Identifying and Avoiding Stereotypes

What is a stereotype?

A <u>stereotype</u> is an oversimplified or generic image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.

Common Stereotypes

1. gender stereotypes
2. personal stereotypes
3. professional stereotypes
4. racial stereotypes

Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are the expectations that people have for men and women.

Examples:
a. Men hunt; women cook.
b. Boys like blue; girls like pink.
c. Men are leaders; women are followers.

This stereotype assumes that a woman's attractiveness to her husband depends on how well she keeps her house clean.

How does this comic strip stereotype girls?
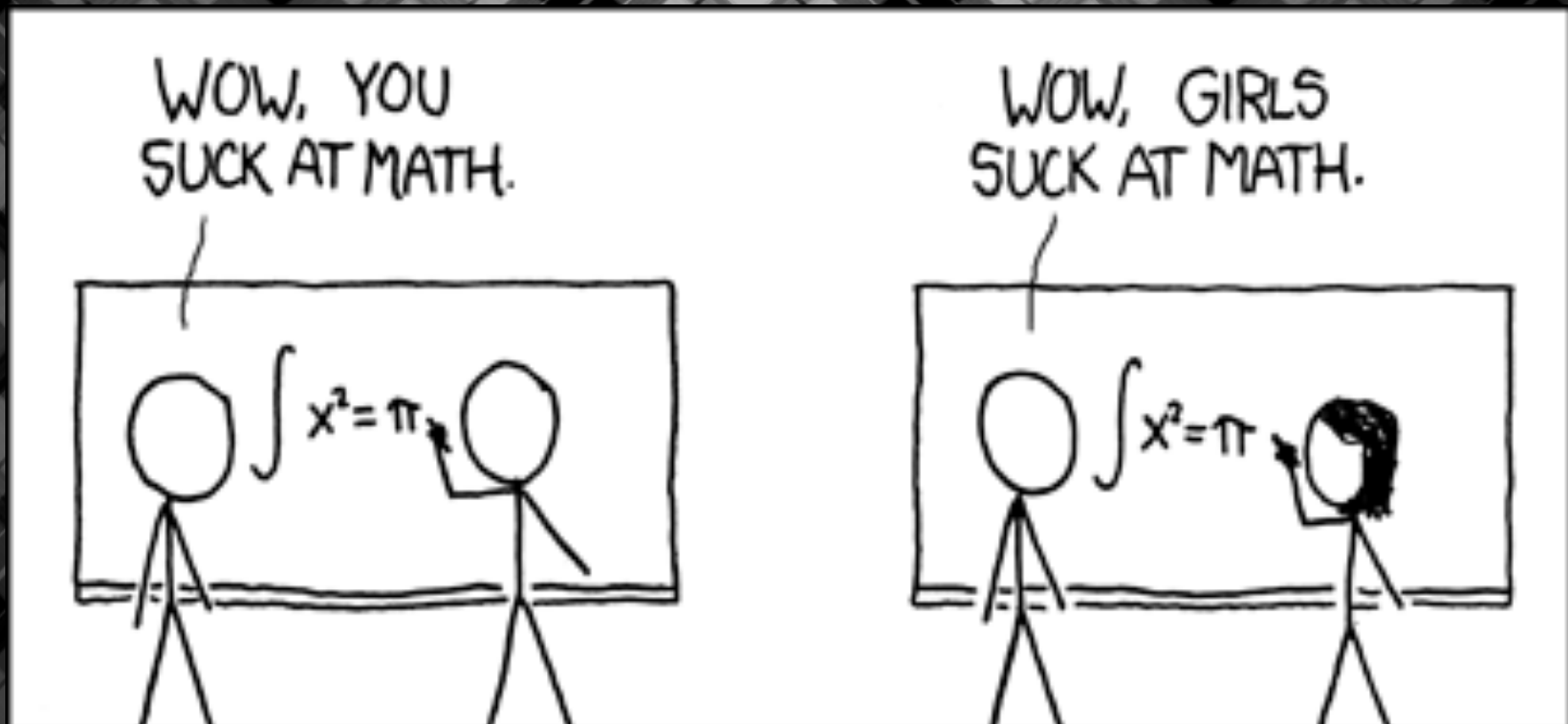
Instead of seeing the girl as an individual, the teacher assumes that she is bad at math because she is a girl.

How does this advertisement stereotype men?

This stereotype assumes that husbands can't cook. Is that true of all husbands? Of course not. It's a stereotype.

Personal Stereotypes

Personal stereotypes are the expectations for certain types of people.

Examples:
a. "the dumb blonde"
b. "the weird artist or hipster"
c. "the jock"
d. "the nerd"

Personal Stereotypes: "The Jock"

Characteristics of the stereotypical "jock":
- Muscular and fit
- Popular with girls
- Getting easy breaks from teachers
- Unintelligent
- Mean to those who are not cool and athletic

Personal Stereotypes: "The Nerd"

Characteristics of the stereotypical "the nerd":
- Skinny
- Socially awkward
- Wearing glasses
- Extremely intelligent
- Unattractive
- Unpopular

Personal Stereotypes: "Rich People"

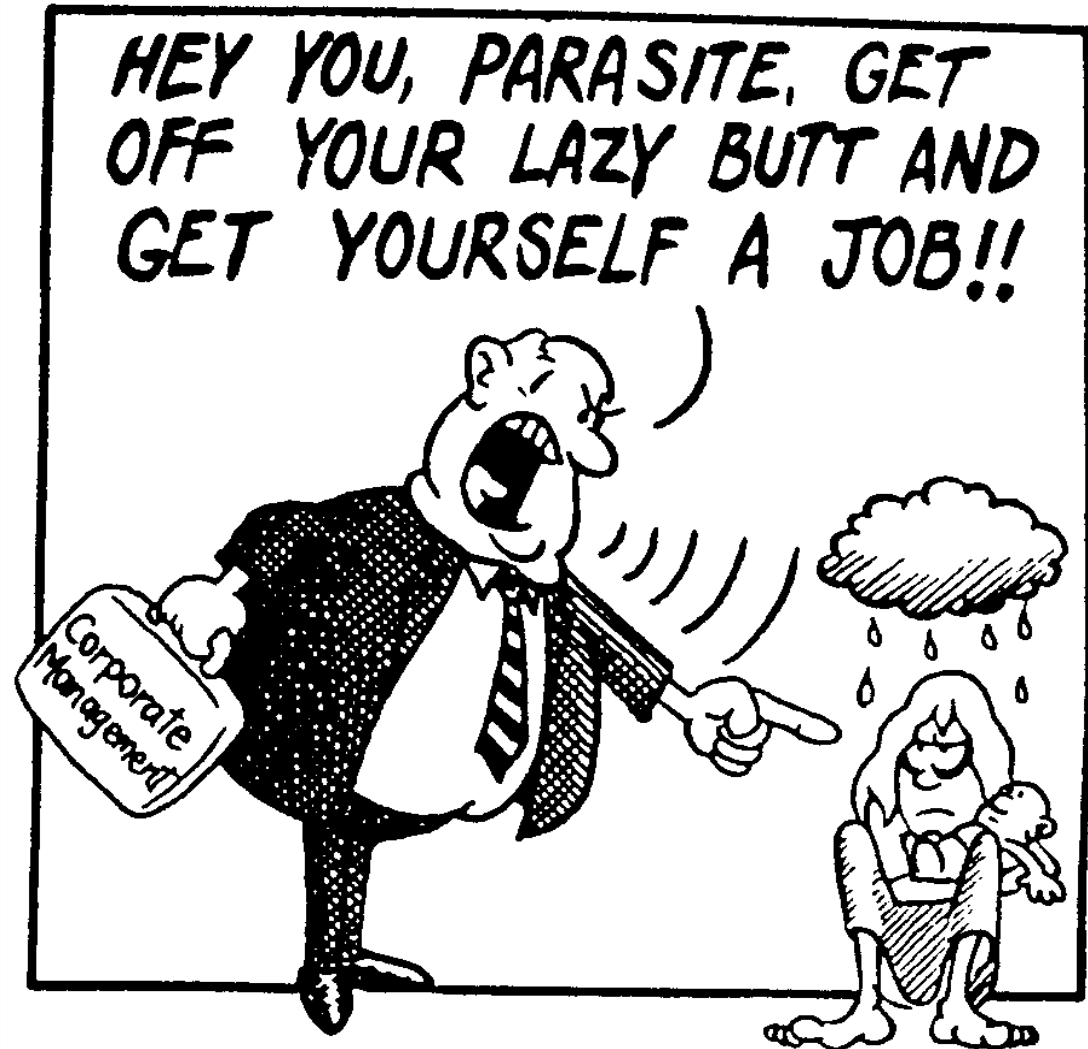Stereotypical rich people are usually characterized as:

- Ungenerous
- Greedy
- Mean
- Superficial / Fake
- Uncaring towards the poor

Personal Stereotypes: "Poor People"

The stereotypical poor are usually characterized as:

- Selfish and lazy
- Spending money on alcohol or drugs
- Not valuing education
- Likely to steal
- Smelly

Professional Stereotypes

6. Professional stereotypes are the expectations that people have for others in certain career fields.

Examples:
a. "the rich lawyer"
b. "the strict librarian"
c. "the fat police officer"

Professional Stereotypes: "The Rich Lawyer"

Characteristics of the stereotypical "lawyer":
- Selfish and greedy
- Power-hungry
- Wealthy
- Prone to lying
- Addicted to work
- Serious

Professional Stereotypes: "The Strict Librarian"

The common stereotype of librarians is characterized by…
- Being old
- Being grumpy
- Wearing glasses
- Wearing ugly clothing
- Being very strict and always saying "Shhhh…"

Professional Stereotypes: The Fat Cop

Characteristics of "the fat cop":

- Overweight
- Loves donuts and coffee
- Power-hungry
- Loves control

Racial & Cultural Stereotypes

Racial/Cultural stereotypes are the expectations that people have for certain races or cultures.

Examples:
a. "the dangerous black man"
b. "the privileged white person"
c. "the violent or savage Indigenous person"

Positive Stereotypes

Some stereotypes are positive, but they are still harmful in the end.

Examples:
a. All black men are great basketball players.
b. All Asians are good at math.
c. All Hispanics are family-oriented.
d. All Indians are hardworking.

What if you're not sure if it's a stereotype?

Ask yourself: "Is that true for all of them?"

For example, your neighbour complains about teenagers and says, "Teenagers these days! They are SO addicted to technology."

So, is it likely that ALL teenagers are addicted to technology? Some teens are, but not all. Therefore, this is a stereotype.

How to Battle Stereotypes:

- Try to see people beyond their appearance.

- Find out what you have in common with people who you think are different from you. Get to know them as individuals!

- Develop compassion for others. Imagine how other people feel.

- Appreciate and celebrate diversity!