

Reading Response

Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism

Homophobia is defined by Suzanne Pharr as: the irrational fear and hatred of those who love and sexually desire those of the same sex. If you asked me prior to reading the article to define homophobia, I would have simply said that it was the fear of gay people (but I also feel silly because before this I never really thought of homophobia pertaining to anyone except gay people). Whilst reading the article my view of this word has changed to truly grasp the meaning. Now homophobia, to me, means: a ridiculous fear that takes away the rights and dignity of people as human beings. It really puts into perspective how cruel we are as a society to take away the god-given rights.

“The American Psychological Association has said that it is no more abnormal to be homosexual than it is to be left-handed.” This phrase sticks out in my mind because it makes me think that everything in this life is so uncertain, and then we have outside influences trying to make us conform to social norms. But what if we take the social norms away? Then what? This is a very perfect analogy to sum up our society. Right handed people are the majority which are straight people, left handed people are a minority and are the homosexuals, and the ambidextrous are the select few that are bisexuals (or some other form like: intersex, bigender, genderqueer, etc.) or the outliers.

The next thing that really stuck out to me was after the Sin Theory (which was also interesting), “A particular sexual identity is not an indication of either good or evil. What is important is not the gender of the two people in the relationship with each other but the content of the relationship.” Wow, where to start... I think this little verse is really powerful because it stresses the importance of how we act in the faces of our loved ones. It matters not what gender someone is, what matters is that the relationship can continue growing in the right direction and without any type of purposeful harm to the other person (whether it be emotional, physical, or both). A mutual respect for another human being knows no gender; and love can be said to be Morally Neutral because it depends on the crucial element of respect.

Suzanne Pharr poses a lot of rhetorical “What if...” questions throughout this article. Taking a look at each of these questions we really cannot come up with a solid answer for any of them because we truly will never know some. How are we supposed to know a world without gender roles when our world is based on gender roles and separating the sexes? We just cannot do it, we can dream and hypothesize all we want, but that’s all that we are doing, dreaming. Although, her first question raised my eyebrow... “What will the world be like without homophobia?” My initial thoughts to this were: people will be able to love anyone they want without judgment; this world would be a lot happier of a place with so much less hate; and possibly gender roles might be reassessed, reassigned and maybe even disappear.

Some of the other main points that she expressed were: Patriarchy, Economics, Violence and Homophobia. Patriarchy is simply the universal thoughts that men need to be in power and express their dominance. Economics is all about men profiting from women and taking advantage of them while continue to strive for the top which they may never actually see. Violence is the other way that men keep women in their grasps to do whatever they want them to do. And finally there is Homophobia which is the defying part to the assumption of this world being heterosexual (Heterosexuality as the social norm).

I do have a question for you though... What do you think the world would be like without homophobia?