**What it might feel like to be a minority**

How do people feel when they are treated like a lesser human due to their identity? *Homecoming King by Hasan Minhaj* and *50 shades of Gay by Io Tillett Wright* both help to answer the question, what conflicts may arise when one is a minority identity? *Homecoming King* is a stand-up comedy on Netflix and is hosted by an Indian – American man named Hasan Minhaj. During his set he talks about his life, the racism he faces because he is not a white person and having to deal with his parents who sometimes have different views on life than Hasan. *50 shades of gay* is a Ted Talk about a woman named Io Tillett Wright’s life story. During this, Io talks about her struggles in life in trying to find out her identity and eventually fighting for her rights as an American citizen. ***Homecoming King* and *50 shades of gay* are both similar when it comes to the discrimination endured within society. However, while *Homecoming King* deals with a more racist tone. A fear for his life because of the 9/11 attacks and from not having a European background, *50 shades of gay* deals with being treated as a second-class citizen because of her decision to be gay and having most of the American society despise her. Regardless, both acknowledge the fact that they conflict with society because of their identity.**

*Homecoming King* is very different from the story told in *50 Shades of Gay*?  First, is Hasan’s experience throughout the 9/11 attacks; he tells of when he was watching the terror attacks happen in real time, on the news, with his family.  During this, Hasan gets a call on his land line, he and his dad pick up and hear people spewing racist remarks towards them and threatening their safety and home.  Hasan hears something outside, so he runs out to see people breaking into his car and stealing his personal possessions. As Hasan goes see who is responsible, broken window glass cuts up his arm, Hasan becomes filled with rage and anger.   Hasan was born and raised in America and is devastated about being treated this way.  Further, he states, “I’m Honours Gov, I have it right here. Life liberty, happiness. All men are created equal. It says it right here, I’m equal, I’m equal. I don’t deserve this,” (Minhaj). This quote explains how Hasan is an American citizen and therefore should have the same rights as any other American and it is only by virtue of his skin colour that he is picked on.  A second example is Hasan’s prom night and how it went wrong. Hasan had to sneak out of his house to go to his date’s house because his dad did not want him to go. When he gets there, he knocks on the door and her mother answers. Hasan looks past her to see his date with a white young man. Her mom then explains that they like Hasan, but the rest of the adults in her family does not so it would not be a good fit. Hasan lives and learns from this experience, and when he meets a Hindi woman and falls in love, he decides to bring his family over to meet her. Hasan is very nervous because his dad does not like the situation, all is going well and then, “He says the sentence that is the killer of every brown kids dream. He goes, ‘I don’t think we should do this. Log Kya kakenage,’” (Minhaj). This quote and the Indian saying at the end demonstrates his dad’s discomfort with Hasan’s personal life as he is not sure of “what will other people think”. Hasan pushes through this by saying he does not care what other people think as long as he is happy.

            In contrast, *50 shades of gay* differs from *Homecoming King* as Io Tillett Wright explains she grew up in mid town Manhattan in the mid 1980’s. She lived in a time and place where if you weren’t an actor, spoken wordest etc. you were considered the weird one. During this time, she went through a rough time where when she was six, she decided to be a boy. She acts and pretends to be a boy, the only people that knew who she really was, were her parents. She kept this up until she was in her teen years when she again identifies as a girl.  Later in life she would bring home male and female partners without concern because her parents were supportive, and it did not bother them at all.  However, as she gets older, she starts to notice all the media attention gay people are getting and how she gay people did not have access to the same rights as straight people. As she tries to think of ways to get congressmen and the general public to understand what gay people are like, she thinks, “Perhaps if they could look into the eyes of the people that they were casting into second class citizenship it might make it harder for them to do,’ (Wright). This quote explains how Io wants to raise awareness for gay people like herself into order to stop them from losing their rights as a human being and a first-class citizens. One more example from Io is unlike Hasan parents, Io’s parents are more understanding and accepting of Io’s identity and choice. When Io was growing up her parents would be very understanding of her love interests whether it was a boy or a girl, whereas Hasan’s parents question Hasan marrying a Hindi person. Io’s parents recognized she was going through a difficult time in life, finding out who she is and “When I was 15, I called my father to tell him I had fallen in love, it was the last thing on either of our minds to discuss what the consequences were of the fact that my first love was a girl,” (Wright).  Io’s home life was far more inclusive than Hasan’s was, thus ensuring she could be herself.

*Homecoming King* and *50 shades of gay are* comparable for their similarities, regardless of their differences. One piece of evidence is how the media and other powerful voices in the world are trying to scare or misinform the general public on their respective identities. For Hasan it was the 9/11 terror attacks and the media’s response in connecting them to his race. After the attack, the media portrayed anyone from the Middle East area a terrorist.  When those people attack Hasan’s car and steal his belongings, they fear Hasan and his family because the news told them that Middle Easterners were evil and unpatriotic. In the same way, Io feels her identity was being treated as a circus and that gay people were being put into boxes corresponding to their identity. This is shown through Io fighting for gay people’s rights to housing, right to vote and many more. Io uses a box analogy to describe the many different personalities and identities in the world. But there was a flaw in the plan, “It wasn’t that we had too many boxes, it was that we had too few,” (Wright). This quote can be used for both sources. Firstly, *50 shades of gay* is about putting people into boxes and how Io had to think outside the box in order to overcome discrimination against gay people.  Similarly, in *Homecoming King,* Hasan felt that he should not have been discriminated against because he was an American citizen.

*50 shades of gay* and *Homecoming King* are similar because they deal with coming to terms with and fighting to protect each of their identities.  However, they are also different because *Homecoming King* is about showing that race should not determine how a person should judge you when they see your skin colour.  Whereas *50 shades of gay* is about not putting people into boxes but rather understanding one’s identity. Either way, both deal with overcoming conflicts towards each of their identities and moving on and learning from past experiences. Overall, *Homecoming King* is about a Hasan’s experiences with racism because of his race, skin colour and religion/ background. *50 shades of gay* is about Io’s experiences with her unusual upbringing, her journey to find a way to stop putting people in boxes and her fight for the rights of gay people. In the end, one of the most important things to have in life is identity. Understanding one’s identity will ultimately lead to happiness.   When we know how to better understand other peoples’ identity, because we have a clear understanding of what identity is, one can be comfortable in their own skin and can express themselves however they choose.

**Works Cited**

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