Stereotypical Results

New immigrants often find themselves at a disadvantage in their new country due to stereotypes. So **how do stereotypes affect a person or cultures?** Authors Hasan Minhaj and Alex Dang both answer this question in their own ways. Minhaj, a Muslim whose father was an immigrant recalls his childhood and growing up in the United States of America in his Netflix comedy special *Homecoming King*. Dang wrote the slam poem, “What kind of Asian are you?” to convey his feelings about Asian stereotypes in America. **Both *King* and “Asian”show what it feels like to deal with stereotypes. However, Minhaj’s *King* shows what it is like to be a Muslim in America post-9/11. Whereas Dang’s “Asian”is about all the different kinds of Asian stereotypes. Both show the affects of stereotypes such as discrimination, isolation, and the shame and pride that one feels as a minority. Ultimately, the two show the struggles and conflicts that arise when stereotyped therefore society needs to be more open minded and end stereotypes.**

The first similarity between the two sources is that they both show that stereotypes result in some form of discrimination. As a Muslim in the United States of America, Minhaj dealt with a lot of discrimination both before and after 9/11. Following the events of 9/11 someone who knew where his family lived called his house and then went a smashed in the windows of his family’s car and stole his stuff from his backpack. “Hey, you sand n\*\*\*\*r where’s Osama?” (Storer, 26:43 – 27:01). This is what the person said on the phone said to Minhaj and his father. This is a prime example of the discrimination faced as it was an unprovoked use of hate speech which later led into a hate crime due to the untrue stereotype that all Muslims are terrorists which made this person believe he had ties to Osama Bin Laden. In “Asian”Dang talks about the different types of racial slurs used against Asians and the background of them. “Let me tell you all the things you don't want to know like how chink, comes from the clinking of metal to railroad as the slaves built train-tracks for this country to be connected” (Dang, Alex Dang – What kind of Asian are you? (NPS 2013), 1:39 – 1:48). This is an example of the many racial slurs used against Asians as well as the dark background of the word. He also goes into detail about how the term “zipper head” is about the way that heads split open when shot with machine guns or how they looked after being ran over by Jeeps. “Every time you lump an Asian person into one culture it systematically making us assimilate.” (Dang, Alex Dang – What kind of Asian are you? (NPS 2013), 2:01 – 2:08. This is Dang saying that every time Asians are stereotyped it is a loss of personal identity which ultimately leads to some form of discrimination, such as being called racial slurs or just being thought of us a lower-class citizen.

Secondly, both sources show that stereotypes cause a feeling of isolation. In *King,* Minhaj recalls the time when he was stood up for prom. The girl he was supposed to go with wanted to go with him, but her family wanted her to go with someone who was white. “We have a lot of family in Nebraska and we are going to be taking a lot of photos, so we don’t think you’d be a good fit,” (Storer, 43:23 – 43:50) is what his prom date’s mother said to him the night he got stood up. This lead to Minhaj going home and playing video games all night by himself in isolation. Dang felt isolation when he was younger due to the media and other boys. He talks about his envy of blond hair and blue eyes and how all the boys that looked like him on TV weren’t a good representation of him. He was also isolated by other children when he was younger. The line where he says, “The anger I felt when those kids thought I would get them sick,” (Dang, Alex Dang – What kind of Asian are you? (NPS 2013), 2:36 – 2:40). Shows that he was isolated by other kids who thought he would cause them to become sick just due to the colour of his skin which could be because of a stereotype that Asian people bring sickness with them or it could just be kids being racist.

The third similarities both sources share is that they show the shame that is caused by stereotypes. Fortunately they both over come this shame to feel pride in their cultures. In *King,* Minhaj talks about his first time experiencing racist and how it made him want to be white. “In 3rd grade Miss. Anderson said ‘Write what you want to be’… I was like I want to be white.” (Storer, 31:21 – 31:32). When Minhaj was younger his dream when he got older was to be white. This was because of the way he was treated on the playground being called the color of poop by other kids. Dang recalls thinking that his worth was based off the colour of his skin. “And I still remember thinking my skin was what I was worth,” (Dang, Alex Dang – What kind of Asian are you? (NPS 2013), 2:43 – 2:47). The tone of this line shows shame and a feeling of worthlessness he had just based off of the colour of his skin. Likewise, both Dang and Minhaj later grew a feeling of immense pride in the culture. The girl who stood Minhaj up for prom later ended up marrying another Indian man. Instead of feeling sad Minhaj took pride in this saying, “I’m the cure for racism,” (Storer, 1:11:02 – 1:11:20). He feels pride in this moment because he takes it as a victory. Dang however is much more direct with his feeling of pride. “And I still feel pride. And I still feel heritage and I still feel Chinese and I still feel Vietnamese and I still feel American.” (Dang, Alex Dang – What kind of Asian are you? (NPS 2013), 2:52 – 2:59). So, despite all the stereotypes he is faced with, Dang still has his pride in his heritage and culture. Ultimately, both men show that they have over come the racist stereotypes and have risen to have pride in their cultural identity.

In conclusion, despite the different genres both pieces of evidence show how stereotypes affect a culture or person in similar ways. Dang’s “Asian” shows the affects that stereotypes have on people with Asian heritage; however, Minhaj’s *King* shows the affect of stereotypes on people of an Indian or Muslim background. Regardless both show how stereotypes affect someone such as discrimination, isolation, and shame. Discrimination being shown when Minhaj’s car had its windows smashed or when Dang talks about racial slurs. The isolation that was forced onto them when Minhaj was stood up for prom because of his prom dates parents or when Dang was left out by other kids because they thought he would get them sick. The shame that was felt by Minhaj when he told his 3rd grade teacher he wanted to be white or when Dang talks about the shame he felt. Likewise, both Minhaj and Dang showed that they had felt pride at the end of their work. Stereotypes are clearly bad and unfair for everyone, so society should disregard all stereotypes and accept people and cultures with open minds.

References

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