WHAT IS GENDER BIAS?

Gender bias refers to unconscious and purposeful discrimination that disadvantages or favors one gender over another. It can occur in various forms and is often subtle, making it challenging to identify and address.

WHAT ARE GENDER ROLES?

Gender roles are the expectations and behaviors that are considered appropriate for men and women. These roles are often learned from a young age and can influence how individuals are perceived and treated in society.

HOW DO GENDER ROLES MANIFEST IN SOCIETY?

Gender roles can manifest in various ways, including in the workplace, education, and media. They can also influence how individuals are perceived and treated in society. For example, traditional gender roles may encourage women to be nurturing and supportive, while men are expected to be aggressive and competitive.

Gender bias can have a significant impact on individuals, leading to unequal opportunities, reduced confidence, and lower self-esteem.

Female athletes are supposed to only be positive, nurturing and supportive (think about the strict rules of conduct in women's sports such as gymnastics and ice skating). Media tends to sexualize female athletes outside of their sports more often than men (especially women's volleyball, soccer, track and field, etc.), and paint them as less athletic. For these reasons, women playing sports (especially less hypersexualized sports) are either "boring" or "undesirable" (e.g. women's basketball, ice hockey, swimming). Women are less likely to play sports and therefore less likely to develop some of the positive character traits that are associated with athletics. Even the women who do develop this mindset, however, are still seen as more aggressive or emotional in the workplace.

The percentage of boys playing sports is higher than girls at every grade from 3–12, with nearly a third of boys being "highly involved" athletes playing 3 or more sports, and most girls playing only 1 or 2. Girls age 8–12 are, on average, 19% less active than boys. "A Black woman must not only perform her gender based on stereotypical gender norms, but to counter intersectional, oppressive images of Black women, like the 'angry Black woman'" says Carter. "She must perform 'happiness' or 'positivity' to counter implicit notions of Black threat. This performance is an attempt to comfort white fragility in sport, to appear nonthreatening, not 'angry' or 'unprofessional.'" (Source)

This creates a vicious two-way street that keeps women's sports in the background.

Women's sports aren't played nearly as much throughout the spectrum, and the attention they receive is often negative. Male sports get huge endorsement deals and millions in investment, whereas women's sports are barely funded, and the few events that have been successful have been under funded. (Source, Source, Source)

Even when women are athletes, they are held to different standards for the same behavior.

SEBASTIAN VETRINO (1972)

"I was afraid of not being good enough to compete at the highest level in my sport, which was soccer. I wanted to prove that women could be just as good as men in competitive sports."

Blair Chin, Women’s Sports Desk, The New York Times

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VICTOR TRICKY (1986)

"In our society, women are often expected to be nurturing and supportive, whereas men are expected to be aggressive and competitive. This is a harmful stereotype that limits women's opportunities in various fields."