

## PSYC 1113 Introductory Psychology

### Response Paper 2

#### Overview

In this assignment, you will consider the concepts of gender and gender role stereotypes and reflect on how gender role stereotypes affect you. You will write a short paper and upload your paper as a word-processed document to the Response Paper 2 drop-box in the online classroom. Your paper should be written in your own words using proper punctuation and grammar. This assignment is worth up to 50 points. Your grade is based on how well you respond to the assignment topic and how well you follow the required format for the paper.

#### Background for the Assignment

The concept of gender refers to how an individual see himself or herself as male or female. Gender develops through the interaction of biological, cognitive, and socioemotional factors. Gender is more than a person's biological sex. It includes biological sex and the individual's understanding of what it means to be male or female.

Gender roles are the expectations about how males and females think, feel, and behave. We learn these roles from birth. Gender role stereotypes are beliefs about psychological and behavioral characteristics of males and females that do not take into account the differences among individuals. For example, a common gender stereotype in the U.S. is that males are better at math than females. This stereotype does not take into account that some women are exceptional mathematicians who have contributed to the development of cutting-edge technologies and some men have trouble with algebra.

Gender role stereotypes are very pervasive in our culture, as well as other cultures. Williams, Satterwhite, and Best (1999) conducted a study of gender stereotypes across 25 cultures. They found the characteristics associated with male stereotypes were more active and stronger than those characteristics associated with female stereotypes. Table 1 below lists some characteristics commonly associated with the male gender and the female gender based on their research.

**Table 1 Gender Stereotypes Across Cultures**

Characteristics associated with females			Characteristics associated with males		
Affected	emotional	soft-hearted	active	dominant	robust
Affectionate	fearful	Submissive	adventurous	energetic	rude
Anxious	feminine	Talkative	aggressive	enterprising	self-confident
Superstitious	fussy	Timid	ambitious	forceful	stern
Attractive	meeek	Weak	autocratic	independent	strong
Charming	mild	Whiny	coarse	inventive	tough
Complaining	sensitive		courageous	logical	unemotional
Curious	sexy		cruel	masculine	
Dependent	shy		daring	progressive	
Dreamy					

Stereotypes may be positive or negative. Table 2 below lists examples of positive and negative traits

associated with what it means to be female (femininity) and what it means to be male (masculinity).

**Table 2 Examples of Positive and Negative Femininity and Masculinity**

Femininity		Masculinity	
<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>
Patient	Timid	Strong	Aggressive
Sensitive	Weak	Confident	Bossy
Devoted	Needs approval	Firm	Sarcastic
Responsible	Dependent	Forceful	Rude
Appreciative	Nervous	Carefree	Feels superior

Source: From “Desirable and Undesirable Gender Traits in Three Behavioral Domains,” by Lina A. Ricciardelli & Robert J. Williams, 1995, *Sex Roles*, 33, pp. 637–655. Reprinted in Brannon, L. (2005). *Gender: Psychological perspectives*. Routledge.

### **Beyond the Assignment**

If you want to learn more about gender stereotypes and the research referenced above, read these articles available online:

- “Gender Stereotypes: Masculinity and Femininity” in *Gender: Psychological Perspectives* by L. Brandon. [http://www.ablongman.com/partners\\_in\\_psych/PDFs/Brannon/Brannon\\_ch07.pdf](http://www.ablongman.com/partners_in_psych/PDFs/Brannon/Brannon_ch07.pdf)
- “Pancultural gender stereotypes revisited: The five factor model.” By Williams, Satterwhite and Best. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.464.8919&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

### **The Assignment**

In this paper, you will write about the stereotypes associated with maleness and femaleness and how they have affected you. Use the questions below to help you think about the topic and answer those that relate to your own experience with gender stereotypes. You do not need to answer all of the questions. You can write a successful paper by addressing any one of these questions.

- To what degree do you feel you identify with characteristics associated with your own gender?
- To what degree do you feel you identify with characteristics associated with the opposite gender?
- How have you felt as though society or specific people have pressured you to “be” a characteristic that you were not, just because you were male or female?
- How have you stereotyped someone based on gender, thinking that they should “be” a certain way?
- How have gender roles changed over the last 50 years? How have they NOT changed since hunter-gatherer days?
- Are gender roles helpful in some way or do they only perpetuate stereotypes?

Remember, this paper is about your own experience. Please do not use quotes. It should not be necessary to include any outside references in your work on this paper.

## Specifications for your paper:

- Word-processed document. Microsoft Word documents, PDF documents, or other formats readable by Microsoft Word are acceptable formats.
- 250-300 words
- Double-spaced with margins of at least .75 inches and not longer than one page.
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- Heading Format – use this format for the heading of your paper  
[Your Name]  
PSYC 1113 –  
[Date]  
[Word Count]  
[Title]

## Grading Criteria

This assignment is worth up to a total of 50 points. The following criteria will be used in grading your paper.

- (1) Content – 70% of the grade. You should write in the first person stating your ideas, thoughts, and opinions. The content portion of the grade is based on how you answer the questions in the assignment section above.
- (2) Format – 20% of the grade. Your paper should be double-spaced using a 12-point Times New Roman font. The paper should not be less than 250 words or more than 300 words.
- (3) Mechanics – 10% of the grade. Your writing should be grammatically correct. Watch for misspelled words and use correct punctuation. Any resources must be cited using APA or MLA formatting.

**WARNING – Your paper MUST be in your own words.** The online classroom drop-box has a built-in plagiarism detection software (TurnItIn.Com). If you copy from a website, a paper written by someone else, or another published source, the software will flag your work as copied. Using someone else's work without proper quotes is academic dishonesty. Turning in work that is copied from someone else will result in a 0 grade for the assignment.

## References

Brannon, L. (2005). *Gender : Psychological perspectives*. Routledge.

Williams, J., Satterwhite, R., & Best, D. (1999). Pancultural gender stereotypes revisited: The five factor model. *Sex Roles, 40*, 513-525.