

Andrea Dworkin asserts that “ the discovery is, of course, that ‘man’ and ‘woman’ are fictions, caricatures, cultural constructs. As models they are reductive, totalitarian, inappropriate to human becoming. As roles they are static, demeaning to the female, dead-ended for the males and females alike.” Are gender roles socially constructed or biologically determined? Write an essay supporting, challenging, or qualifying her statement. Use examples from your own experience and readings.

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The internet is arguably gender-neutral. When you do not know another user’s background, physical traits, style of dress, and so on, you have to judge them by only their words. Some observers believe that the anonymity of the Internet allows people to move outside of expected gender roles. Write an essay supporting, challenging, or modifying the information above. Use examples from your own experience and readings.

In his book *Men Are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, John Gray writes, “A man’s sense of self is defined through his ability to achieve results...A woman’s sense of self is defined through her feelings and the quality of her relationships.” Write an essay supporting, challenging, or modifying his statement. Use examples from your experiences and readings.

In the final paragraph of her speech, Virginia Woolf says, “Even when the path is nominally open—when there is nothing to prevent a woman from being a doctor, a lawyer, a civil servant—there are many phantoms and obstacles, as I believe, looming in her way.” Write an essay in which you defend, challenge, or modify that statement with regard to women today in the United States or to women in another country where gender equality might be more problematic.

According to Judith Ortiz Cofer's essay "The Myth of the Latin Woman," she asserts that "mixed cultural signals have perpetuated certain stereotypes—for example, that of the Hispanic woman as the 'Hot Tamale' or sexual firebrand. It is a one-dimensional view that the media have found easy to promote. In their special vocabulary, advertisers have designated 'sizzling' and 'smoldering' as the adjectives of choice for describing not only the foods but also the women of Latin America." Does this assertion—that the media promotes stereotypes—apply today? Write an essay challenging, defending, or qualifying her statement. Use examples from your experiences and readings.

In his essay “Women’s Brains,” Gould refers to “a general theory that supported contemporary social distinctions as biologically ordained” in the late nineteenth century. In the twenty-first century, many continue to argue for nature over nurture, supporting biology rather than socialization as the causal agent for the skills and talents of specific groups. Write an essay supporting or refuting the theory that heredity, not environment, is the principal determinant of human traits. Use your experiences and readings.