

# Defy gender roles

[People](#)



## **Conform or Defy**

Gender roles in the society of the human race have always been that the women bare the children and take care of the home while the man is out working and bringing home the money to support his family. In certain societies this is still true and women do not have a say in what they do. The role and identity of women in certain societies has been shaped and it is up to the woman under this conformity to conform or defy.

The roles of women through the eyes of Marjane Satrapi as a young girl were quite “ normal” for her. As a young girl she did not realize how different of a life style she was living from other young girls her age living in Iran. For example when she was six she says, “ I wanted to be a Prophet because our maid did not eat with us. ” Later on in the story she reveals that their maid named Mehri was eight years old when she had to leave her parents’ home to come to work for Marjane and her family.

As a teenager, Mehri begins falling in love with the neighbors’ son. When Marjane’s family finds this out her father goes over to the boys home and tells him, “ I know that Mehri pretends she is my daughter. In reality she is my maid. ” Marjane does not understand why this cannot be. Her father says, “ You must understand that their love was impossible, because in this country you must stay within your own social class. ” Marjane begins to understand the whole concept of the Revolution and wants to demonstrate against it.

Women in the novel conform to and also defy the expectations that are placed on them by going out and demonstrating during the Revolution but

also confirm by wearing the veil. Over a broadcast a man declares, “ Women’s hair emanates rays that excite men. That’s why women should cover their hair! If in fact it is really more civilized to go without the veil, then animals are more civilized than we are. ” Marjane says, “ In no time the way people dressed became an ideological sign. ” Marjane says, “ There were two different kinds of women, the fundamentalist woman and the modern woman. The fundamentalist woman covered her entire body with a black veil and only showed her face. The modern woman to show their opposition to the regime would still wear the veil but let a few strands of hair show and they would not cover their entire body either. They would wear pants, boots, and long coats. This was done in order to protect the women from all the potential rapists, it was decreed that wearing the veil was obligatory. As a teenager she was stopped by the “ Guardians of the Revolution. ” These women were in place to arrest women who were improperly veiled.

At the committee, they did not have to inform parents and they could detain girls for hours or even days. They could be whipped and in short anything could happen. This was quite traumatizing for Marjane however she did not tell her parents. Overall, the effects of these societal expectations on the psyche and development of Marjane as a child were very influenced by the revolution. Her parents tried their best to protect her from what was going on in their country. They tried to still give her all the liberties of that the Western children had.

They did not want to take away from her childhood and wanted her to have the absolute best. They wanted her to have the best education and normal

social life possible and free of terrorism. At the age of fourteen she was sent away to Austria where she would finish school and be a lot safer.

## **Works Cited**

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