Gender vs. Sex
Question #1:

What are gender norms you have experienced?
The Binary Opposition

- The need to place things into two opposing categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOY</th>
<th>GIRL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Blue</td>
<td>- Pink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Masculine</td>
<td>- Feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hard</td>
<td>- Soft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Handsome</td>
<td>- Pretty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strong</td>
<td>- Weak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So.. why does gender in children’s media matter?
The Constructionist Approach & Cultivation Theory

- “The constructivist approach proposes that children develop beliefs about the world based on their interpretations of observations and experiences.”

- “Cultivation theory posits that exposure to television content helps develop concepts regarding social behavior and norms.”

The gendered media that children consume can help them cognize their own gender identity.

With skewed representation, some children may have a harder time with understanding their own identity, especially if it does not fit into “boy” or “girl”, leading to repression of identity.
Gender Reveal Parties

- Pinks vs. Blues

- “TRENDY”

- Perpetuates need place gender norms onto unborn children

- Why the need to know?
Babydolls
Babydolls

- Historically “Girls Only”

- Children, some even babies themselves, take care of the babydolls

- Feeding, diaper changing, crying etc.

- Setting young children up to clean & take care of children and typically excludes boys from this.
Disney
Disney Princesses

- “Damsel in distress” → leads to belief that girls cannot help themselves and must rely on men to do so.

- “Pretty, but meek” → leads to the belief that you cannot be both beautiful & strong.

- Physical appearance → Princesses are only thin, small waist, larger breasts, etc.
Disney Princesses & A Closer Look: Ariel, *The Little Mermaid*

- Gives away her voice for a man
- Changes her physical appearance for a man
- Man falls in love with her even though she is unable to speak.
- Gives herself away to the man after only knowing him for a couple weeks. (All at 16 years old.)
Sexualization of Young Girls
Transgender Representation

- Most individuals represented in media are cisgendered, causing underrepresentation of trans, intersex, or genderqueer children. (and adults.)
- However, the show *I Am Jazz* sheds light onto what it’s like to grow up as a transgender child.
Can you think of any other examples of gender-positive media?
How can we help eliminate gender roles for children?