

Critical Thinking Paper Two: Is it Possible for a Man to Think like a Woman? Is it Possible for Someone Who is White to Think Like Someone Who is Black? Is it Possible for a Teacher to Think Like a Student?

Olga Innocent

Department of Sociology, Nyack College

SOC 347: Contemporary American Society

Dr. Charles T. Awasu

October 24, 2021

Critical Thinking Paper Two: Is it Possible for a Man to Think like a Woman? Is it Possible for Someone Who is White to Think Like Someone Who is Black? Is it Possible for a Teacher to Think Like a Student?

In society, the categorization of people helps control how and what they think. This is through a process of roles. All different roles in society lead to different perspectives. Some roles, people are born into and others, people choose. Perspectives are what shapes a person's experience and ultimately their thought life. In various roles presented by society, either through institutions, class, or race, it is difficult for differing roles in life to think like the other. In examining gender roles, race roles, and work roles, all positions have dynamics whereas it is difficult for those within the categories to think the exact same.

In society, categorizing humans and giving them attributes such as skill sets, is what is often common. This is highlighted through the process of acquiring positions in society. Gender roles are always applied in society in every sector of life such as, education, work field, and home life. The attributes to men and women roles, and depending on what state in America it's in, these roles can't be interchangeable. Society thrives in separating roles and institutions like marriage, helps setting expectations and standards in gender roles. Charon (2013) states, "Overtime, every society develops legitimate, accepted ways that people get used to and normally follow without even thinking about options" (p.117). It is not possible for a man to think like a woman depending on the sector of life. In society, gender roles in the work field are constantly changing and many of those roles can't be interchangeable in thought. However, in the subject of motherhood, men cannot think like woman. In motherhood, a woman's instincts are biological when regarding her children. The way men and women think should be embraced, as the differences create spaces for dialogue to occur and for society to not be ruled by one set of thoughts from either gender. Gender roles and the contemplation of whether it's possible for a

Critical Thinking Paper Two: Is it Possible for a Man to Think like a Woman? Is it Possible for Someone Who is White to Think Like Someone Who is Black? Is it Possible for a Teacher to Think Like a Student?

man to think like a woman stems out of social class. In social class, depending on class level and culture, gender roles are already set, meaning anything learned in those roles are not encouraged for the other gender to practice or have experience in. Charon (2013) highlights, "Roles matter in our actions. They are the scripts we are expected to know and follow" (p. 121). If a woman in a set role that is given by society, is not pushed to free her mind and life from the box of the role, she will never be able to learn what men do and thus think like how they do scenarios. It's possible for a man to think like a woman, but if they are not willing to take on the roles, they will have trouble accessing the trains of thought. Charon (2013) states, "Women are not simply forced to do such things; they are taught a perspective that justifies it. And their angle of vision becomes part of their very being they come to think differently from the men with whom they interact (p. 107). Through the concept of femineity and masculinity, and what is acceptable in society, ways of thinking are shaped.

Since slavery, black people have been in physically, biologically, psychologically impacted with trauma by the era. Many black people in modern day experience racism, prejudice, and discrimination at least once in their lifetimes. Black people had to strive to get to true freedom, as to their white peers who never had to fight for freedom because of their skin color. A white person cannot think like someone who is black because they do not and cannot share the same racial experiences. Though society is made up many individuals from different backgrounds, it is not possible for white people to see the world through the lens of a black person, thus making it difficult to have the same line of thought through the perspective of being black. Different perspectives is an outcome because of different roles played in society. Charon (2013) states, "It is extremely difficult to be in a position and play the role that is expected and

Critical Thinking Paper Two: Is it Possible for a Man to Think like a Woman? Is it Possible for Someone Who is White to Think Like Someone Who is Black? Is it Possible for a Teacher to Think Like a Student?

yet escape the tyranny of the perspective that goes with the position.” Race, like being black, automatically puts black individuals in a certain role in life and it is hard for others to share the same perspectives because they do not share the same role within race or the experiences that contribute and follow it.

In working America, roles are constantly changing which means perspectives and experiences are changing. However, in occupations such as a teacher and student, it is possible but difficult for teacher to always remain thinking like a student. Unlike race, occupation is can be changed, but a teacher’s perspective is different than a student. Teachers can think like a student because they were once a student before developing into a teacher. The thought and perspectives needed for a student in school studying to be a future teacher, changes slightly when the student is working professionally in the field. Charon (2013) states, “Human beings change their thinking when they occupy new positions, when they go from student to graduate, from single to married, from working class to middle class” (p. 111). A teacher can choose to think like a student because they have already played that role, but a student cannot think like a teacher because they have not been exposed to that role yet. As a teacher their language, class, social circle changes thus meaning their perspective on different things in life changes because of their role.

Roles are part of the process of socialization. Charon (2013) highlights, “The most important reason why positions so powerfully influence our thinking is that each one is, in fact, a different angle in the organization” (p.109). As individuals interact with each other every day, thought processes are exposed, however it is hard to understand another’s life and role because of socialization. Constructed roles like in marriage, gender, work, race, and relationships, opens

Critical Thinking Paper Two: Is it Possible for a Man to Think like a Woman? Is it Possible for Someone Who is White to Think Like Someone Who is Black? Is it Possible for a Teacher to Think Like a Student?

the doors for dialogue. However, through studies a thought received from a role is hard to change and transform. Many people in society are desiring to be valued and included, which has created a system where roles are introduced, and thoughts can be controlled.

Critical Thinking Paper Two: Is it Possible for a Man to Think like a Woman? Is it Possible for Someone Who is White to Think Like Someone Who is Black? Is it Possible for a Teacher to Think Like a Student?

Work Cited:

1. Charon, J. M. (2013). Chapter 5. In *Ten questions: A sociological perspective*. essay, Thomson/Wadsworth.