

Racial stereotypes in the media

Sociology



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Racial Stereotypes In The Media

Intro

Alongside with other questions, the issue of creation and application of racial stereotypes is addressed in the articles by Pozner and Yang. Paper Tigers by Wesley Yang discusses how stereotypes are formed in regards to Asian American men, while the work written by Pozner analyzes racial stereotypes in the media applied to women.

The articles show that racial stereotypes work differently for men and women.

Main body

Stereotypes in Yang's Paper Tigers

In his article, Wesley Yang addresses stereotypization of Asian American males at the workplace, in corporate America in particular. In this regard, he uses the notion of the Bamboo Ceiling to describe the nature and characteristic features of racial stereotypes applied to Asian American men. It is defined as “ an invisible barrier that maintains a pyramidal racial structure throughout corporate America, with lots of Asians at junior levels, quite a few in middle management, and virtually none in the higher reaches of leadership” (quote Yang page 4 of the article). The statistical data used by the author shows that this notion does exist (quote on statistics page 4 of the article).

At the same time, as Yang puts it, the fact of stereotypization is not directly associated with racism, it is rather “ a matter of unconscious bias”. This shows that the author perceives the issue as not too serious one, at least if to compare it to stereotypization of women.

In addition to this, the author of the article draws a conclusion that

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stereotypes take roots from Asian Americans' character and upbringing. That is to say, Yang claims that Asian Americans themselves have created these stereotypes and now they justify them by their behavior and features of character, such as obedience, commitment, eagerness, submissiveness etc. Bottom line: From what is mentioned above, it becomes clear that stereotypes about Asian American men do have background and are created based on what the representatives of other cultures observe in life. In addition to this, as Yang writes only about men, it is possible to draw a bottom line and say that stereotypization works for men in relation to their actual abilities and skills applied at the workplace.

Racial stereotypes about women in Jennyfer Pozner's piece

Racial stereotypes about women are generalized and misogynistic in their nature. While all the stereotypes about Asian American men discussed in Paper Tigers are relatively neutral and even positive if to compare them to stereotypes used in relation to female representatives of different ethnicities described in Pozner's work, in *Ghetto Bitches*, *China Dolls* and *Cha Cha Divas*, racial stereotypes about women are negative ones. Stereotypes about women have nothing to do with their characters or skills they obtain; sexuality is what determines the nature of stereotypes in this very case. The author of *Ghetto Bitches* suggests a bright classification of how women that belong to different cultures and ethnicities are referred to in the media (*America's Next Top Model*). Asian women are referred to as exotic lotus flowers, China dolls, dragon ladies, sex nymphs; African American women are called ghetto black Barbies, devil, "sexy little animals" that should be tamed and "softened up", "wild things" etc. (Pozner).

Bottom line: no positive characteristic feature of a particular ethnic group or

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culture is taken as the background for stereotypes about women.

Conclusion

Racial stereotypes are created in different ways for men and women as the articles written by Wesley Yang and Jennifer Pozner suggest. Stereotypes about men are created in the following way: the society chooses positive features, exaggerates them to some extent and applies them as the background for stereotypes (at least it works for Asian American men, as Yang shows it). For women, as Pozner vividly shows it, the situation is completely different. More specifically, it is their femininity and sexuality that are used as the framework of all the stereotypes, and no positive feature is taken into account when it comes to racial stereotypes about women.

Works Cited

Pozner, J. L. *Reality Bites Back: The Troubling Truth About Guilty Pleasure TV*. Seal Press, 2010. Print.

Yang, W. "Paper Tigers." *New York Magazine*. 8 May 2011: n. page. Web. 27 Feb. 2015. .