



Gendered Stereotypes

Stereotypes are something that have always been around and can lead to discrimination. One of the many types of stereotypes that are still around until this day is gender stereotypes, or more commonly the gendered stereotype at work. Although many of the gender stereotypes have changed or are not so present in today's world, many are still around and prevalent to this day. Both men and women have certain stereotypes that can limit them in their lives or cause difficulties for them in finding a job that suits them. This paper will go through different stereotypes men and women go through, and the difficulties and discrimination that they must go through due to these stereotypes.

Men face many gender stereotypes; boys like blue, boys like sports, boys like cars, stereotypes such as those have been around for a long time but these don't really affect the lives of men in a bad way. There are stereotypes that can be impactful to the life a man grows up in, two of which are that they are the "Sturdy Oak" and that they are the "Breadwinner" (Wood 240). The stereotype of a 'sturdy oak' is that being a man means being strong and never breaking. A man is supposed to be strong and others can always rely on them because of their strength (Wood 140). This stereotype leads people to believe that men should be able to fend for themselves and do everything alone without the assistance of others. An example to this would be a father is always there for his wife and kids. If a car breaks down, the father is the one to fix it or know what to do if that were to ever happen. To explain it simply, it is the classic 'men never ask for directions' because men should be able to figure it out on their own. It is very common to hear of a man as a strong sturdy person. The other common stereotype that men are often referred to is the 'breadwinner.' This is a very well-known reference towards a man. The





man is the one who works and brings home the money for the family. They are the ones bringing in the income and the ones who support their family. This stereotype began because for a long time men were the only workers while the women were stay at home moms but as women have broken those boundaries and began working this stereotype of the man being the breadwinner should no longer be as prevalent as it is in today's society.

These stereotypes are troublesome for men and cause a certain discrimination that is unfair. Things have changed but these stereotypes have stuck around and it is difficult for men to break out of these stereotypes without being judged for it. The stereotype of a man being the strong one who everyone can rely on is difficult to always live up to. It discourages men from asking others for assistance because to ask for help would mean being seen as weak. This makes it difficult for some men to get certain tasks done in a job or project because they don't want to lose respect for having to ask for help, and because of this, that job is not done to its full potential. This is not only harmful for the man's job but also for the company which he works for. The thought that men are the breadwinners is just as bad if not a worse stereotype as being a sturdy oak. Today it is easier for a man to be a stay at home dad or to work a job that doesn't bring in a lot of income because women have become a great part of the workforce and can support the family on only their income. In fact women now consist of about "58% of US college undergraduate students" (Academia 1). Although because of the old stereotype that it is a man's job to bring home the money and to support the family, many men will not stay home or find a job that earns less than their spouse. Many men would feel embarrassed or weak by letting their spouse bring in the income instead of them. Other men and even women will look down at a man who stays home and doesn't work. This discrimination is not something that many realize is even





happening but it does happen. Men are in a way forced into finding a good paying job even if they are not happy in that job and all because of a society's thoughts that men need to be the supporters of the family.

Women also have many stereotypes based on them, some not so big such as girls like pink or girls like shopping, but there are some stereotypes that are very impactful on the life of a woman. Two of the very common stereotypes mentioned about women are that women are sex objects, and that they are mothers (Wood 234). Often time's women are seen as sex objects. It is easy to see as it is in everyday life, women on display in the front of magazines looking tall and beautiful in only the best of clothes. This sadly is still very present in jobs. Many places hire based on how a women looks, if they do not look according to what they see fit it is not going to work. For example at an American Apparel store an associate described this situation, "they had to be good looking...The only girls that were not totally emaciated were forced to work back-stock. So as not to disgust the customers with their average sized hips" (Life 1). Although many would be outraged to hear things like this it is not uncommon for many places to hire only woman who are ideal. Women are often also seen as the mothers. It is true females are mothers if they have children, but society seems to take it to another level as to say that women who work usually work as "emotional labor" (Wood 235). Women are supposed to be the caring ones on the job and the ones who support others. It is very common to see women working these jobs rather than men because women are used to caring for children at home, they should be able to care for those they work with as well. That is the thought of most people.

These stereotypical views on women can be very harmful for the future of many women. Being seen as sex objects can lead to many problems. Those jobs that hire based on looks then



become hard to find a job without dressing up and looking feminine. If a girl does not look a certain way then automatically she has less of a chance of being hired than a girl who depicts the sex object ideal. Being seen as a sex object can also lead to sexual harassment. Women are not taken seriously and men see them as these sex objects than can just be played around with. That is a terrible situation for women, one that seems to go under the radar much too often. Women are also seen as the mother figures. This leads to women only being hired in jobs that require them to help others and makes it harder for women to be seen as leaders. In fact, “only 3% of Fortune 500 companies have women as CEOs” (Wood 235). Due to the stereotype that women are mothers and therefore only have caring jobs or jobs that are not too much work because they have a job at home makes it difficult for women to move up in the workplace. Women in general have been put down a hard road throughout the years. Fighting for many years to become equal to their male counterparts and although it finally seems women have broken through the most difficult, there is still not an easy road for them. In fact women have so often been seen as the housewives that are not as intelligent as men in school that it is engraved in the mind of all females. A test was done where before taking a math test the student had to indicate whether male or female, the female students scored lower on that test than they did taking a test where there was no gender identification box (Stereotypes 1). Stereotypes can be truly damaging and harmful in the future lives of these students.

Stereotypes seem harmless but the truth is they have negative effects in the lives of men and women. Each face discrimination that is not obvious to most but the truth is the discrimination is still there and it is harmful. Men have to seem strong and work to be the supporter of the family only because they do not want to seem weak or like less of a man.





Women are limited in the jobs they can receive due to such ridiculous stereotypes. It is hard for a woman to get a job without dressing up and look pretty because that's what women are supposed to be. If it is not that then they are having a hard time moving up to good jobs because typically women only work in the lower jobs. People are being limited or confined to do things they might not want to do with their lives all because of the reason that society depicts men and women in a certain way and the reality is that it is time to look at these old stereotypes and consider the harm that is done by them.

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