

# Essay on women and gender studies

[Sociology](#), [Gender Studies](#)



## Introduction

Jodi Arias is accused of killing her former boyfriend, Travis Alexander by shooting him, stabbing him several times with a knife and then slitting his throat. Prosecutors claim that Arias committed these crimes after her boyfriend allegedly threatened to leave her. Arias on the other hand claim that she was merely acting out of self defense after a long period of relationship abuse. Gender roles have played a very crucial role in this case. First of all, it is important to note that the defendant is woman. Meehan (2002), states that the woman has in many years been portrayed as the innocent soul. In this particular scenario, it would appear that the abuser is Jodi Arias. However, due to the long standing perception of gender roles that perceive a woman to be essentially non- violent (Snyder 2008), Arias might come across as the innocent party. Jodi Arias clearly fits as the abuser in this particular relationship. It is clearly an issue of power and control. In this case, the power and control are with the woman which is clearly a reversal of gender roles. The media has been divided in the representation of Miss Aria. Some have represented her as an innocent girl who has after being subjected to abuse finally decided to act. Others have presented her as a sadistic murderer. This has clearly caused conflict of opinions among societal members, most of which have been based on gender lines.

The Ariel Castro case is quite different to that of Jodi Arias. Here, the woman is an actual victim. The defendant, Ariel Castro has been accused of kidnapping three women, raping them and keeping them captive in his house for over ten years. Ariel Castro is a classic exemplification of the male patriarch in the society. Established perceptions about gender roles would

present him as chauvinist and a domineering figure who exudes power, control and dominance over women (Snyder 2008). Therefore, the woman in this scenario is once again displayed as the innocent member of the society who requires guidance and protection and Ariel Castro clearly acted contrary to this. The media has personally crucified him through this chauvinist and patriarchic representation and the implication is that most members of the society have already convicted him as guilty and this will also have serious implications when it comes to the jury.

## References

- Snyder, R. Claire. 2008. What is Third Wave Feminism? A New Directions Essay. Department of Public and International Affairs. George Mason University.
- Meehan, Eileen R. 2002. Gendering the Commodity Audience: Critical Media Research, Feminism and Political Economy. In Eileen R. Meehan and Ellen Riordan (eds), *Sex and Money: Feminism and Political economy in the Media*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 209-22.