



Gender Roles: Where Do I Stand?

Sometimes our beliefs about males and females are based on messages we've gotten from friends, family, or the media, but haven't really thought too much about. It's important to make our own decisions about what we choose to believe regarding gender roles. Check the boxes below to indicate whether you agree, disagree or are unsure about each statement.

GENDER ROLE STATEMENT	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
Boys are <u>born</u> more violent than girls.			
Girls are <u>born</u> more emotional than boys.			
Women make better parents than men.			
A man should be solely responsible for providing financially for his family.			
A man should have the right to discipline his wife.			
The more often a guy has sex, the more of a man he is.			
The more often a woman has sex, the more of a slut she is.			
The guy should always pay for a date.			
It is okay for someone to hit their girlfriend or boyfriend under some circumstances.			
Both people in a couple should have equal say in all decision-making.			
The music people listen to today contributes to relationship abuse.			
Gay and lesbian people are discriminated against because they do not conform to society's gender roles.			
A man should be embarrassed to be a nurse or secretary because those jobs are for women.			
People should go to jail for beating up their relationship partners.			
Women who dress in overly sexy clothes are asking to get raped or sexually harassed.			
Society generally treats men and women as equals.			
Guys who don't act aggressive will be made fun of by other guys.			
If a girl goes to a guy's room alone with him, then she should expect they're going to have sex.			
A real man could never get raped.			

The Romantic Code

Girls Learn

Love, sex and romance must go together.

They are responsible for how far sexual advances will go; they are responsible for stopping the advances.

They must balance pressures to be sexually "free" and liberated, but not earn a reputation for "sleeping around."

If they say "yes" to sex, they are "easy." Must be "swept away."

They give sex.

They must be attractive but not too attractive or they will be called "seductive."

Their role is to be passive, dependent and nurturing.

Boys Learn

Sex is okay without love or romance, although they may have to say they're in love.

They must make advances but face frequent risk of rejection.

Men have lots of sex and lots of sexual partners; their sexual urges are uncontrollable.

They will have to coax and persuade to get sex.

They take sex.

It's a real plus to be attractive, but not required for sexual success.

Their role is to be aggressive, tough and independent.

(Adapted from NO IS NOT ENOUGH,
Caren Adams, Jennifer Fay &
Loreen-Martin, Impact Publishers, 1984).

Discuss the following:

1. Do you think that these codes are true or false? Can you relate to any of these?
2. What is a personal "romantic code" that you were taught or grew up with?
3. What do these codes have to do with sexual violence?
4. Make up a code that you feel would help create healthy relationships.