

Reading Response

Kimmel's basic idea is to point out the differences of man and woman by asking his two fundamental questions: Why is it that virtually every single society differentiates people on the basis of gender? And why is it that virtually every known society is also based on male dominance? These questions are at the beginning of his introduction and it really leaves us thinking. Throughout the rest of his introduction he introduces us to new terms such as: Differential Socialization or being taught to be masculine or feminine, Social Constructionist or the nature of our bodies and how we relate to them, Emphasized Masculinity or the need to prove yourself as a man, Emphasized Femininity or the need to maintain lady-like habits, and the Interplanetary Theory of Gender Differences. Each of these topics has their own ways of thinking and compels us to seek answers.

The most relevant topic to me is the Interplanetary Theory of Gender Differences because it is a very cut and dry concept that the majority of the population wants to be true even though more often than not it is false. This concept is completely based on generalizations of the "average" person. It basically states that men and women have always been thought to be polar opposites; "Opposite sex" "day and night" "earth and sky" "yin and yang." Although, this is not necessarily the case; we, as humans, are more alike than anything in this world. Men and Women are tied more closely to each other than we are to anything that we have ever known. The graph on page 15 is a very good representation of this theory, it demonstrates at what levels we are alike.

What is privilege? Privilege is a specialized right that one possesses. What exactly makes someone privileged, and who is to say that one truly is? These questions are what came to mind when I read my favorite phrase from this article:

"When I look in the mirror, I see a human being. I'm universally generalizable. As a middle-class white man, I have no class, no race, no gender, I'm the generic person."

And reflecting on the reading and this phrase especially all I can think now is the simple cliché phrase of "you are only human." This is truly what I believe, we are ALL only human. It really bothers me that someone can judge someone on first glance and say that they are privileged. As Kimmel points out privileges are invisible, we cannot see what we aren't looking for in ourselves. As for the black woman, why on earth would you look in the mirror every morning and classify yourself the way you don't want anyone else to. And this brings me to my next point of the dominant power argument.

Privilege leads us to assume power, and power leads us to seek success, and success leads us to dominance. White Men have always been thought to have the upper hand upon which no one can top. Which is very true is you categorized yourself like the black lady did, she is in a more accepting society and she is completely stuck in the past. But that might not necessarily be true about women in the workplace. Kimmel goes on to express how men dominate the

workplace and women and never taken as seriously as men; “Success is tailored to men.” But the fact is men and women communicate differently in powerless situations; generally men employ competitiveness whereas women normally use softer subtle language. Therefore feminine ways lack opportunity and masculinity “gets the job done.” (Complete generalization)