

wearing sexy clothes posing in decorative ways (Lavine et al. 1999). *Stereotypical images of men* are also commonly presented by the media (→ Masculinity and Media). For example, male heroes abound, often demonstrating aggression in ways that receive validation.

Several studies have examined how *women and men of different races* are portrayed. There has been considerable criticism of the mediated sex role stereotypes of African American women. Brooks and Hébert (2006) discuss several common stereotypes, including ‘mammies,’ ‘matriarchs,’ ‘jezebels,’ and ‘welfare mothers.’ African American men are also stereotyped in the media. According to Brooks and Hébert (2006), common stereotypes include ‘the shuffling Uncle Tom,’ ‘the savage,’ and the ‘childlike Sambo.’ Some studies cite frequent depictions of anger and aggression, reinforcing fear of black men.

Women from the *Far East* tend to be stereotyped as lotus blossoms or dragon ladies (Brooks & Hébert 2006). *Latinas* tend to be depicted as highly emotive, possessing hypersexual toughness, and exotic temptresses. According to Brooks and Hébert (2006), Far Eastern men are often depicted as menacing foreigners, laborers, corrupt businessmen, and martial artists. Latinos tend to be represented in problematic work roles (e.g., drug dealers, criminals) and as prone to violence. The repetition of mediated stereotypes counteracts strides made by women and minorities. Through their subtle unity, sex role stereotypes reinforce patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity (Eschholz et al. 2002; → Sexism in the Media) and heterosexual relationships (Wade & Sharp 2011).

Overall, results are mixed – suggesting some, little, or no progress in ending sex role stereotypes in the media. Much work remains to achieve fairness and equality. Sex role stereotyping continues – as do admonitions from scholars, researchers, and activists that it perpetuates sexism and makes it less likely for equality between women and men to be imagined and made real.

See also: ► ADVERTISING ► CINEMA ► CULTIVATION EFFECTS ► MASCULINITY AND THE MEDIA ► MEDIA AND PERCEPTIONS OF REALITY ► SEXISM IN THE

MEDIA ► SOCIAL PERCEPTION ► SOCIAL STEREOTYPING AND COMMUNICATION ► WOMEN IN THE MEDIA, IMAGES OF

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Sexism in the Media

CAROLYN M. BYERLY

Howard University

KAITLYNN MENDES

De Montfort University

Sexism in the media relates to concerns about a range of gender inequalities – in content, employment, policy, decision-making, and ownership – that have been a major focus of global women’s liberation movements since the 1970s. Mass media matter to women everywhere and play a central role in the formulation and dissemination of ideas and the shaping of → public opinion and → social perception (→ Feminist and Gender Studies). Popular media such as film television, newspapers, and magazines (→ Popular Communication) have universally tended to frame women within a narrow repertoire of types which bear little or no relation to how real women live their real lives (Byerly & Ross 2006; → Framing Effects). Starting in the 1960s and 1970s, with the rise of women’s liberation movements around the world, women began to recognize and analyze these problems. Women

also understood that having respectful, accurate, and progressive images and messages about themselves in the media was essential if they were to have a louder public voice and participate more fully in public life.

Feminists have *critiqued the media* for the 'symbolic annihilation' of women, which comments upon women's absence, trivialization and misrepresentation in the news and other 'serious' media forms. Although women's presence in mass media has improved over the years, women remain underrepresented, marginalized, and trivialized in ways that men are not (Collins 2011; → Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media; Social Stereotyping and Communication). All across media forms, women are consistently hypersexualized and exploited. These are often manifested through undue emphasis on women's sexual attributes over other qualities (e.g., intelligence, competence, achievement), through patriarchal (i.e., male superior) messages, or through overt use of male violence against women, and depicting women in humiliating positions. Feminists have also focused on the structural marginalization of women in the media industries, particularly women's exclusion from ownership and decision-making positions (Byerly 2013). Having more senior women within the media industries is necessary to encourage egalitarian content and increase women's visibility across all sectors. While women have had some important successes in overcoming sexism in the media, they remain vigilant of the persistent sexist patterns described above. Although new technologies and social media have enabled many women to engage in multiple forms of networking, information sharing, political analysis, collaboration, and agenda building, they are also potent spaces for (re)producing sexism and misogyny (Jane 2014).

In the traditional media, there are some *signs of change*. There are stronger and more plentiful roles for women today in both movie and television programming in many nations, and women of varied races and of lesbian identity have found roles in movies and television dramas. In terms of news coverage, many of the issues that women have agitated for (e.g., rape law reform, an end to domestic violence, AIDS prevention) are being covered with greater regularity and sensitivity by many news organizations (Byerly & Ross 2006).

Nevertheless, women are still at the periphery of most news (Global Media Monitoring Project 2010). Three-fourths of the people heard or read about in the world's news are male, and women account for less than half of the news sources (44 percent) and even fewer (37 percent) of the reporters covering the news. Some of women's progress in overcoming sexism in the media can be seen in the creation of large-scale strategies with long-range goals. Central here are the more than two dozen media monitoring and advocacy groups functioning in nearly as many nations. Monitoring produces data that can be used to advocate for changes within the news media.

Overall, feminist-led efforts to end sexism in the media occur at national, international and grassroots levels. The optimistic view of these efforts, taken together, is that change is coming and will continue to come, and that an important role for communication researchers is to follow and evaluate their results.

See also: ► CYBERFEMINISM ► FEMINIST AND GENDER STUDIES ► FEMINIST MEDIA ► FEMINIST MEDIA STUDIES, TRANSNATIONAL ► FRAMING EFFECTS ► GENDER: REPRESENTATION IN THE MEDIA ► POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE MEDIA ► POPULAR COMMUNICATION ► PUBLIC OPINION ► SEX ROLE STEREOTYPES IN THE MEDIA ► SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA ► SOCIAL PERCEPTION ► SOCIAL STEREOTYPING AND COMMUNICATION ► WOMEN IN THE MEDIA, IMAGES OF

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