

Stereotypes in Movies: Legally Blonde Analysis

Choose **two** of the following topics and write a response for each one. Use specific examples from the movie. Each response should be half a page long. The total length of the analysis will be one page in length.

1. Describe the portrayal of the female protagonist in the film. How is she portrayed physically (what does she wear, how stylish is she, etc.)? How is she portrayed mentally (is she smart, silly, or both)? How does she relate to the male characters in the film? With whom does she develop romantic relationships? How does she relate to the other female characters in the film? How does she solve problems? Whose help does she solicit to do this?
2. Analyze the role of young female protagonists in films today. How does the main character in this film compare to other films you've seen lately? What aspects of her character discussed in the previous question make her similar to most young females in films? What aspects make her different? How is the plot of this film similar to some other "teen movies" that you may have seen? How is it different?
3. Interpret the ultimate effects of this film. For whom is this film intended? How did it affect you as an audience member? At the end of the film, did you like or dislike the female protagonist? Why? What techniques do the filmmakers/writers use to steer you in that direction? How do these (and other movies) tell the audience what it means to be a teenage girl in today's society? What behaviors are encouraged and discouraged, based on what you've seen?
4. Evaluate the role of this film in portraying young women to the public. How realistic are these portrayals of young women? Do you think it depicts young women in a positive or negative light? What examples lead you to this conclusion? Do you think the female protagonist would identify as third wave or postfeminist, based on Douglas' (2010) definition? Why or why not? These films are getting dated (made in 1999 and 2001). How do you think perceptions of feminism and postfeminism have changed? What examples do you have to illustrate this perspective?
5. Engage with the concepts presented in class and in the film. Would you call the protagonists in these films feminists? Why or why not? How do these films add to the conversation about what it means to be a young woman and/or a feminist? What might you do with the new knowledge you've acquired in this process? What is the role of the audience member in sharing these concepts with the wider public (beyond the classroom)? Would you talk about feminism differently with a friend, family member, or colleague after this exercise? Why or why not?