

More on Gender Roles

Pre-theophany gender roles were simple. Men had worldly authority and women had spiritual authority. In the Bright Way this developed into a spectrum, with "women only" on one extreme and "men only" on the other. Strictly speaking at the time of First Contact the only occupations that are absolutely gender-locked are hearthkeeper (female) and soldier/law enforcement (male). Historically politicians also fell into the "male only" category, but as AW society secularized after the war of dissolution women found themselves disenfranchised as their former locus of power was no longer relevant. Politicians, even in the secular AW, are still mostly male, but there are no laws forbidding women from holding office.

Besides the two extreme ends of the spectrum, some occupations fall under "ideally male" and "ideally female". Post war, politics and diplomacy are found on the male side, and occupations historically associated with the clergy like healer and engineer on the female side.

Most occupations are not gender-specific. In the Bright Way pious men gravitate toward non clerical religious roles such as bonekeeper, research monk, farspeaker, missionary, etc. The Claravian mystical tradition is particularly associated with men.

There are loopholes though. Men may become veterinarians if they're interested in medicine, and while deliberate instigation of violence is taboo for women, self defense is fair game, and many, many martial arts arose from the clergy and their acolytes learning to defend themselves while working in isolated areas. Let's just say those ceremonial wrenches are big for a reason. Farspeakers, though not limited to women, have similar traditions, with a weapon similar to a flail or nunchucks evolving out of networking cables with heavy metal terminations.

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