The medias stereotype of women media essay

The media is an indispensable part of our lives. It is not only a form of entertainment, but also a powerhouse which has been granted the authority to influence our environment. And it's no wonder, because through television we know, for example, the characteristics of the classic criminal: ugly, dirty, drunken voice and a pistol in hand, or the classic model: fashionable, beautiful, hateful, dull, and possibly even anorexic. These two representations are examples of what is known as stereotypes – the process of applying categorization to groups or individuals. The use of stereotypes is a normal process, seeing as how it reduces the complexity of our environment to a manageable size. It allows us to identify different attributes of people such as happy, sad, well-intentioned, malicious, etc., which in turn reduces the need to look at the particularity of each person. Basically, stereotypes relate one thing with another, and by doing this, they provide a basis by which we interpret what happens around us. However, not everything is hunky-dory. Unfortunately, the media has focused on programs and content, which portray a number of stereotypes that only make our society a bit more ignorant.

In the course of time, the media has associated the male stereotype with values such as independence, aggressiveness, competitiveness, and strength. All of these concepts are clearly associated with males. Meanwhile, women have been linked to concepts such as affection, dependency, fragility, and concern for others. All of these notions have contributed to the transmission of certain clichés such as those of a wife, lover, or mother. These stereotypes are almost always associated with qualities like beauty, seduction or attraction. Therefore, the women that are represented in the

media, almost always appear as a subordinate of the guys. This sort of patriarchal system persists in many post-industrial countries such as the United States. It was not until recent years that women, somehow, began their integration into society. In today's society, the female role originates and spreads mainly from the media. The media integrates roles, values, norms, and symbols. This process is considered an important instrument in the transmission of values. In some cases, these values become a way to reference certain groups of society. The Media's stereotypes are intended to destroy or direct our desires. We can see examples of these on TV, where the role of men is to be charming, professional, and successful. In the case of soap operas, men are usually shown to be torn between the loves of two women. On the other hand, women are always shown to be more liberal, passive and submissive. People watch programs, series, or movies because they feel the need to identify with something. People with high cultural levels enjoy watching programs that are informative. Women who are housewives like to watch loving family dramas or soap operas while children want to be like superheroes. And so for every person, group, sex, or age the media will always find a stereotype to put them in.

In this modern era television plays an important role in the development of stereotypes, including gender stereotypes. Television has the potential to create values and it has the potential to influence people. Among the many stereotypes that it offers is that of the ideal woman. Commercials show happy women who do not contradict what is said. Physically they have perfect features and are slender. Younger women are viewed as sexual objects, while adult women are portrayed in advertisements as housewives,

mothers, workers, and patients. These stereotypes about women are transmitted every day on TV and are responsible for several negative traits that do not represent the female gender, except in the minds of men who think of these stereotypes as something natural. Examples of this can be seen in detergent, food, and other household article commercials that feature women as the typical housewife, who is weak, helpless, dependant, delicate and sensitive. Another widely used image of women is the vain female consumer, who buys anything just for the satisfaction. This image is widely used by sellers of beauty products and shopping center owners. Consequently, these images have had a huge impact in the way women see themselves and the way they portray their gender. It is important to note that all these stereotypes are false representations of what a woman is, but unfortunately most women accept this image given by the media. Most women believe that these images reflect society's standards about what an ideal woman is. The worst part is that due to the importance that they give to these standards, they comply with them, resulting in low self-esteems. Most women compare themselves with the idealized image projected by the media, which results into a life full of insecurity and discontent. All this dissatisfaction may ultimately lead some women to develop some sort of eating disorder.

Fashion, and how it's projected in the media, is always changing the attitudes of women, especially young women. That is why it comes as no surprise that the level of anorexia and bulimia have skyrocketed in recent years, especially when girls intend to fit into shirts and pants that are becoming increasingly smaller. Part of this problem is the stereotypes that

the media has created. Women will only look good in clothes if they are thin and delicate according to the stereotypes. Consumers of clothes begin to follow the stereotype, and by doing so they gradually devalue their own features, planning to look like that sickly looking model that appears in clothing commercials or runways. The roles played by women in the media are limited to traditional roles like the housewife, the mother, the victim, or the sexual object. The roles of men in the other hand are that of the strongest players in public life. This, however, is not the reality of the situation and it does not help build equality in our society.

The media has brought into the light the triumph of many female athletes and the stereotypical prejudice that we have against women in sports. Thanks to that, many stereotypes about women who go into sports have been eliminated. For example, the stereotype that all females in sports tend to lose their femininity is no longer seen as true. Or the stereotype that women are not anatomically designed for sports is also considered irrelevant nowadays. All of this was once held appropriate due to the fact that the media focuses more on the physical characteristics of female athletes rather than their level of performance. But now, it's not uncommon to see Anna Kurnikova or the Williams sisters in the front pages of sports magazines.

Although we live in a culture of gender stereotypes, which apparently puts men over women, the fat is that stereotypes have the potential of affecting society negatively. Some stereotypes can develop patterns which do not allow the development and expression of individual qualities. To avoid setting those kinds of stereotypes, one must analyze the information that the media communicates to us before creating a stereotype. By doing this,

people will be able to realize that the ideas that the media feeds are far from reality. The use of stereotypes is convenient to some extent, but it is important to know the boundaries of the line that leads to prejudice and discrimination, a line that is crossed countless times by the media. The process of stereotyping allows people to interact with their environment, to understand it, and to develop their own interpretation of it. But what happens when the amount of information gained is digested without the right amount of evaluation and the stereotypes begin to take the place of personal perception? Those stereotypes become our view of the world.