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Chapter 2

Self and Perception

CHAPTER OUTCOMES

- Identify the components of self and understand how self impacts communication
- Learn how to present the self to others, both online and offline
- Explore how the perception process works and the common errors made within this process
- Explain the ways people form impressions of others
- Describe the importance of perception-checking and empathy for improving communication skills

CHAPTER OUTLINE

THE NATURE OF SELF

Your "self" isn't just one thing, it's many things: who you think you are as a person; your values, attitudes, and beliefs; and how you feel about your self-worth. Because all of these factors influence how you communicate, the first step to improving your communication is to understand your self.

- Your **self** shapes how you communicate, whether online or offline, with friends or in groups, and even before an audience.
    - **Self** is an evolving blend of three components:
        1. Self-awareness
        2. Self-concept

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3. Self-esteem

SELF-AWARENESS

- **Self-awareness** is the ability to view yourself as a unique person distinct from your surrounding environment and to reflect on your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. In short, it means asking yourself, "Who am I?"
  - Self-awareness isn't only about inward analysis. You also look outward, to others, and compare yourself to them.
  - Through **social comparison**, you assign meaning to others' behaviors and then compare their behavior against your own.
  - When communicating, you are always self-aware, constantly considering your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
- **Critical self-reflection** is a special kind of self-awareness that focuses on evaluating and improving your communication. By routinely practicing critical self-reflection, you will achieve a deeper understanding of the factors that influence your communication choices, allowing you to make better decisions and achieve improved outcomes as a result.
  - To engage in critical self-reflection, consider these five questions:
    1. What am I thinking and feeling?
    2. Why am I thinking and feeling this way?
    3. How am I communicating?
    4. How are my inner thoughts and feelings affecting my communication?
    5. How can I improve my thoughts, feelings, and communication?

SELF-CONCEPT

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- **Self-concept** is the overall assessment of who you are; it answers this question: "I'm a _____ person." It is based on the beliefs, attitudes, and values you have about yourself.
  - *Beliefs* are convictions that certain things are true ("I'm a caring person.").
  - *Attitudes* are evaluations ("I'm satisfied with my fitness level.").
  - *Values* are enduring principles that guide your behaviors ("I think it's morally wrong to lie.").
- **Self-verification theory** suggests that you often choose your relational partners based on how well they support your self-concept. This includes choosing others who support a positive or a negative self-concept.
- **Self-fulfilling prophecies** are predictions that you make about future interactions that cause you to communicate in ways that make your predictions come true.

SELF-ESTEEM

- **Self-esteem** is the overall value you assign to yourself. It answers this question: "Given who I am, what's my evaluation of my worth?"
  - Self-esteem strongly shapes your communication, relationships, and general outlook on life.
  - People with high self-esteem report greater life satisfaction, communicate more positively with others, and experience more happiness in their relationships than do people with low self-esteem.
  - People with high self-esteem also show greater leadership ability, athleticism, and academic performance.
- **Self-discrepancy theory** holds that your self-esteem results from comparing the following two mental standards:

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1. *Your ideal self* involves all the qualities (mental, physical, emotional, material, spiritual) you want to possess.
2. *Your ought self* is the person you think others want you to be. The concept of ought self stems from expectations of your family, friends, colleagues, and romantic partners, plus the culture you grew up in.

- You experience high self-esteem when your self-concept matches your ideal and ought selves.
- By contrast, you may suffer low self-esteem if your self-concept is inferior to your ideal and ought selves.

- You can work on improving your self-esteem by following these steps:
  1. *Assess your self-esteem*. List the beliefs, attitudes, and values that make up your self-concept. Review the list and determine whether you view yourself positively or negatively.
  2. *Analyze your ideal self*. Who do you wish you were? If this ideal self is attainable, how could you become this person?
  3. *Analyze your ought self*. Who do others want you to be? What would you have to do to become this person?
  4. *Revisit and redefine your standards*. If your ideal and ought selves are realistic and reachable, move to step 5. If they're not, redefine your standards so that they are realistic and reachable. Frame your new standards as a list of goals.
  5. *Create an action plan*. List the actions necessary to reach your ideal and ought selves. Establish a realistic time line, perhaps several months or years. Then carry out this action plan, checking your progress as you go.

CULTURE, GENDER, AND SELF

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- **Culture** is as an established, coherent set of beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices shared by a large group of people.
  - Culture includes many types of large-group influences, such as nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, and age.
  - You learn your culture from your parents, teachers, religious leaders, peers, and the mass media.
  - Culture influences your communication, depending on the type of culture in which you were raised.
- **Individualistic cultures** teach that individual goals matter more than group goals.
  - People in individualistic cultures are encouraged to focus on themselves and their immediate family.
  - Individual achievement is praised as the highest good.
  - Countries with individualistic cultures include the United States, New Zealand, and Sweden.
- **Collectivistic cultures** promote the value of belonging to groups that look after you in exchange for your loyalty.
  - In collectivistic cultures, the goals, needs, and views of the group matter more than those of individuals.
  - The highest good is considered cooperation with others.
  - Collectivistic cultures include China, Guatemala, Pakistan, and Taiwan.
- **Gender** is the set of social, psychological, and cultural attributes that characterize a person as male or female.
  - Your concept of gender forms over time through interactions with others.

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- Gender socialization is a lifelong process where societal norms define and assign appropriate behavior for each gender.
- Gender is distinct from the biological sex organs you are born with that distinguish you anatomically as male or female. For example, a **transgender person** possesses a strong sense of gendered self-identity (male/female) that doesn't correspond to the biological sex they were born with.

PRESENTING YOUR SELF

Every time you communicate with others, you present a version of your self to them. Sometimes this represents who you really are. Other times you may hide your true self. In either case, the self you present is the "you" people know. If you want people to see you in a certain way, it's essential to learn how to present your self skillfully.

- *Private self* is the combination of your self-awareness, self-concept, and self-esteem.
- *Public self* is the self you present to others.
- You actively create your public self through your communication and behavior.
- People form impressions about you based on the public self you present.
- People know and judge the "you" who communicates with them—not the "you" that you keep inside.
- Managing your public self is a crucial part of being a competent communicator.

CREATING FACES AND MASKS

- **Face** is the positive self you want others to see and believe; you actively create it through your communication. It can be anything (perky, upbeat, cool) and varies depending on the situation.
- **Mask** is the presentation of a public self that strategically veils your private self. You may adopt a mask to protect yourself or to protect others.

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LOSING FACE

- *Losing face* occurs when you create a certain face (or a mask) and then do something that contradicts it, causing others to feel betrayed or to view you as a phony. Losing face can also cause you to experience **embarrassment**—feelings of shame, humiliation, and sadness.

MAINTAINING FACE

- *Maintaining face* often involves the following:
  - Using words and actions that are consistent with the face you're trying to create
  - Making sure your communication meshes with others' existing knowledge about you
  - Trying to anticipate and manage events that could contradict your face
- When you *lose face* try to
  - Promptly acknowledge that the event happened. People who consistently deny their inconsistencies or who blame others for their lapses are judged much more harshly;
  - Admit responsibility for any of your actions that contributed to the event;
  - Apologize for your actions and for disappointing others; and
  - Move to maintain your face again. Remember, most people want you to maintain face because your face is the positive, public "you" with whom they're most familiar.

PERCEIVING OTHERS

Along with your view of self, your perception of others determines how you communicate. Although it may seem that your view of other people is both accurate and objective, it is anything but. Understanding the process of perception will help you avoid errors that might cause you to communicate incompetently.

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- **Perception** is the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting information from your senses; it's the gateway to the world around you, and what you "see" through this gateway determines the communication path you'll pursue as you walk through it.

THE PERCEPTION PROCESS

The **perception process** occurs when you

- ***Select*** information to focus your attention on.
  - Selecting information involves focusing your attention on certain sights, sounds, tastes, touches, and smells in your environment.
  - One estimate suggests that even though our senses take in 11 million bits of information per second, we select only about 40 bits to pay attention to.
  - You're more likely to focus on something when it's visually or audibly stimulating, deviates from your expectations, or is viewed as important.
- ***Organize*** the information from your senses into an understandable or coherent pattern in your mind, such as words, phrases, ideas, or images.
- ***Interpret*** the meaning of the pattern by calling to mind familiar information that's relevant and using that information to make sense of what you're hearing and seeing.

ATTRIBUTIONS AND PERCEPTUAL ERRORS

- **Attribution** is the process of assigning an explanation for why things happen the way they do. Two types of attributions are commonplace:
  1. *External factors* or events are the things outside of the person that cause the person's behavior.
  2. *Internal factors* are the personality, character, and emotions that cause the person to act as he or she does.

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- Attribution errors occur when you form invalid attributions. There are two common types of attribution errors:
  1. **Fundamental attribution error** is the common tendency to attribute others' behaviors to internal rather than external forces.
  2. **Actor-observer effect** is the tendency to make external attributions regarding your own behaviors, particularly during unpleasant interactions.
- **Self-serving bias** is the tendency to attribute mistakes to external controls and successes to internal controls.

FORMING IMPRESSIONS

Whenever you meet people, you paint pictures in your mind of who they are and what you think of them. These images can be positive or negative, long lasting or subject to change. However, these pictures act as a powerful guide in shaping your communication, for better or for worse.

- **Impressions** of others are created when you use the perception process to form mental images of who people are and how you feel about them.
  - All aspects of the perception process shape your impressions: the information you select to focus your attention on, the way you organize this information, the interpretations you make, and the attributions you create.
  - Impressions vary widely because the perception process is complex, and everyone organizes and interprets information differently.
  - Three common ways in which we form impressions are to construct a Gestalt, develop algebraic impressions, and stereotype.

GESTALTS

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- **Gestalt** is the process of forming a general impression of a person that's positive or negative.
  - Gestalts form rapidly from a few traits you identify about the person.
  - They are useful for encounters in which you must make quick judgments about others with limited information.
  - A disadvantage of Gestalts is that they can distort how you interpret the information you learn later about people. The **halo effect** is the tendency to interpret the behavior of people positively if you've formed a positive Gestalt. The **horn effect** is the tendency to interpret the behavior of people negatively if you've formed a negative Gestalt.

ALGEBRAIC IMPRESSIONS

- An **algebraic impression** is an analysis of the positive and negative things you learn about someone to calculate an overall impression, updating your impression as you learn new information.
  - Information that's important, unusual, or negative is usually weighted more heavily than information that's trivial, typical, or positive because people tend to believe this type of information reveals more about a person's "true" character than more positive or commonplace information.
  - Algebraic impressions are more accurate than Gestalts because they take more time to form and include a wider range of information.
  - Algebraic impressions are more flexible because they're updated regularly.

STEREOTYPES

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- Stereotyping involves forming impressions by categorizing people into a social group, such as by race, age, or gender, and then evaluating them based on information you have related to that group.
    - Stereotypes take the subtle complexities that make people unique and replace them with blanket assumptions about their character and worth based solely on their social group affiliations before it's possible to make any other impression.
    - Stereotyping is difficult to avoid and is the most common way we form impressions.
    - Stereotyping often leads to flawed impressions.
    - The Internet enables stereotyping because the lack of nonverbal communication cues and other unique personal information leads people to form stereotypical impressions of others.
    - **Prejudice** is when your stereotyping becomes rigid toward groups and their members and often can cause you to communicate in destructive and unethical ways.

IMPROVING YOUR PERCEPTION

Even though perception and impression formation occur in specific ways, they are not unchangeable processes. You can improve your perception and impressions by critically questioning your own judgments and routinely considering the feelings, needs, and viewpoints of others.

- Skills that can help you improve your perception are perception-checking and empathy.

PERCEPTION-CHECKING

- **Perception-checking** is a five-step process for testing your impression of someone else and avoiding errors in judgment:

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1. Review your knowledge about the other person. Your impression of this individual is only as accurate as the information you have. Never presume that you know the "truth" about someone.
2. Assess attributions you've made about this individual. Avoid attributing the person's behavior exclusively to internal causes.
3. Question your impression. Make sure you're not basing it solely on a Gestalt or a stereotype.
4. Share your impression with the individual. Present it as "here's my viewpoint," not as the "right" or "only" perspective.
5. Check your impression with the other person.

- Mastering perception-checking takes practice, but the effort is worthwhile.
  - Perception-checking helps you make fewer communication blunders.
  - It also enables you to tailor your communication to people as they really are.
  - You will come across as a more competent communicator if you use perception-checking.

EMPATHY

- **Empathy**, from the Greek word *empatheia*, is when you "feel into" others' thoughts and emotions, making an attempt to identify with them. It has two components: perspective-taking and empathic concern.
  1. **Perspective-taking** is the ability to see things from another person's point of view without necessarily experiencing that person's emotions.
  2. **Empathic concern** means becoming aware of how other people are feeling and experiencing compassion for them.

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- We often think of empathy as an automatic process beyond our control, something we either feel or don't feel yet:
    - Research suggest that whether we feel empathy toward others depends largely on our empathy mindset—our beliefs about whether empathy is something that can be developed and controlled.
    - People that view empathy as developable and controllable are capable of feeling empathy for a broad range of others—even during challenging communication contexts.
    - Those who believe empathy is an uncontrollable, natural response have difficulty experiencing empathy within such challenging encounters.
- Experiencing empathy isn't enough; you must also convey your empathy to others. You do this by
    - Letting others know you're genuinely interested in listening to them ("I'm here to listen if you want to talk")
    - Telling them you think their views are valid and understandable ("I can totally understand why you would feel that way")
    - Expressing your concern about them ("I care about you and want to be sure that you're OK")
    - Sharing with them your own emotions regarding their situation ("I feel terrible that you're going through this")
- When expressing empathy, avoid using "I know" messages ("I know just how you feel"). Even if you make such comments with kind intentions, the other person will likely be skeptical, particularly if they suspect that you don't or can't feel as they do.
- Competently conveying empathy isn't just something to be strived for as a matter of principle; it's a recommendation packed with practical benefits. When others perceive you

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as empathic, they're also more likely to perceive you as relatable, more likely to like you, and more likely to help you when you are in need.

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CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Think of a time when you became more self-conscious as a result of *socially comparing* yourself with others? What happened and how did you handle it?**
   - Possible answers from students may include job interviews, dates, or witnessing public performances. Discuss with your students the importance of having a healthy gauge when making comparisons between themselves and others. Ask them to suggest reasons why we might be overly negative or overly positive with our social comparisons. Discuss the pitfalls of social comparisons involving celebrities or professionals.
2. **Considering the differences between an individualistic culture and a collectivistic culture, how might these cultures differ in their perception of family? Their perception of wealth?**
   - Students may bring up differences such as prioritizing family or career responsibilities or viewing wealth as essential to happiness. You may also want to expand this discussion and ask them to think about how these differences might influence individual decision making on caring for elderly parents or committing a crime. Use their examples to show them how these differences might affect the communication process.
3. **Thinking of your private and public self, give an example of a time when you intentionally presented an image that was nothing like the real you. Why? How long did you keep it up?**
   - This question may spark a discussion about the ethics behind presenting a public self. Depending on the situations that students present, you might want to talk about the differences between a public self, a mask, and a lie. When do versions of self become lies? It may help the discussion if you point out the impossibility of always presenting

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your private self to everyone. How difficult is it to draw the line between our private self and public self?

4. **Give an example of a public figure or celebrity who *lost face*. Did it have long-reaching effects on their career? How did they cope with the incident? Are public figures and celebrities held to different standards?**
   - Students may bring up a variety of instances, such as when Mel Gibson or Reese Witherspoon were arrested and made disparaging remarks; when Rob Ford, the mayor of Toronto, was exposed for drug abuse; or when Amanda Bynes started several feuds via Twitter. Discuss how the actions of each celebrity influenced the outcomes—were their apologies accepted, did they seem contrite, or were there extenuating circumstances? Remind students of how we expect others to overlook or forgive us when we lose face but often are unwilling to forgive others, especially public figures.

5. **Give an example of a common stereotype young people might hold toward the elderly. Can you think of someone you know or a celebrity who doesn't fit into that stereotype? How can you prevent such a stereotype from becoming a prejudice?**
   - Common stereotypes about the elderly may include difficulties using or understanding technology or limitations related to certain physical activities, such as driving. This question will give you an opportunity to remind students that there are many different kinds of stereotypes and that they need to be cautious to prevent their stereotype from slipping into a prejudice. Ask students if they think their example of an elderly person who doesn't fit the stereotype is just an exception to the rule? If so, is this a prejudice or stereotype?

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VIDEO SCENARIOS

HOW TO COMMUNICATE: EMPATHY TOWARD A STRUGGLING GROUP MEMBER

This video feature shows students' competent communication skills in action based on the scenario following. The first video illustrates an ideal outcome while the "What if?" challenges prompt them to apply their own skills to times when their communication partner is more difficult. To access the videos, go to macmillanhighered.com/choicesconnections2e. Have students watch the videos and answer the questions before class so that they will be prepared to discuss the ways they would respond to each variation of the scenario.

Scenario: You're assigned to lead a group project for a class. One team member, Alex, has missed two of the first three meetings. You meet with Alex privately to discuss her attendance. During the conversation, you discover that she has a three-year-old who she is raising as a single mother and that she is working full-time to put herself through school. She genuinely wants to contribute to the project but is struggling to juggle all of the competing demands in her life.

The text suggests students use the following skills when trying to express empathy toward Alex:

- **Openly express concern for her as a person**, not just as a group member. "We've missed you at the last couple of meetings . . . I'm concerned about how you're doing personally. Is everything OK? . . . I'm here to listen, if you need someone to talk to."
- **Legitimize her situation** by letting her know that to feel overwhelmed when faced with such demands is perfectly understandable. "We've missed you at the last couple of meetings . . . I'm concerned about how you're doing personally. Is everything OK? . . . I'm here to listen, if you need someone to talk to."
- **Reaffirm the importance of her contribution** by making it clear that you want her to stay in the group. "The insights you've contributed to the project so far have been

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awesome. We don't want to lose you as a group member. What can we do to help you out, so we can make this work as a team?"

Instructor note: Online, students will be asked a multiple-choice question after the first video. For Chapter 2, the question is this:

When Paul says "It's totally understandable that you're feeling stressed," this is an example of _____.

A. Empathetic concern*

B. Perspective-taking

C. Perception-checking

D. Identity acknowledgment

[The asterisk (*) indicates the right answer. Depending on how the students answer the question, one of these two feedback options should appear:

Right answer: Congratulations, you are correct!

Wrong answer: Incorrect. Paul's sentiment expresses compassion for Alex, which is a feature of empathic concern. See the section "Empathy" in Chapter 2 to learn how perspective-taking and empathic concern combine to communicate empathy.]

You can see how many of your students got this question right or wrong in the LaunchPad grade book and spend more class time discussing communication goals if needed.

WHAT IF?

This section challenges students to adapt their skills and communication plans when things don't work out as shown previously. Students will view two videos. In each video, the encounter becomes challenging, and students must decide how they would respond based on the open-ended question.

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1. Alex says, “Why would I talk to you about my problems? It’s not like we’re friends or anything.”

    - In this case, students should remember that showing empathetic concern means remaining compassionate when trying to identify with someone. It would be competent to remind Alex that she is supported by the group by saying something like “I understand we aren’t close, but sometimes talking to someone who is on the outside of a problem might help. I value you as a team member and would be happy to listen.”

2. Alex says, “Yes, you’re right: You can’t imagine, or understand, what I’m going through.”

    - When someone reacts defensively in the way Alex is doing here, it can be tempting to respond in a way that does not show empathetic concern by saying something like “fine” or “whatever.” However, remind students that a reactive response will not help them obtain their goals in this situation—to show empathy for Alex and to get her to participate fully in the group. Instead, a more competent response would be “You’re correct. I might not understand, but I just wanted to let you know that I’m willing to listen, if you just want to talk it out.”

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CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Show-and-Tell

Goal: To illuminate individual differences between self-concepts and demonstrate the various ways we develop our concept of self

Time: 40 minutes (depending on class size)

1. Ask students to bring one object that represents their past and one object that represents their future to class. Remind students of any banned items (e.g., live animals or weapons). You may also consider banning all forms of electronics to encourage creativity and eliminate repeated cell phone presentations.
2. During class, ask each student to explain briefly why they selected their two objects and what the objects mean to them.
3. After the presentations, ask students to discuss how these objects describe components of their self-concept such as their attitudes, values, and beliefs.

2. Critical Self-Reflection Writing Exercise

Goal: To demonstrate how critical self-reflection can improve our communication skills

Time: 15 minutes

1. Either in class or as homework, ask students to think of a past communication experience in which they experienced stress, provoked an argument, or just needed improvement to get their point across to the other person. Have them briefly describe the event in writing and then answer the following critical self-reflection questions:
    a. What was I thinking and feeling?
    b. Why did I feel that way?
    c. How did I communicate?
    d. How were my inner thoughts and feelings affecting my communication?

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2. Now ask students to describe how this situation may have been improved if they had used the critical self-reflection questions during the actual situation. If they could do it over again, how would they change their communication style? Would changing their style have changed the outcome? Do they think critical self-reflection would have helped?
3. During class, start a discussion about using critical self-reflection. I suggest you provide one or two personal examples to get the discussion going and then ask for volunteers. This assignment will demonstrate critical self-reflection and give students an opportunity to connect with you and their classmates.

3. Group Communication Comics

Goal: To have students explore how simple it is to make attributions and perceptual errors

Time: 50 minutes

1. Gather paper, colored markers, and/or crayons or have students use online cartoon creation sights like ToonDoo, found at toondoo.com
2. Divide the class into smaller groups of three to six members each. Supply each person in each group with a piece of paper and writing utensil.
3. Have each group review the section on attributions and perceptual errors in the textbook (pp. 47–48) and then create an original comic strip with at least six frames (one per page) that demonstrates an example of communication gone wrong due to these types of errors. Encourage them to be creative.
4. After the comic strips are completed, allow time for sharing and give each group a chance to show their comic strip to the other groups and see if others can identify the perceptual errors.

4. My Advertisement

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Goal: To help students understand their overall value and improve self-esteem

Time: 15 minutes

Ask students to create an advertisement with the Lucidpress' free trial flyer templates found at https://www.lucidpress.com/pages/examples/free-flyer-maker-online. The advertisement should be about their self with the goal of selling themselves as a potential best friend. Advertisements must list their strongest and most attractive personality qualities to advertise themselves well. Ask the students to state one of their traits to the class and explain why this quality would make them a good friend.

5. Martians Reading Magazines

Goal: To explore how our sense of self and gender are influenced by media

Time: 30 minutes

1. Ask students to bring a copy of a popular magazine or provide used magazines (*Maxim*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*, and *Elle* work well for this activity).
2. Ask students to trade magazines or randomly pass them out to the students as they enter the room.
3. At the beginning of class, tell students to pretend they are Martians visiting earth for the first time. The magazine they are holding is a good "reference" for learning about what men and women are supposed to act/be like in our culture.
4. As students look through their magazines, have them make a list of 20 items about the media's portrayal of gender. Encourage them to find at least 10 items related to females and 10 items related to males.
5. Once they have collected their data, have an open discussion about the media's portrayal of gender *roles* and how this might affect men and women's self-concepts and self-esteems.

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MEDIA RESOURCES

1. ***TED Talks: Thandie Newton: Embracing Otherness, Embracing Myself***

   This TED Talk by actress Thandie Newton is an elegant discussion of the concept of self, perceptions, and stereotypes. She describes her story of finding her "otherness": first, as a child growing up in two distinct cultures, England and Zimbabwe, and then as an actor portraying many different selves. The talk provides students with thought-provoking ideas and can be accessed at http://www.ted.com/talks/thandie_newton_embracing_otherness_embracing_myself.html

2. ***African Men: Hollywood Stereotypes***

   This short video narrated by four African men provides a good example of how the media, particularly popular film, influences our stereotypes of other cultures. It can be found on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSElmEmEjb4 or at the Mama Hope Organization's Web site: http://www.mamahope.org/unlock-potential/. If you use this link, it is the second video on the page.

3. ***Center for Building a Culture of Empathy***

   The Center for Building a Culture of Empathy (http://cultureofempathy.com/) has a number of videos and resources that discuss the concepts surrounding empathy that you may find useful. One video that discusses the relationship between empathy and interpersonal communication is titled, *Empathy Documentary Project: Insight into Empathy—Newt Bailey*. It can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWHRAbQKWOQ&feature=em-share_video_user

4. ***In Her Shoes*** (20th Century Fox, 2005)

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This movie is a light comedy that explores how sisters—party girl Maggie and plain, dependable Rose—affect each other's self-images. Both struggle with their *ideal self* and their *ought self* as they mature and find peace with themselves and with each other. If you choose not to use the full film, consider a useful clip that demonstrates how family can affect one's concept of self. Go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfijPxVOVv8.

5. ***The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*** (Miramax Films, 2008)

This is the story Bruno, the son of a German SS commander who lives a wealthy lifestyle in prewar Germany. Bruno's father is assigned to take command of a prison camp and the family relocates. Bruno befriends another youth named Shmuel, strangely dressed in striped pajamas, who lives behind an electrified fence. This is a touching portrayal of how we perceive others and form impressions.

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