Learning to Be Gendered Argument Analysis

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Introduction

One of the worthy things about the manuscript "Learning to be Gendered" by P. Eckert and S. McConnell is that the authors have provided a thought-provoking piece to the readers by examining the customs where infants are allotted gender characters and learn to act accordingly when they grow. The superfluous gendering of objects and children spreads sexism and stereotypes that can influence an infant's view of itself for its whole life, and often, this gendering can be very challenging to forget. The prime argument of the paper is that the genders are needlessly allotted roles from the very first moment when their sex is exposed to their close relatives. Illogical things are assigned to the genders from birth and conception, for instance, blue caps for baby boys and pink caps for girls in hospitals. These arbitrary things do not make sense in terms of gender because bright pink was preferred for males while blue for females in the late 19th century. Concisely speaking, the main message of the article is that society demonstrates to people which gender she or he should be. The gender role created by these societies is influenced by several factors like peers and family. In this essay, we craft our responses to the author's arguments by using the "Agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously" template.

Body

The fundamental purpose of the article's arguments is to spread awareness among people that they are labelling boys and girls in our daily lives without even knowing. As the authors mentioned, our conversations with babies are highly dependent on gender as we use a more stern tone with boys but tend to be gentler with girls. The authors of the article develop a good point, "Being grown-ups, leaving babyhood, means very different things for boys than it does for girls. The fact that growing up involves gender differentiation is encoded in the words of assessment with which progress is monitored- kids do not behave as good or bad people but as good boys or good girls, and they develop into big boys and big girls. In other words, they do not have the option of growing into just people, but into boys or girls" (p. 742). This argument states a dichotomy between boys and girls and claims that infants have no choice in what gender they grow into because they are already stereotyped by the way we treat them, baby clothes, baby names and so on. The arguments of the authors express a formal, enlightening and slightly concerned tone. They create ethos by integrating plenty of reliable sources to back their core argument, but the majority of references come from the sociology and psychology fields, which creates bias in their argument.

Following the "agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously" template, there are plenty of areas where I

agree with the authors, like the illogical tagging of the objects and infants, but I also disagree at the same time because gender roles help us understand what to do, how to act and what to wear among plenty of other things. Penelope and Sally convinced me that from the day our parents found our sexual identity, they immediately assigned a pronoun along with our "do" and "be" list for the rest of our lives. The first question people ask the Doctors remains, "Is it a girl or a boy?" I wholeheartedly agree with the authors' claim that we are not born; we are made. When it comes to gender norms, another idea of the manuscript I find more interesting is that we, as babies, rely on the adults' decisions, which I consider is the leading problem we have as a society.

I observed that Penelope and Sally said it best when they said that "colours are so integral to our way of thinking about gender that gender attributions have bled into our view of the colours so that people tend to believe that pink is a more 'delicate' colour than blue (and not just any blue, but baby blue)" (738). How can we decide that blue is for boys and pink is for girls? When and why are colours integrated into gendering objects and infants? Another source I have attained is also from the They Say I Say book, which is an essay named "Lean In: What Would You Do If You Weren't Afraid?" by S. Sandberg. This manuscript, I found to be inspirational. Instead of concentrating on our early lifespan and education to be gendered, it challenges what life is like after we have learned gender and the consequences we must face because of that. It is an essay that describes women and the balancing act they often find themselves living between having a happy and full family life and a passionate career.

Conclusion

This essay deals with the "Learning to be gendered" article, which argues that the gender identity of an infant is shaped by the behaviour and roles imposed by adults, which restrict girls in plenty of ways as they grow. Authors use different kinds of experiments and psychological observations to support their argument, but their empirical support is only limited to sociology and psychology, which makes their claims subjective and biased. However, the article contributes to the existing debate and brings up several challenges; for example, there is no logic behind assigning gender or colour to babies as they do not have any favourite colour at that point in time in their lives. Why is there always a tool case for the girls, but it cannot be a just tool case? The increment of words like "for boys" or "for girls" infers that gender can be too senseless to use for common objects, and that is why more generalization is required in this regard. Even though I agree with the authors because there are plenty of objects that are gendered by people, I cannot accept their overall conclusion because they do not sufficiently explain the ways to cope with this problem of gendering infants and objects.

Works Cited

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