

# Lesson 8

## Sexual Stereotypes

### Activity 1

In the next exercise, we will think of common sexual stereotypes for various social groups in the United States. Keep in mind that some groups will be easier to think of stereotypes for than others. Also, be sure to be respectful of others when noting these characteristics. Stereotypes are, for many, a sensitive topic and they have a great potential of hurting others' feelings.

First choose five social groups. Some examples are: Black, Asian, Latino, White, Muslim, First Peoples (Native American), elderly, individuals with a physical disability, individuals with a mental disability, people who are overweight, lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals.\*

Next, try to think of a person from popular media that fits in each of the categories. Persons from popular media may be a character from a television show, cartoon, or movie, or a real person such as a pop star or newscaster.

Then, using a scale from 1-10, discuss and rate how sexy and sexual that person is, as portrayed in the media (1=not at all, 10=the most possible).

Social Category	Famous person/character	Sexy?	Sexual?


\*Note: Teacher can assign categories and individuals analyzed

**Questions for Discussion:**

1. Do your characteristics represent sexual stereotypes for that category of person? How so?
2. Is it accurate to equate someone's sexual characteristics with belonging to a certain social category?
3. Do these sexual stereotypes harm individuals from those groups? Explore the reasons for your responses.
4. What is the media's part in perpetuating or creating these stereotypes?
5. Do we, as media consumers, have a role in perpetuating these stereotypes?
6. Are some stereotypes more harmful than others? For example, is it more harmful to stereotype someone as "sexy" or an "animal" than it is to stereotype someone as a sexual predator?
7. Is it more harmful to stereotype someone who belongs to an oppressed minority group than someone who is in the majority? Why?