Carl Jacques

Professor Stefanovic Rabil

ENC1102

1 April 2019

Stereotypes in the Media

# Introduction

Media is flooded with news and information from around the globe, making generalizations and categorizing information for the audiences on a daily basis. Media stereotyping subjects groups and situations in organizations of false reality. It abrupts the social beliefs and opinions of the audiences against other social and cultural groups. This states that mass media is playing a major role in redefining perceptions and creating new stereotypes. In the United States of America, media is comprehensively involved in restricting, degrading and negatively portraying races, ethnicities, minorities, gender and other groups (Robin L. Nabi). These distinctions between social groups make it difficult to co-exist and hence create conflicts, sense of inferiority/superiority, and animosities amongst them. Not only this there is a significant difference in the treatment within the media as well. The stereotyping in media is fueled by unequal opportunities which consequently renders difference in treatment, pay, and attitude towards them.

# Discussion

Media in America is actively involved in creating stereotypes amongst the populations. It normalizes the sense of hatred and degradation in society. Such stereotypes shape common prejudices and perceptions having a psychological physical impact on those around them. The Asians are portrayed as geeky and nerdy, black as gangsters and dangerous people and lastly Latinos as aggressive. African Black Americans were initially brought to America as slaves, and no matter how they have achieved in the past two decades in terms of their rights and status, they are still portrayed as second-grade citizens. One of the very common bias is against, African black American is that they live in crime-prone neighborhoods and are dangerous especially in movies like “Paid in full”. The black women in media are categorized in the Mammy, Sapphire and Jezebelle categories, which represent the slave motherly figure, the aggressive women and the one who is sexually exploited sexually by the men. Moreover the representation of black men and women in the music industry is also dominated by the use of excess vulgar lyrics, display of wealth as a form of showing that they are no less than any other celebrity and women like exotic dancers dressed provocatively (Rana) such as Cardi B and many black rappers in the music industry. All of these categories Blacks as criminals or sexual figures. Latinos, on the other hand, are represented as seductive figures, often shown by dark skin and black hair (Dana E. Mastro). They are categorized into Hispanic men who work in lower wage brackets and have flings with a white woman as was shown in Friends where Paulo an Italian man had a fling with Rachel or women who are temptresses. Britishers in the media industry are represented by being mean, uptight yet classic the connotations of such characters are made to look evil hence perfectly accommodating for being a villain famously recorded on "The Silence of the Lambs". Interestingly the media reflection of germans is still portraying Germans as being Nazis decades after the wars. Another role stereotyped for Germans is that they are scientists. Russians are also popularly shown by media screens having anti-American sentiments and as of those involved in spying or other conflict-prone actions which are anti –American. Representation of Asians is a common theme in American media houses, they represent the geeky studious and nerdy Chinese or Indians with an accent in English like Apu in “Simpsons” and Raj in “Big Bang Theory”. Also many Chinese are shown as action figures performing martial arts in Hollywood movies. These stereotypes limit the skill of those performing them, very often the ethnic or representation is not done by those who belong to them, for instance, the Actress in Rich crazy Asians said, colored races cannot play other characters while roles of all kinds are open to white faculty in the industry.

Moving towards LGBT reflection as part of the society in media is also marginalized. Actors rarely get to play a gay lesbian or bi-sexual mainstream role. In addition to this, gay people are shown as aggressive or in the fashion industry. Stretchen quotes that “It Ain’t Easy Being Bisexual on television by entertainment writer Amy Zimmerman bisexual actors are scarcely provided acting roles in mainstream television shows (Stretchen)). This makes people with difference in sexual preferences difficult or to comply with standards as posed by media. Gender inequality is widely rendered in the media industry. Superheroes are played by men and very rarely in movies by women such as “wonder woman”, or by color "Black Panther”. Media is often seen as posting adverts whereby women are objectified (G.). Post 9/11 media is persistently playing Muslims as those who are conventional and as terrorists.

# Conclusion

The stereotypes perpetuate stereotypes that are particularly hurtful to those who belong to such marginalized groups. The movies, tv, and newspapers and now social media all create a picture that negatively effects the way American perceive others. Negative stereotypes have a more serious impact. They make lives of those categorized by media difficult;t and subject to lower employment opportunities, lower pay and character assassination by others. There are a number of challenges the stereotyping faces in the media today. However, it is noted in the recent trends that media inclusive of diversity can affect a more receptive audience response. For instance, the recognition of Lana Condor in her movie "To All the boys I've loved before". Creating an acceptable behavior within the media behind the camera will eventually lead to better representation in front of it. Although stereotypes are a mere perception of beliefs however, they go deep into the collective consciences of people who believe these perception built by media to be true.

References

Dana E. Mastro, Elizabeth Behm. "Latino Representation on Primetime Television." Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly (2005).

G., Tuchman. "The Symbolic Annihilation of Women by the Mass Media. k." Culture and Politics. Palgrave Macmillan, Newyork (2000).

Rana, Emerson. "Where My Girls At?: Negotiating Black Womanhood in Music Videos." Gender & Society. (2002): 16: 115–135.

Robin L. Nabi, Mary Beth Oliver. "The SAGE Handbook of Media Processes and Effects." SAGE, 2009, 2009. 378.

Stretchen), Amy. ", “It Aint easy being bisexual in the media”." Everything’s an argument with readings, seventh edition, Bedford/ St. Martin’s, ( 2016): 561.