

Is Gender Socially Constructed: A Field Trip to the Mall

Go to a mall or a large store and visit three of the areas listed [on the paper given out in class] considering the questions provided. Make notes as you examine each area. Using your findings, write a paper including:

1. A brief introduction discussing socialization and the process by which we develop a sense of identity.
2. A review of your methods and findings
3. An analysis of your findings, offering conclusions about how we develop gender identity i.e. what socializes us into our stereotypic gender roles
4. You will include the notes you made during your study as an attachment to the paper

The areas I picked:

Toy Store

1. What are the types of toys that are marketed towards boys? Towards girls?
2. What color schemes are used for each type of toy?
3. Does each type of toy promote certain personality characteristics? What are they?
4. Are certain types of roles being taught by each type of toy? What are they?
5. Do you notice a certain age where the sorts of toys marketed to boys and girls begin to change? What are the changes?

Music Store

1. Examine the covers of the CDs and describe how females are portrayed. How are males portrayed?
2. Do the depictions of males and females change depending on the types of music?
3. Is there a certain type of music that caters more to females? To males?

Book Store

1. Take a random sample of children's books and note the following:
 - a1. The number of stories where the main character is male.
 - a2. The number of stories where the main character is female.
 - b1. What sorts of activities are females engaged in?
 - b2. What sorts of activities are males engaged in?