict resolution (Sharf, 2008), diversity, support, and a sense of cohesion (Corey, 2008). Group counseling geared toward adolescents offers students a chance to connect with peers who have the same concerns, to discuss self-doubt, and to challenge personal beliefs and values. Through group therapy, adolescents help each other understand and accept themselves while testing their limits and experiences with reality (Corey, 2008). When using feminist theory, Sharf (2008) recommends separating males and females. This may be beneficial in some circumstances, but in regard to gender issues, it is important to acknowledge all perspectives while providing an opportunity for feedback. Given gender differences, males tend to disclose little and appear tough while females are more open and intimate with one another. For these reasons, some believe males and females are not comfortable sharing in front of each other; however, Shechtam (2007) notes that having a heterogeneous group is extremely beneficial, especially for males. Since females tend to share more freely, their male peers are likely to mimic the females’ frequency of disclosure without negatively affecting the females’ group experience (Schechtam, 2007).

When attempting to combat stereotypical gender roles in media, school counselors and educators can use popular culture and television shows such as Glee as examples for discussion. As depicted above, gender roles in media and on Glee are prevalent and help shape young peoples’ ideas of appropriate gendered behavior. The first step in moving toward change is
recognizing the problem. Using pop-culture in lessons and group sessions (see Appendices A, B, C, & D) helps students relate by involving favorite shows, characters, music, and typical adolescent activities such as school, sports, and clubs. Feminist theory is about recognizing differences in male and female roles, then addressing and transforming identified wrongs. Helping students process identified wrongs while using pop-culture as a salient example can help lead to a better social system through advocating for change.

In *Glee*, males and females are represented unequally in job professions. Viewers may internalize this as certain professions being unreachable for females or degrading for males. The image of male toughness on the show encourages young men to hide emotion rather than recognize why they feel the need to suppress. The image of female submissiveness on the show encourages young women to deny confidence and self-acceptance rather than recognize why they feel unworthy and degraded. When the only openly gay individual on *Glee* is constantly harassed, it sends the message that the world isn’t ready for individual expression. Rather than feeling comfortable being ones’ self, viewers are inadvertently pushed further into the closet, thus creating the idea that blending in with the crowd is wiser than standing up for one’s beliefs and values. The same concept can be applied to pregnant teenagers or any other minority. Everyone deals with harassment at one time or another and it all stems from what is deemed “appropriate” by society. By refuting gender stereotypes in media, school counselors and educators can work toward creating equal, non-stereotypical opportunities for future generations.

One may encounter resistance regarding change from administrators, teachers, parents, and students when beginning new programs, especially when introducing controversial interventions such as feminist theory. Nevertheless, the focus should be on the content surrounding feminist theory and the possible outcomes of therapy rather than the social stigma of
the theory itself. When resistance occurs, a lack of cooperation can lead to a hostile environment, inevitably hurting those the program intends to benefit: the students (Freiberg, 1996). A cooperative school environment is crucial to a supportive, successful education. Students should not only feel comfortable approaching a school counselor, but also teachers and administration – thus viewing those individuals as educators rather than disciplinarians. When the leadership role is shared among educators, Freiberg (1996) believes that discipline will come from the students themselves.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, limitations to this analysis include limited access to the current season, author bias when selecting and critiquing stereotypes depicted on the show, and possible opposition faced within schools when implementing new programs. The current (second) season of Glee is only available online for a limited time, thus not all episodes were available for critique (the first season was purchased on DVD). The author personally selected various topics within the show to emphasize. It is possible that topics in dialog or scenes were missed due to author preference. As discussed above, school opposition is possible in any new environment. Implementing new programming can also face challenges such as budgeting, time consumption, and support for the program itself from government educational standards, school officials, colleagues, and parents.
Conclusion

*Glee* clearly portrays gender stereotypes, but interestingly enough, many of those stereotypes are often addressed on the show. Kurt continues to stand up for himself – and others help defend him – even Finn. Rachel helps the glee club respect individuality and differences. Mercedes embraces her feminine shape and helps others at the school feel beautiful in their own skin. Quinn learns what it’s like to not be popular and drastically changes her outlook on her classmates. One of the football players who bullies Kurt turns out to be gay, using homophobia as a cover. Will has a moral lesson to be learned each week and the students almost always figure it out on their own through their daily lives. This characteristic of the show is refreshing, but the gender stereotypes persist.

The show’s gender stereotypes coincide with society’s expectations. Males are presented as tough and emotionless while females are portrayed as influential and emotional. Although there are a few exceptions to stereotypical behavior and image, the majority of characters fit the molds. It is pertinent that school counselors and educators do everything in their power to deemphasize gender stereotypes presented in media. As research shows, media effects on young people play a dramatic role in self-esteem, emotional expression, career options, and self-acceptance. Stereotypes exist as generalizations within a culture whether they existed in media or society first. They may not be entirely true, but when stereotypes continue to define genders, it becomes more difficult than ever to counter the stereotype and redefine what it means to be a man or a woman.
References


“Britney Spears-themed episode of ’Glee’ draws second-most number of viewers in show’s


Appendix A

Topic: What Do You Know About Men and Women?  
Time Allowed: 30 minutes

Materials Needed: “What do you know about men & women?” quiz, answer/discussion sheet, pen or pencil

1) Students will be introduced to the topic of gender stereotyping, including what it means to stereotype and examples.

2) Students will individually take the “What do you know about men & women?” quiz.

3) Students will discuss answers with a partner before sharing with the group.

4) Facilitator will hand out the answer/discussion sheet and lead a group discussion.

Example questions:

• Which questions were easy to answer?
• Which questions were difficult to answer?
• Did you have a lot of the same answers as your partner?
• Were you shocked at or did you disagree with any of the answers?
• Why do you think men and women are stereotyped the way they are?
• Why do gender stereotypes persist?
• Who/what is responsible for creating/maintaining those stereotypes?
• How do we change gender stereotypes?


Adapted and submitted by Danya Espinosa.
What Do you Know About Men & Women?

1. Husband-wife arguments are usually won by the spouse who does the most talking.
   - Yes
   - No

2. Women are better at solving complicated problems than men.
   - Yes
   - No

3. Women tend to be more cheerful and optimistic than men.
   - Yes
   - No

4. Men get along on less sleep than women.
   - Yes
   - No

5. When faced with a severe crisis, a woman is more likely to go to pieces than a man.
   - Yes
   - No

6. Men are fussier about their food.
   - Yes
   - No

7. Men tend to be more self-centered than women.
   - Yes
   - No

8. When a couple has mother-in-law trouble, it's usually the wife's mother who is to blame.
   - Yes
   - No

9. Women talk more about men than men talk about women.
   - Yes
   - No
10. Wives understand their husbands better than their husbands understand them.
   - Yes
   - No

11. Women make more fuss about minor and non-existent ailments.
   - Yes
   - No

12. Men are more truthful than women.
   - Yes
   - No

13. Most husbands are more intelligent than their wives.
   - Yes
   - No

14. Divorced men are better second marriage risks than divorced women.
   - Yes
   - No

15. The widespread masculine belief that women are the most talkative sex actually has no basis in fact.
   - Yes
   - No

16. Women are more easily bored than men.
   - Yes
   - No

17. Men have quicker reflexes, react faster than women.
   - Yes
   - No

18. Men have a greater capacity for happiness than women.
   - Yes
   - No
Answer/Discussion

1. Harvard University studies show that, when domestic differences arise, it's usually the spouse who does the most talking who gets his/her way.

2. A two-year study conducted at Stanford University demonstrated that, other factors being equal, men are as much as 50 percent more proficient than women in solving complicated problems.

3. Studies conducted by University of Southern California psychologists show that women are more subject to feeling depressed and "down in the dumps" than men.

4. Authorities find that the average woman requires appreciably more sleep than the average man.

5. Psychological studies show conclusively that, while emergencies tend to upset a woman more, in a real crisis she is likely to remain calmer than the average male.

6. Leading university studies show that women are far more finicky about what they eat than men.

7. Psychologists have found that women are more self-centered. They have fewer outside interest than men, are more preoccupied with personal concerns and problems.

8. The American Institute of Family Relations, after careful evaluation of surveys, found: "Contrary to tradition it is not the wife's mother but the husband's mother who is the most frequent troublemaker."

9. University of Minnesota investigators found that women discussed men far more often than men discussed women. Women talked about men more often than about any other subject- except other women. Men's conversations were more frequently devoted to business, money, other men- and then women.

10. Veterans Administration psychologist Richard C. Cowden made an intensive study of married couples, subjected each husband and wife to test designed to reveal their knowledge and understanding of the other's personality. Husbands had far better insight into their wives' character and were able to predict much more accurately how they would react under specific conditions.

11. We can hear the women's protests: "Hah! You should see my husband when he has a cold!" Nevertheless, in a study of over 5000 men and women, sponsored by the Veteran Administration and Cornell University Medical College, it was found that women had a far greater tendency to exaggerate virtually all types of complaints and ailments.

12. Psychological tests at De Paul University showed that though women were no less evasive than men, where outright lies were concerned, men led the field.
13. Studies show that women tend to be attracted to men they can look up to intellectually. Men, on the other hand, tend to shy away from women who have more brains than they do. This doesn't mean that men are superior in general intelligence, but that men tend to "marry down" and women tend to "marry up."

14. Studies conducted by sociologists at the University of Southern California show that men have much more difficulty in adjusting happily to a second marriage than women. Divorced men tend to become more "set in their ways," less willing to compromise, and to expect their next marriage partners to do most of the adjusting.

15. Professor Leona F. Tyler, psychologist at the University of Oregon, evaluating the findings of leading scientific investigators, found the female begins to out-talk the male shortly after infancy. She talks more readily, longer and faster. But it is in verbal fluency, rather than in the grasp of verbal meanings, that females are superior.

16. Studies show that men are more restless by temperament than women and much more easily bored by repetitive action. They lack women's capacity to adjust to monotonous conditions. Possibly one reason women are less bored by monotony is that they are more given to introspection and daydreaming.

17. Numerous psychological studies on reaction time show that when a man's senses warn him of approaching danger, he reacts much faster than the average woman.

18. Studies show that women not only have a greater capacity for happiness than men, but also for unhappiness. According to psychologist Lewis M. Terman at Stanford University, "Women experience the extremes of marital happiness and unhappiness more keenly than their husbands."
Appendix B

Topic: Gender Stereotyping Professions  
Time Allowed: 45 minutes

Materials Needed: Pen, index cards, tape

1) Each student will receive an index card naming a specific career taped to their backs. Students will then mingle around the classroom getting clues to the job with which they’ve been labeled. Students will look at the back of a peer and talk to them the way they would someone in that profession. They can refer to the schooling that is needed to obtain that particular job or to the special equipment they might use if they did that job.

Example: If the career is a doctor, someone might ask that person what kind of cream would bring swelling down from poison ivy.

Possible careers to choose from: doctor, teacher, plumber, bus driver, mechanic, computer technician, play director, newspaper editor, journalist, store manager, school counselor, jewelry salesperson, police officer, firefighter, psychologist, restaurant server, restaurant chef, choreographer, ballet dancer, construction worker, librarian, nurse, flight attendant, pilot, etc.

2) To challenge students’ gender bias, females in class are given stereotypical male jobs and males are assigned stereotypical female jobs.

3) After students figure out their job, a class discussion will take place.

Example questions:

• What was your immediate reaction when you found out your job?
• Why do you think you had that reaction?
• What kinds of jobs are women usually portrayed in?
• What kinds of jobs are men usually portrayed in?
• What kinds of gender messages do we send unintentionally?
• Have you ever felt like you couldn’t do something stereotypically for the other gender?


Adapted and submitted by Danya Espinosa.
Appendix C

Topic: Media Collection

Time Allowed: 45 minutes

Materials Needed: Magazines, computer, television, DVD player

1) Students will collect a number of images and video from various media including internet, magazines, television shows, commercials, movies, books. Each image should show one person who is working or engaged in an activity. Images should be as varied as possible.

2) Students will present their media piece and students will discuss each image as a group.

   Example questions:
   
   • Where does this person work?
   • What is the person’s occupation?
   • What kind of math is used in this occupation?
   • What kind of science is used in this occupation?
   • Does this person have a family?
   • How many people are in her or his family?
   • What does the person do for fun?
   • How are men and women shown?
   • What do these images imply about men and women?
   • How are men and women stereotyped in media?
   • What would the image look like if the person depicted were the opposite gender?
   • How do you feel about the image now?

3) Students will finish by writing a brief reflection about the activity and discussion, explaining what they learned about themselves and their classmates.


Adapted and submitted by Danya Espinosa.
Appendix D

Topic: Identifying and Correcting Stereotypes  
Time Allowed: Two 90-minute sessions

Materials Needed: television, DVD player, *Glee* episodes, CD player, computer, pen, paper

Part 1:

1) Students will watch an episode of *Glee* and pay attention to gender stereotypes throughout the episode.

2) Students will discuss stereotypes found in the show and how they affect viewers.

   Example questions:
   - How are the women depicted?
   - How are the men depicted?
   - Do you identify with any of the characters?
   - Is there anything that would have been done differently in the episode if a particular character had been of the opposite gender?
   - How does it make you feel to see men/women portrayed in a particular way?

3) Students will reflect on the experience and answer the question: “What is gender bias and how does it affect me?”

Part 2:

1) Students will bring in their favorite music, television shows, movies, web sites, magazines, music videos, advertisements, video games, books, etc. that show evidence of stereotyping to share with the group.

2) Students will present their media piece and discuss as a group.

3) Students will discuss ways to combat gender stereotypes in media and their own lives.

   Example questions:
   - How do media affect us?
   - Why are gender stereotypes prevalent in media?
   - What is it used for? (humor, marketing, etc.)


Adapted and submitted by Danya Espinosa.