

Doing gender

Sociology



The paper "Doing Gender" is a worthy example of a sociology assignment. People living in society are inevitably influenced by its norms and gender stereotypes. Sometimes these norms are extremely strictly defined, and hence men and women stick to their gender roles and cannot be free in switching from "traditionally female" occupations to the "traditionally male" ones and vice versa. E. g. little boys are still often told that they are not supposed to cry when something hurts them, either physically or morally, because "men should be strong", whereas the girls' tears are tolerated much more often, as women are considered to be more "emotional". Girls are still given dolls and dollhouses as presents, and boys get toy cars and guns. Boys and girls are dressed up in different ways, they are offered different games and types of activity (including household duties). There is no "unified" male or female role; there are lots of gender roles each of us is playing in life - e. g. mum, dad, sister, son, lover, etc., and sometimes these roles fail to match each other and then the conflicts arise. For example, many have seen the conflict between the roles of a businesswoman and a good mother and wife. Pretty much every person I have ever met in life, including myself, played gender roles. It is seen even from the appearance (many girls who want to emphasize their femininity wear very feminine clothes that show their bodies in the best way possible), the way people walk, talk, gesticulate, choose their activity sphere, etc. The female gender role makes women more caring, emotional, showing concern with other people's problems. The masculine gender role, in its turn, demands from men to be active, dominating, ambitious, sometimes even aggressive. Some jobs are still considered more "feminine" or "masculine". It is important to mention that whereas at the level of the society, the gender roles determine

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the overall interactions between people, at the personal level these strict boundaries between these traditional roles might even affect health and life of people. E. g. men are more prone to suicide, accidents, severe illnesses, heavy smoking, alcoholism, whereas women more often have psychological problems, depressions, anxieties, and different eating disorders (which is connected with the concept of female sexuality that is much more strict than the one for males). And it is also necessary to remember that “ traditional” gender roles prepare people to live in the world that does not exist anymore: men are no more the only ones who “ bring home the bacon”, and women do not have to devote all their lives to family and motherhood.