critical media project
Lesson Plan: Gender

This lesson plan should be used in conjunction with the [media examples](#) and the various resources, including [diy activities](#). Please also see the provided example worksheet that can be printed and handed out for students to write their responses on the gender of their choice. See [CMP website](#) for ideas.

PURPOSE & LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will be able to critically analyze a range of media examples and their representations of gender.

- Students will be able to learn how to "read" media texts (film, television, Internet, news, streaming media, radio and recording, social media etc.) and identify patterns and stereotypes in the representation of gender.

- Students will be able to explain in written and oral forms the way gender takes on varied meanings in different media contexts.

- Students will be able to explain how the media's representations of gender can potentially impact how they understand their own and other identities.

GETTING STARTED:

- Ask students to think about how they see or understand themselves (what part of their identity is most important to them).

- Ask students to assess how many of their peers cite "sex" (male or female) or "gender" (masculine, feminine, transgender, non-binary, etc.) as fundamental parts of who they are.

- Ask students to list stereotypes of masculinity and femininity (see accompanying worksheet).

KEY IDEAS & CONCEPTS: (see longer overview on [CMP website](#))

- Sex is a system of classification based on a combination of biological and physiological factors (generally male or female, but also intersex). Gender is an evolving concept that refers to both the cultural meaning ascribed to a person's sex or body (often manifesting as masculine or feminine) as well as our internal sense of self or personal experience of our own body.

- Masculinity and femininity are the terms that are often used to identify a set of characteristics, values, meanings, and cultural expectations tied to gender.

- In our society, the values tied to masculinity have been generally seen as superior to those associated with femininity.

- From an early age, children are socialized and encouraged to perform specific gender roles and conform to gender roles. The repetition of gendered narratives and images in media has helped to shape these cultural norms around what it means to be a man or a woman, masculine or feminine. There are fewer models and norms for transgender and non-binary gender identities.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING: (use media examples & diy activities)

- Can students see and identify patterns in the representation of gender in the media?

- Can students critically question and challenge the representations and stereotypes they identify?

- Can students critically question their own ideologies (ways of seeing) tied to gender and the role media (on-screen and behind-the-scenes) plays in shaping those ideologies?

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Worksheet: Media Representation of Gender

Name:_____   Class:_____

Class Discussion:
1. List any stereotypes (in media and everyday life) of _____
   that you can think of.
   (write a gender identity of your choice)
2. Are there any patterns that you identify on your list?
3. How would you characterize these representations? Are they positive?
   Negative? Neutral? Why?
4. Do you agree with these representations? Do they seem true or accurate?
   Why? Are there other gender representation that are left out or less
   visible? (Transgender? Non-binary?)

Your Thoughts/Notes:

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Small Group Discussion (after viewing media examples from website):
1. How are women/girls represented in the media compared to men/boys?
   How are transgender and non-binary individuals represented, if at all?
2. Does the media focus on outside appearance or the body as a marker of
   gender? On sexuality and sex appeal? On physical strength? On
   intelligence? On beliefs and values?
3. Are individuals of various genders treated equally? Are some treated as
   objects? Are some empowered? If so, where do they get their power?
4. Are their particular actions, places, scenarios associated with particular
   gender identities (What are they doing? Who are they with?)
5. How do individuals of different genders look? Are they old or young? Fit
   or unfit? Loud or soft? How do they dress?
6. Does the media potentially play a role in telling individuals what their
   gender identity should be? How?

**Reflection: Should we try to change or challenge these stereotypes in the
media? Why? How?**

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