

Materialistic or what ever is easier on you essay example

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



America is broad in various contexts. As a matter of fact, America can be considered a melting point of all the world cultural, historical and political influence. America has to mince all these different yet diverse cultures that present themselves every year into this country that has become a worldwide dream destination for many. That said, one of the culture that has become dominant in American way of life related to the peoples' physical appearance especially, the men. Granted, Masculinity has become a prominent topic of discussion among people in American culture especially the youth, masculinity has been viewed from a specific lens.

Well, the biggest things affecting girls today all relate to the society that socializes men and women differently. While boys are socialized to own the world, conquer, express manhood, acquire more wealth and win, women are socialized to be strong but not too strong, sexy but not slutty, intelligent but not smarter than their men, educated but not paid well. In a nutshell, the society is so rigid on the girl child. Women are still expected to be the ideal mother of the children and wife. At the same time, women are also expected to career people and professionals. Finding this balance is so hard. Many women are overworked, tired and depressed. When one does fulfill the job requirement, there is the risk of being fired and, if one is one does not fulfill the role of an ideal mother or wife, there is also the risk of divorce.

John Beynon argued that masculinity is " composed of much masculinity." In his view, the concept of manhood is a complex and unique concept that varies widely from culture to culture, place to place and with age (Beynon, pg 1). In the understanding of masculinity, it is important for people to realize that while maleness is biological, masculinity is cultural. The idea of

manhood is thus determined by the socialization of a group. One has no power of choosing between being a woman or a man, but the society has a great influence on how that masculinity shapes up.

In the agricultural world, labor is intensive and masculinity is determined by the ability of the man to provide for the family. Chinua Achebe's book, *Things Fall Apart* perhaps offers a classical explanation of masculinity. In the book, Achebe uses the main character Okwonkwo to explain the concept of masculinity in pre-colonial Nigeria. The conventional understanding of masculinity in the culture is that manhood is symbolized by strength, power, influence, and physical aggressiveness. War becomes a symbol of status for men of creed. In some societies, the maleness is not encircled in the idea of super strength. However, male dominance still characterizes the nature of relationships between men and women. Let us take the American culture for example.

In general, in the American society is very distinct on how men and women should relate to one another. An ideal American man has to be big, masculine, strong, not show emotions in public, he should get as many women as he can get, a man should also be in control, play sport and have enough money to spend on his woman or women. The premise of this belief is on the idea of supremacy. An ideal man has to be in charge of other men and other women, As such a man has to exercise control over other men by manipulating them, beating them up and humiliating them. The supremacy of men over other men and women is best demonstrated in the classic American Western movies. The hero is the man who beat up the bad guy with his gun or physical prowess. This man is also a darling of many women.

The question is what about the other guy? What happens to the guy who does meet rigid definition of manhood?

The society is then quick to judge him as less manly. Because of desperation, many men work so hard to be the ideal man. The pressure is so high that some young men get depressed and do bad things just as to be the “cool” guys around. Women have not been left aside in the pursuit of perfection. In fact being a woman America comes with so much pressure. Women have to weigh a certain weight, be curvaceous, tall but not too tall, blonde, blue eyed and slim. Women have to eat certain food, do certain sports, watch certain movies and speak a certain way. If a woman goes either way, the society quickly calls her a tomboy or a weirdo.

David Plumer explored the concept of masculinity amongst American teenagers. In the article, “The quest for modern manhood: masculine stereotypes, peer culture and the social significance of homophobia”, Plumer reports that the relationship between homophobia is more complex than meet the eye. Boys use words that are deemed to make gayness look less human. Words such as faggot or poofter target boys that exhibit behaviors that are mostly classified as feminine (Plumer, 1999, p. 24). In the same way, a boy who is stands apart from the group norm is considered fewer masculines. In the boy code, it is unethical for the boy to be smarter, adhere to adult rules, and who tends to be friendlier to the “others” become target to abuse and injurious comments. Boyhood is thus determined by a strong homophobia. A slight tolerance for homosexuals could be easily misinterpreted for gayness.

Nancy Bonvillain in her book Men and Women writes that “people in every

culture maintain and transit ideas about the roles that women and men perform, the rights they have in relation to each other, and the values associated with their activities” (4). Certainly this transcends over roles into other cultural factors that affect the relationship between men and women. In most cases, these cultural aspects of gender relationship are constructs that are built and made to become beliefs and values that govern how men and women should act and interact.

I think that people should be given the choice to do whatever they think they can do. The society should not define how to be a man or a woman. When a society does that, then either sex always needs that reassurance that they are either men or women. This eventually creates a culture of nihilisms, pessimism and ego that is self-destructive

The United States as a developed, post industrial state has its own issues with gender relations. While there has been considerable progress in terms of gender equality, a lot is still lacking in terms of how women and men are perceived. Women are still supposed to be lesser gender, at least the way it seems. The patriarchal nature of the old American society has not been kicked out completely. Instead, capitalism has married with the old system. Capitalism has therefore been an engine that promotes distinctive gender roles, pays women less wages, uses women as sexual objects to make more money, and makes it hard for women to acquire position of power. Men are therefore the biggest beneficiaries of the capitalist economic system.

Works Cited

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