

Do TV Shows and Movies Influence Careers Held by Women and Men?



My World Think about the TV shows and movies you like to watch. What professions do male and female characters hold in these shows and movies?

In the T-chart below, list at least 5 male characters and 5 female characters from the shows and movies you enjoy. Next, identify the profession each one portrays in a particular show or movie. (For example - on *Glee*, Sue Sylvester is the cheerleading coach and Will Schuester is a Spanish teacher and glee club sponsor.)

Female	Male

The Real World Studies show that men earn more than women in the same careers. Read the excerpt below from USA TODAY and underline one detail that catches your attention.

Women of all ages, races, ethnic backgrounds and education levels—and in almost every line of work—earned less than men [as reported by the American Association of University Women]...The report says that in 2010, women’s annual median earnings were \$36,931, compared with \$47,715 for men.

“Women and people of color don’t choose to earn less,” said Dana Schultz, Wisconsin state director of the 9to5 women’s advocacy group. “Many factors contribute to the over-representation of women in undervalued, underpaid occupations.”

The American Association of University Women used national and state Census data to determine 2010 annual median earnings for full-time workers older than 16.

Source: *Study shows how broad pay disparities are between sexes*, April 17, 2012. USA TODAY

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The article states there are many reasons that contribute to the earning disparity between men and women in the United States.

Answer the question below and be prepared to share your response.

- ▶ Why do you think women are generally paid less than men for the same jobs?

My opinion Taking into consideration your completed T-chart and the USA TODAY excerpt, read the statement below and check the box that best represents your response. Be prepared to stand and defend your position.

- ▶ The way male and female professionals are portrayed in movies and TV shows is a contributing factor to the wage disparity between men and women in the United States.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

My Future World Think about a career that you might like to pursue when you get older. In the space below, answer one of these two questions and share your response with the class.

- ▶ Is there a character in a TV show or movie who has inspired you to want to pursue a certain career? (or avoid a certain career?) Explain why.
- ▶ Are men and women portrayed accurately and fairly in your career choice in TV shows and movies? Explain why or why not.

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Extend Your Learning

Want to find out more? Check out the following websites:

- ▶ Find out more about gender portrayals in children's media: www.seejane.org
- ▶ Explore how boys and girls picture themselves in a variety of careers: www.seejane.org/resources/abcmouse.php
- ▶ View videos that show how gender stereotypes exist in careers today: www.seejane.org/resources/guesswho.php
- ▶ See how girl scouts are exploring STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers: www.girlscouts.org/research/pdf/generation_stem_full_report.pdf
- ▶ Find out more about females in STEM careers: associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/55563/_PARENT/layout_details/true.