

# Gender Reveal Parties: Dangerous & Outdated

Olivia Wallace Laningham & Laura Jimenez Arista

## Recently Embed in History

### Recently embed in American history

- Included in a 2008 blog post, gender reveal parties blew up the maternity culture in the United States, bringing further gendered capitalist ideals, environmental damage, and sexist ideology onto what baby showers once were.



## Harm on Minds

### The concept of gender reveal parties imprint lifelong gender stereotypes onto newborns.

- Gender stereotyping refers to the practice of attributing or certain characteristics unto an individual solely based on their perceived or actual gender -typically male or female. You have likely heard of gender stereotyping before, and you likely participate in it, consciously or unconsciously.
- Gender stereotypes may not seem harmful at face value, such as females are more nurturing. Still these ideals can implement pressure unto oneself to present with certain characteristics or we may not be seen as 'normal'.
- Gender stereotypes heavily influence children's upbringing, one infamous longitudinal study from the 1970's shows how overtime individuals are impacted by these stereotypes. Many individuals who remember being stereotyped in youth are still impacted to this day.
- We see the impact all around us. Within these viral gender reveal videos; parents crying during their reveal for not having their preferred gender. Imagine how the child will feel if they were not what their parent wanted them to be, what kind of mental turmoil this would bring? Another example is seen in children policing other children for not aligning with a stereotype. Judgment and bullying is a learned trait from the environment around us.

< These two photos represent stereotypes in infants through their clothing, which is only further ingrained into society through focusing on gender as a vital part of who a child is, without even meeting them. >



## Bring Back Baby Showers

### Why did we ever get rid of them?

- When you look up baby shower it's hard to find photographs that aren't depicting a gender-themed party. Why do we as a society place so much emphasis on the idea of the child's gender and not just the health and wellbeing of the child and parents?
- Baby showers focus on not only the newborn, but also put a lot of attention onto the parents of the children.
- Instead of making the party about how gender will affect the life of the newborn, why not focus on their health, the parents hard work ahead of them, and silly baby themed games and activities.

## Resources/References

- Abraham, Amelia. Gender Reveal Parties Need to End In 2020 and Here's Why. *Vogue India*, December 10 (2020). <https://www.vogue.in/culture-and-living/content/gender-reveal-parties-need-to-end-with-2020-heres-why>.
- Culhane, Leah, & Bazeley, Alex. Gender Stereotypes in Early Childhood. *Fawcett Society*, March 7 (2019). <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/gender-stereotypes-in-early-childhood-a-literature-review>.
- Diaz, A. (2018, November 28). *Officials release video from Gender Reveal Party that ignited a 47,000-acre wildfire*. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/11/27/us/arizona-gender-reveal-party-sawmill-wildfire-trnd/index.html>
- Garcia-Navarro, Lulu. Woman Who Popularized Gender Reveal Parties Says Her Views On Gender Have Changed. *NPR*, July 28 (2019).
- Gender Stereotyping. Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *United Nations*, (2023). <https://www.ohchr.org/en/women/gender-stereotyping#:~:text=Gender%20stereotyping%20refers%20to%20the,group%20of%20women%20or%20men.>
- Hope, Allison. Gender Reveal Parties are Destructive from Top to Bottom. *CNN*. September 8, (2020). <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/08/opinions/gender-reveal-party-california-fire-destruction-hope/index.html>.
- Morales, Christina, & Waller, Allyson. A Gender-Reveal Celebration is Blamed for a Wildfire. It Isn't The First Time. *New York Times*, July 21 (2021). <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/07/us/gender-reveal-party-wildfire.html>.
- Ro, Crystal. 15 Photos People Shared of Straight-up Offensive Kids Clothes. *Buzzfeed*. March 17, (2021).
- Seavey, C.A., Katz, P.A. & Zalk, S.R. Baby X. *Sex Roles*, (1975). <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00288004>.
- (2021) July 21. Gender Reveal Party Couple Face Jail Over Deadly California Wildfire. *BBC*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-57898993>

## Environmental Damage

### Fires, emissions, and pollution.

There have been multiple -yes, multiple- wildfires caused by gender reveal party contraptions, which are insurmountably damaging to the environment around us, and there have even been deaths. Not considering these, the amount of pollution caused by the exorbitant amount of party favors, confetti, gender-themed gear and other typical party waste.



^ El Dorado fire of 2020, caused by a gender-reveal photo shoot pyrotechnic. Father of the newborn charged with manslaughter plead guilty.



^ This photo from 2018 captures the moment before ignition of the Sawmill Fire that burned over 45,000 acres of Coronado National Forest, government owned and private land near Green Valley, Arizona.