

Billy elliot

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



Billy Elliot Traditional ideas about stereotypical gender roles can be challenged or supported with different characters and environments. The visual text Billy Elliot was created in 2000 and directed by Stephen Daldry. The film is about an 11 year old boy (Billy Elliot) who tries to pursue a career in Ballet despite negative stereotyping. Billy must overcome many obstacles in his path including his stereotypical father and brother who are convinced that men cannot do Ballet. Billy Elliot demonstrates that traditional masculinity is restrictive and makes men feel trapped.

He does this by following his dream to be a ballet dancer proving that he could still be masculine and successful. Topics such as symbolism, setting, characterisation and stereotyping will be discussed in this essay. Billy, the main character of the film Billy Elliot is a symbol of change and freedom not only in his family but in the community in which he lives. In the visual text, Billy must break free and be who he wants to be. In the world he lives in, men are trapped and there is no tolerance for diversity and male ballet dancers.

Billy brings a sense of change into the film as he leads his family to become more tolerant and respectful. He is successful in a way that Jacky (father) learns that stereotyping is wrong and that people should be free to follow their dreams. In the beginning of the feature film Billy's brother and father feel that Billy doing Ballet would disgrace their family and make them seem less masculine. In the end Jacky and Tony learn that masculinity is social construction and sports and activities are not equivalent to homosexuality.

By breaking out into the world as a ballet dancer Billy shows the community that stereotypical imagery forces people to hide who they really are when

following your dream can make you happy and not powerless. Billy does this by not being afraid to express himself by dancing. He is committed and does not give up which sets a good example for his friends and family. With Billy's caring and non stereotypical nature he is the perfect symbol for change and freedom. The setting of the feature film Billy Elliot is vital because it helps to set up the idea of people being trapped by their environment.

The traditional mining town Country Durham restricts creativity and freedom as men are forced to comply with their traditional stereotype. There are limited jobs in this town as expectations to be manly are very high. Men show their masculinity by their environments including workplace and activities. The director deliberately chose a traditional British town as there is nowhere near as much diversity then there would be in a busy city centre. The setting automatically makes viewers think about masculinity as just by looking at the environment you can tell that the people are traditional and have very low tolerance for difference.

The two main settings are the Royal Ballet and the small miner's town in Country Durham. There is a very large contrast between the two settings which adds to the narrative. The Royal Ballet is a very grand, creative, posh, red environment where the old mining town is very dull, grey limited environment. The director uses these settings to make a point that Billy is trapped between these two opposite worlds. The setting of when Billy breaks free is a dirty area behind his house sitting in an old wooden out house. He slams the rickety door open and bursts out into the world dancing.

The environment represents the limited role of stereotyping in Billy's community and that he is breaking free of the rules and restrictions. Using a <https://assignbuster.com/billy-elliott/>

setting that has a background and symbolist meaning adds to the narrative and helps the viewer understand what context the visual text is in. Billy challenges our ideas about gender by presenting the viewer with a successful alternative to the traditional male stereotype. Billy Elliot challenges stereotypical ways as he is the most successful character even though he is breaking the rules.

Billy is the only successful character in this film which conflicts with the fact that the masculine characters in the film are the least successful. Billy is successful as he breaks out of the limited routine of the traditional town and follows his dream to become a dancer. At the end of the film Billy is shown as a strong, masculine man who is now very successful and professional. When Billy first tells the world of his aspire to be a dancer he is mocked by his family and called gay. He became a very successful dancer which showed society that they were wrong and that masculinity does not always equal success and power.

Billy shows the world that being creative and expressing yourself can lead you to follow your dreams and be happy. The unsuccessful characters in the visual text were Jacky (father) and Tony (brother). The town expects men to be masculine and miners. Jacky was unsuccessful as he had stood up for himself and the miners' strike yet lost the battle to the government. He ended up where he started so his efforts towards the miners' strike were worthless. Tony ended up following his dad into the trapped empty depths of mining as he was not strong enough to pursue or find a dream to follow.

As Billy was so successful it challenges stereotyping as the masculine characters who are supposed to take charge ended up powerless. With Billy

giving viewers a successful alternative to traditional male stereotypes it helps prove the case that masculinity doesn't always equal triumph. The feature film Billy Elliot provides the viewer with many symbols to help get the narrative's ideas across. Symbolism is an important part to the film as it supports the film by making the characters' actions stronger. An example of such symbolism is shown in the scene where Billy is dancing in his dad's mining boots.

It represents the combination of the two worlds Billy belongs to. The boots signify the hard, trapped, masculine world but he is dancing in them which represent freedom and creativity. In another scene Jacky looks out at Billy dancing through a barred window. This gives the viewer the impression that Jacky is trapped behind masculinity and Billy is free to dance and be himself. In the scene called 'The Chance to Dance' Billy is forced by his brother to dance on the table seeing as he wants to be a ballet dancer.

The song "Town Like Malice" starts playing as Billy is deciding who he should listen to. The song is set to play inside Billy's head as it is a young boy who just wants to dance yet his family does not want him to. Directors use symbolism in feature films to get underlying messages across to the audience. In the visual text Billy Elliot, traditional ideas about gender are challenged by the main character as he doesn't follow masculine stereotyping. The director uses symbolism, environment, success of characters and characterisation to get messages about masculinity across.

Billy breaks free of tight gender rules and follows his dream to be a dancer. By doing so he is successful in his career as a ballet dancer and his family are left behind in the no hope mining town. Through Billy's determination

and creativity he teaches his family to be more tolerant and follow your dreams. They end up being very supportive of Billy as he becomes a successful ballet dancer. Billy changes his community and family to learn that masculinity is just social construction and people should be free to express themselves.