

Soc 101 Practicum 6 Writing Assignment, due 11/5

The Significance of Gender in Everyday Life – A Scavenger Hunt
(Developed by Tom Gerschick)

To facilitate your awareness of the significance of gender in the everyday world around you, **try to locate as many items on the attached scavenger** list as possible. For your response paper, answer the questions indicated for each item, for a *minimum* of four items. In other words, if you locate 15 of the items listed, **you only have to write about four of them** (though you can write about all fifteen if you choose). But this also means that you *have to find* at least four of the items. Please provide copies of the items if possible; if you cannot provide copies, please describe the items. You may work alone or in groups of up to five people, but each student must turn in his or her own response paper.

All assignments must be typed with double-spacing, 1” margins, and 12 point font. A passing assignment **must** do the following:

- Use concepts from our text, readings, and class discussion when answering the questions for each item
- Define these course concepts and **explicitly state** HOW and WHY the concepts are related to the object
- Be specific and detailed in your answers
- Answer all parts of the questions

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY: Find 15 of the 20 items **and** answer the questions for all 15 of the items.

Scavenger Hunt List

(Developed by Elizabeth Hoisington, Northern Illinois University)

There are 20 possible items to locate. In addition to locating the item, you must provide a copy of the item or describe it in detail, and you must answer the question(s) given with each item (**for at least four items**).

1. A multiple choice question from an exam which makes assumptions about gender roles (i.e., is sexist). What is the question? What assumptions are being made?
2. A cartoon or cartoon strip with a sexist premise. What assumptions are being made? How do the assumptions make the cartoon funny, if at all?
3. A photocopied paragraph from a book or article that is currently being used in a college course that uses all masculine pronouns (include the text title, copyright year, and class required for). Why is the use of all masculine pronouns so pervasive in academic texts? How would you hypothesize any variation in the use of all masculine pronouns based on class or discipline?
4. A church bulletin which uses inclusive language (“people,” “his/hers,” in the prayers, responsive readings, announcements). Why was it written this way?
5. Two ads from the personal section of any newspaper: one ad seeking an attractive/ pretty/ cute woman/ girl/ female; and one ad seeking an attractive/ handsome/ good-looking man/ boy/ male (can use any adjectives for physical attractiveness). What are the differences, if any, between the emphasis on physical attractiveness in the ad seeking a woman and the ad seeking a man? (YOU CANNOT USE ONLINE PERSONAL ADS)
6. Lyrics from a relatively recent (within the past two years) popular song that depicts a male as a sex object. (Include artist and title of song.) What is the message of the song, regarding men?
7. A sexist rule, regulation, or statement in any relatively recent or current Vanderbilt document (e.g. housing rules, handbook describing the college, etc.). Do not use the school newspaper. What is it about the statement that makes it biased?
8. A greeting card congratulating the parents of a new baby that does not specify the sex of the baby. What attributes of the card are gender-neutral (e.g., color, illustrations)?
9. A magazine ad in which the woman is taller than the man (both figures should be “normal sized” adults). Why do you think this ad utilized a taller female model?
10. An engagement or wedding announcement that lists the groom’s parents first. Why have brides’ parents’ names traditionally been listed first?
11. Rewrite the Declaration of Independence using inclusive language (not just he/she). How does this change the nature of what is being said?
12. Find a nursery rhyme with a male or female (or both) as the main character(s) and rewrite it to make the character(s) more androgynous. How does this change the images presented in the rhyme?

13. A picture from a department store's catalog showing children's clothing with sex-typical pictures on the clothes (e.g., sports, flowers, kittens). Why do parents buy these clothes for their children?

14. A table of contents from a men's magazine listing an article about male-female relationships. Why are these kinds of articles rarer in men's magazines than women's magazines?

15. An Old Maid card (or photocopy of one). What does this card game reveal about our attitudes toward older, single women?

16. A picture from a hotrod/car magazine showing an attractive young man lounging by/on a car (instead of the usual, ornamental women). What would be a good argument for showing an attractive male instead of an attractive female in this case (if you had to convince the editors of the magazine)?

17. A table of contents from a men's magazine listing a child-raising article. Why is an article with this specific content likely to be included here? What kinds of articles would you not be likely to find?

18. A picture showing male athletes displaying physical affections towards one another. Why is it acceptable for them to be doing this?

19. Lyrics to a country-western song which describes nontraditional gender roles. Why has country-western music portrayed traditional gender roles for so long?

20. The business card of a car saleswoman. Aside from avoiding charges of discrimination, why would a car dealership want to hire a woman to sell cars?