

Example of essay on gender role in media

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Gender Role in Media Gender is defined by the different roles and anticipation that a society assigns to males and females. However, gender is also sidelined towards human sexuality as to female and males ascribed by biological differences in boys and girls. The media's portrayal of gender is a little bit different. Much of what media perceive to be gender must be tagged to feminism. Print media such as news papers and magazines as well as journals and periodicals look at gender representation from a different perspective. Similarly, audiovisual media that include televisions and radio stations follow the same path.

As the saying goes that too much of something is dangerous, the attention that have been given to women has cost the male counterparts. Media plays an important role in disseminating information to the public. The electronic and verbal transmissions of information are the main means by which the public gets information. The coverage should unbiased, appropriate and accurate. The media mainly aims at educating the public about the dangers and impacts of gender violence. However, some criminals take it as a way to publish themselves and prove that they exist.

The media portrays males and females in different ways. Men as masculine human being are depicted as strong and violent as opposed to females who are beauty queens. For a long period of time, the media have magnified the masculinity in man in connection with violence more than women are portrayed. In the actual sense, the man's masculinity has been seriously changing. Men have been becoming more and more masculine. According to Cowmanll's documentary, the size of the man's biceps has been increasing significantly over the last five decades. And this change has been going hand

in hand with their strength and power. On the other hand, he observes that women have been constantly becoming slimmer. A beautiful woman today is one who is slim and not fat. These contrasting scenarios give a depiction of what gender has evolved into.

When it comes to gender violence, the media seems to define gender violence as social injustice perpetrated against women. When a woman hurts a man, it is not violence but it is treated as the man's weakness to defend himself. In fact, the woman can even receive praises for being tuff. It is no disputable that about 95 per cent of gender related violence is committed by men but in some circumstances, women commit some of the worst violence against their men. For instance, media reporting on gender violence is done on passive voice. In this voice, women are given more emphasis than men. For example, the media reports on how many women were slain, how many women were raped or how many women were murdered. This voice does not bring into the scene the males persons involved in these acts of violence.

The influence that media programs and advertisements have on their viewers speaks for itself. Erica Goode writes that television has done a lot in changing the Fijian girls' perception on thinness and obesity. The culture of Fijians is embedded on eating a lot and huge bodies. The idea of slimming is a notion that is very foreign in the ears of these people. However, after watching various television shows, the Fiji girls are opting to reduce their weight rather than eat uncontrollably and having huge bodies. As Jean Kilbourne puts it, the women adverts and models used in popularizing several products are valued according to their thinness. This notion is also echoed by Cowmanll's documentary. In this documentary, Cowmanll argues

that masculinity and feminism are taking contrasting dimensions. As men are becoming huge and more masculine, women are becoming slimmer and thinner. But why this form of difference? Modern women's beauty is attached to their slimness. The slimmer the body, the more beautiful a woman is perceived by the public. This therefore explains why most advertising companies and agencies prefer slim women and ladies for their promotions. This is what is carrying away the Fijian girls. They have discovered another form of beauty that they little knew of before. To achieve this, many Fijian girls have opted to observing very keen diets. They are going out of their cultural way to embrace the western notion of beauty. So, does it mean the media is using advertisement to ruin or to do away with some of the world's culture? This what Jean refers to as Killing Us Softly. She emphasizes that as girls discover that their sexual behavior and appearance is recognized and appreciated by the society, they get more encouraged and feel more empowered. However, she cautions this trend that it draws much attention at the expense of other important aspects and qualities. (Goode)

Movies and action cinemas portray men more violent than women. Men play the role of gang stars that shoot and kill. They murder both men and women in cold blood. Movies acted from as early as 1960s to date are filled up with social injustices performed by men. In fact, most violent men target their male counterparts in the excursion of their criminal activities. Just but a few will divert their anger to women. In these movies, women do take a lower profile that involves romance and sexual exploitation by men. They are less violent but at sometimes they are very dangerous. Women in these films mostly conspire and betray their male counterparts to their enemies.

Jean Kilbourne is an American women's rights agitator who has been following keenly the trends in commercial advertisements in the United States. In her observations, she closely examined the patterns that multimillion American advertisements take especially on women. Despite her active participation in the women movements in the United States, she still believes that for over 40 years, advertisement has continually worsened. In the United States, about 3000 adverts are aired on a daily basis. These advertisements posted almost everywhere in schools, sports grounds, bus stops elevators, offices among other key social joints. However, Jean cites that only about 8 per cent of this huge advertisement is received by the conscience part of the human mind. But she also reiterates that adverts not only sell the products but also the images, values, success, sexuality and even concepts of love. In short, advertisements reveal much about our societal values and our culture or the type of life that we lead.

The issue that the research attempts to address is to identify whether there is a difference in suicide method between genders in Canada. Apart from the suicidal methods, the research also aims to provide analysis to factors that affect the differences such as age, suicide location and suicide motivation.

The determinations of these factors are paramount for mitigating the problem of increasing number of suicidal attempts recorded in several countries. Determining the differences would allow authorities, researchers, psychologists and sociologists in devising an effective measure to eliminate the problem and eventually lower down the mortality rate in the suicide methods determined to have the higher rate of utilization.

Suicide tendencies and methods are perceived to be different between

genders in Canada. Several research findings aimed to uncover the differences on how each individual attempts suicide. However, Kposowa and McElvian (2006) concluded in their study of suicide methods that women are less likely to commit suicide in a much lesser lethality than men. In most cases, hanging is the most popular method used by both genders, but the issues is more complicated than just identifying the difference between the choice of lethal and less lethal method in both genders. It is because the place where suicide will take place should also be added into the equation. Kposowa and McElvian's (2006) study concluded that suicide victims succeeded in their attempts at home than performing it outdoors. In addition, suicide at home is three times more likely to use the hanging method than using firearms (Kposowa and McElvian, 2006).

Jean's theory on advertisement exposes more to women than they may perceive. She says that advertisements imposed an image on women. An image that is not they do not have in reality. Before going for these advert shootings, these women are taken through cosmetics that completely change their outlook. These beauty therapy approaches include airbrushing to more advanced computer retouching. In the actual sense, what people perceive as beautiful has undergone thorough photo-shopping. Does advertisement add value to women? This is the question that Jean poses for her audience. Color and brightness is highly associated with beauty especially when they are light. According to Jean's observations, women are turned into objects or things rather than human beings whom they should be. For instance, black women are portrayed in jungles settings in a more animal way than human beings. They can be portrayed wearing animal skins

of imitating animals. This is critically violence against women. The matter worsens when the female body is dissociated. Various parts of the woman body have their significance in advertisements. For instance, their breasts are viewed as romantic and very attractive hence are more exposed in adverts.

The time our society needs men's movements is now. Women have been over protected to an extent that men are now the marginalized gender. For many years, the mention of gender is always associated with women. This association has actually diminished the real meaning of gender in our societies. It is worth noting that not all men are strong enough to withstand the pressure subjected to them by the women movements. According to Wood, men's movement always spring up to counteract particular issues that are propagated by women. These movements fiercely reject and work against feminism. For instance, by 1960s the rise of student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Students for Democratic Society (SDS) sidelined the women agenda. In their reaction, women accused men of being sexism. However, some of the movements are close allies of feminist movements. (Wood 95)

In conclusion, media should diversify their coverage and provide an equal attention to both male and female. When the girl child is over protected, the boy child is left on his own. This calls for another danger. In just a short moment, the boy child is going to be the next object of focus. Gender debate should not be given turns but male and female issues should be discussed simultaneously. On advertisement, several ethical issues are must be put into consideration. This is an activity that should not violate the societal

ethics and integrity but used to promote economic development of every country.

Works Cited

Goode, Erica. " Study Finds TV Alters Fiji Girls' View of Body." The New York Times

20 May 1999.

Jean. What are advertisers really selling us? 22 April 2013

.

Tough Guise: Violence, Media & the Crisis in Masculinity. Dir. Cowmanll. 2013.

" Becoming Members of Society: Learning the Social Meanings of Gender (Devor"

StudyMode. com. 03 2013. 03 2013 .

Wood, Julia T. Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture. USA: Cengage Learning, 2008.