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gender stereotyping in literature.mp3

DATE

April 30, 2023

DURATION

11m 48s

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Hello guys. Welcome to Feminist Ink, the podcast that we got to rant and scream about just how frustrating it is to be a feminist in Nigeria. Come on, baby. The struggle is real. Today's topic, or what we're discussing on today's episode, is something that's really dear to me, something that has been bothering me for a while now. And you know, as you guys know, I'm a bookworm. I don't know if you guys know that I'm a bookworm. I love reading books. I love everything related to literature. I love writing. No, I mean I'm a certified book Lady. My dream would be to have like, a library, be with all my pets. It'd bea Dream Come True, Baby. Anyway, something that I really noticed in a lot of the books I read is gender stereotyping. I read romance novels a lot because I love, love, duh. Who doesn't love love? No. Like, duh. I love love and I really love romance novels and I love happy endings. But one thing I've really noticed about romance novels is the way they portray men and women the harmful consequences of portraying men as predators and women as victims. Now, you might be thinking, what's wrong with that? Isn't that just realistic? Aren't men naturally more aggressive and women naturally more passive? But no.

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And if you think that way, you may want to check your internalized misogyny and toxic masculinity. That's just the truth. I said what? I said. If you are thinking that men are just naturally more aggressive or women are naturally more passive, you need to do some inner work because gender stereotypes are not only inaccurate and unfair, but they also have negative effects on both men and women. Let me give you some examples of how literature reinforces these stereotypes. Think about the classic fairy tales like Cinderella or Sleeping Beauty. The female protagonists are always helpless damsel in distress who need a Prince Charming to rescue them from their evil stepmothers or wicked witches. The male protagonists are always brave heroes who fight dragons or evil kings to win the love of their princess. The message is clear Women are weak and dependent. Men are strong and dominant. Or think about modern day romance novels like 50 Shades of Gray or Twilight. I definitely did something on 50 Shades of Gray an episode on that. I really looked into it and dissected the book. If you haven't checked it out, do check it out. I'll drop the link in the show notes. Or Twilight I'm doing. I don't know. I don't want to put all my cards on the table, but I'm actually doing a review of Twilight from a feminist perspective.

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I don't know why the female protagonists are always naive and innocent young women who fall for mysterious and dangerous older men. The male protagonists are always controlling and possessive. Alpha males who stalk, manipulate or abuse their love interest like After. That book is toxic as fuck. The message is clear Women are objects of desire. Men are subjects of power. Hmm. I like that. Or think about the crime thrillers like Gone Girl or The Girl on the Train. I've not read like I just used Gone Girl as an example. I've not read it, but I know like the storyline and everything. The female protagonists are always unreliable narrators who lie, cheat or kill their husbands or lovers. The male protagonists are always unsuspecting victims who suffer from their wives or girlfriends, deception or violence. The message is clear Women are crazy and evil men are rational and good. Do you see a pattern here? Literature often depicts men as predators and women as victims in different ways, either by making men heroic rescuers and women helpless damsels, or by making men abusive dominators and women submissive masochists or masochists.

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or by making men innocent sufferers and women malicious perpetrators? But why does this matter? Why should we care about how literature portrays gender roles? After all, you may say that. Oh, it's just a book or this that that it's not real. But I hope you know that literature is a mirror of life. And a lot of the literature that we read or the things we consume, influence our thought patterns and the way we think. Literature is not just entertainment. It is also education. Literature shapes are imagination are emotions, and values are beliefs and are identities. Literature influences how we see ourselves and others. How we relate to ourselves and others, and how we behave towards ourselves and others. Honestly, that literature is so beautiful. One of the reasons why I love it so much like. You can't be my friend or be around me without knowing I love books like I have learned so much from books. And when I just started reading feminist literature, my eyes were open. Man, I love feminist literature and then reading popular culture, popular books like After, Twilight, 50 Shades of Gray, The Girl on the Train and really seeing the sexist undertones in those books has really been eye opening for me. When literature reinforces gender stereotypes, that point paints men as predators and women as victims.

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It has harmful consequences for both genders. For example, it limits our potential as human beings by confusing us, I mean, sorry, not confusing by confining us to rigid boxes of what it means to be a man or a woman. So basically what I'm saying is that, oh, if I'm a woman, woman, I must be a damsel in distress. Or women are always correct, like, Oh, this romance novel that I always read, the man is always offending the woman. the man will do something, asshole, something stupid, something jerkish something dick behavior and mess up the relationship. The woman is always seen as the perfect one. I don't know if you. If you read romance novels a lot, you would have noticed it, actually. So are you trying to say that women cannot make mistakes? Women cannot mess up a relationship? If you think that women are always perfect. that's a box. Um, we put men and women into these roles that they must fulfill. It creates unrealistic expectations for ourselves and others by idealizing unhealthy relationships based on power, imbalance, violence or manipulation. Actually, if we look at a book like Twilight or 50 Shades of Gray. Ah, I was disgusted.

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the power Imbalance is just, and then it just creates like unrealistic expectations for young people that are reading the book and be thinking that, oh, is this what a relationship is supposed to look like? That kind of stuff. It's foster self-hatred and insecurity by making us feel inadequate and inferior, like, okay, if you if you don't fit into these stereotypes, we start to see ourselves in another light. Like when I talked about breaking the mold, the truth about men and their sexual desires. If you have not checked out that episode, do check it out. I'll drop the link in the show notes like when I when I talked about it. I said, okay, men who don't want to have sex all the time, who aren't hypersexual. They may feel less than or they they may be made to feel less than because they don't fit into society's expectations of what a man sex life should be like. That's the same thing here. If you don't fit into this stereotype about what a man or woman should act like, you start to feel less than like you're not doing enough. Okay, That kind of stuff. these are just some of the ways that gender stereotyping in literature harms both men and women. And I'm sure you guys can think of many more examples from your own experience or observation. So you may be wondering, what can we do about it? How can we challenge these stereotypes and create a more equal and respectful society? Because don't just think that it's just literature.

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Do you know how Twilight Blew, Do you know 50 Shades of Gray blew? See, "After" they don turn am to film sef like god. Young people are reading and watching these things and they are learning from it and they're using it to mirror their own relationships and their own lives. So if there's anything we can do to challenge these stereotypes, we must do it. Okay. The first thing we can do is to read more critically and consciously. Okay. Like when you are reading a book, don't just read it and be soaking up everything that is inside. Dissect the book. Like, what is the message this book is trying to pass? How is it? What exactly is it trying to pass across? Okay. We can question their assumptions and messages behind the stories we read. We can analyze how they represent gender roles and relations, and we can critique how they reinforce or resist stereotypes. I know you're not a literature student, but anytime you read a book, okay, try and look at, okay, How did this book reinforce gender stereotypes? How did this book resist stereotypes like what made this book stand out? What made this book different? How did this book represent women? How did this book represent men? Okay.

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Is it just your typical stereotypical, messed up relationship kind of thing, or the woman is damsel in distress kind of thing, if you get what I mean. Another thing we can do is to read more diversely and inclusively. It's true. It's not only Twilight to be reading Abi after all those kind of books you read, you know, read deep, read books from marginalized women, read feminist books, not necessarily feminist literature like We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. I mean fiction with feminist themes. You can read books like The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives by Lola Shoneyin, that kind of thing. Okay. Read more Diversely and inclusively. You can support writers who challenge the status quo and celebrate. Diversity and we can amplify voices that have been marginalized or silenced by mainstream literature. Yes. So that that's just what I wanted to say today, because that's really been on my mind. I mean, I read a lot, so I see a lot of patterns. I notice a lot of patterns, which I mentioned earlier. Okay, So bye, guys. I'll see you next week with a book review and I forgot to mention it. If you liked this episode, don't forget to rate and or subscribe and or leave a review. It really helps me out. Bye, guys. I'll see you next week. Kisses.

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