

Last name, first name _____

Homework for Lesson 3, Day 2

I. Femininity and masculinity of the butch women ["buchi" in Russian]

You have acquired knowledge of gender stereotypes, as well as the differences between the stereotypes and people's behaviors. In addition to this distinction, the behavior of Russians is different in different social groups. One of them is **gays*** and **lesbians****. Among lesbians there is a group which is called "buchi," (from the English *butch*; its counterpart is "fem," from the English and French *femme*). These are masculine women, whose styles of clothing and **gesticulation***** are similar to those of men.

So what are the typical behaviors of "buchi," and what is life like for them in Russia, where gender stereotypes are rather widespread? To learn more about this, you are offered an excerpt from a Russian website for lesbian women, www.lesbiru.com.

***Gays; singular *гей* (M) [Russian word translated into English]**

****Lesbians; singular *лесбиянка* (F) [Russian word translated into English]**

*****Gesticulation (nominative *жестикуляция*) (F) [Russian word translated into English]**

Before Reading

In this article, there are some words and expressions that you do not know yet. They are offered for your review below. Read them and respond to the questions for each word or expression. Please use full sentences when responding, using the word/expression in question.

1. **большой психологический груз (M): a great psychological burden, a source of significant stress and worry**

Do you think that it is a great psychological burden to be gay or lesbian in the U.S.? How about in Russia (according to your knowledge of gender)?

2. **натурал (M), натуралка (F): straight, heterosexual (colloquial; noun), literally "a natural"**

Do you think that those lesbians and gays who usually behave differently than straight people should act like straight people when at their workplaces?

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- 1. гомофоб (M): a homophobic person; «бучефоб»: a “butch”-phobic person (colloquially), a person who dislikes or discriminates against butch women**

Do you think there are many openly homophobic people? How about open “butch”-phobic people?

Now read the text.

To Be Butch

By Vdova, with the participation of VolgaVolga [pseudonyms of the authors]

1

[Paragraph 1 summary]

Historically, it so happened that a butch woman is supposed to be strong and courageous, independent, etc.

"Yes, that's me!" modestly you will say, and some beautiful woman will jump into your arms.

2

[Paragraph 2 summary]

Well, in reality, "being a butch" means a great psychological burden. Straight people (men as well as women) constantly attack butch women, and "butch"-phobic people always try to explain how "a real woman" is supposed to dress. So how do people cope with this? Lesbiru.com's survey shows the following:

3

[Paragraph 3 summary]

Takkata Jim, 23 years old: I agree that there are difficulties. But to eradicate "the butch" in oneself – no, don't do it, it's not worth it... You should just "relax and enjoy it :)"; you should be confident in yourself, above all.

Kot, 27 years old: You should be just as you really are, you can't make yourself look the way others want you to look. I cut my hair short and wear boots, it's hard, but this is what I want, and if some people do not like this, it's their business.

NN, 27 y.o.: You have to be born a butch, then it is easy.

Ora de Montale, 29 y.o: No way you should eradicate it!!! Cultivate, cultivate, cultivate! It is so pleasant to look at a masculine, buff, stylish young woman.

4

[Paragraph 4 summary]

WORK

Self-employed artists or people in "creative professions" usually have no problem with their appearance at work. You can always rely on the legend that artists are just "of a different world" and show up for work in military attire or with your head shaven. A hair stylist who looks boring is not to be trusted to interest a demanding client. Working in the business world, the law, sales, etc., is another story. There, you are faced with a constant flow of clients and a dress code that is strictly specified.

Excerpt from the article, "Быть бучем" ["To Be Butch"]. Full article is available on the site www.lesbiru.com with the URL, http://www.lesbiru.com/style/be_a_butch.html.

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After Reading

1. Please reread the first and third paragraphs and answer the following question: What **kinds of behavior distinguish “buchi” from*** straight women?

***distinguish a butch [lesbian] from**

2. Please reread the 2nd paragraph. What kinds of problems do “buchi” experience? Summarize them.

3. You already know the expression «предлагается» [“it is proposed”] plus the infinitive of a verb. You can use this expression when retelling how the author (or a person speaking in a text) recommends to behave, either in the positive or the negative. For example:

Text: One should brush one’s teeth twice a day. – It is proposed in the text to brush one’s teeth twice a day.

Text: You must not use fruit jam to brush your teeth. – It is proposed in the text not to use fruit jam to brush one’s teeth.

What is proposed in *this* text to do and what not to do? Reread the third paragraph, paying special attention to the sentences with underline phrases. Substitute the underlined phrases with the expression «предлагается» + the infinitive of a verb, according to the model above.

4. Reread the fourth paragraph and answer the questions below. In your responses, use the phrase, “существуют такие гендерные нормы: ...” [“there are the following gender norms:”].

What gender norms exist in “creative professions”?

What gender norms exist in the business world, the law, and sales?

- II. You already have knowledge about both gender stereotypes and behaviors in Russia. What else would you like to find out, specifically, during your final presentation? Fill out the table below.

	<u>Know</u>	<u>Want to Know</u>	<u>I think that I will find out... (predict* what you believe you will find out)</u>
Men in Russia			
Women in Russia			

***Predict**

This handout is adapted from the "KWPL Graphic Organizer," the CARLA CobalTT Practical Resources, online at <http://www.carla.umn.edu/cobalTT/scaffolds/GO/HGO/11H.pdf>, viewed January 1, 2005.