

The “Othering”: *The Impact of Societal Normativity on Exclusion and Oppression*



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The “Other”

“He is the subject. He is the absolute. She is the other” (De Beauvoir, 1949).

- A social construct based on cultural and societal expectations
- Hegemonic Masculinity
- Superiority vs. Inferiority
- Subordination/Oppression of others
- Need for societal and social change

Climate of Exclusion and Oppression

“Social exclusion is often the effect of a process of discrimination or ‘othering’ on the basis of cultural, social and/ or racial identity” (Khan, et al, 2015).

- Division between groups
- Patriarchal power and the “natural order”
- Attack on “other” groups
- Stereotyping and discrimination
- Gender Studies promotes equality and inclusion

The “Other” and Gender Studies

It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences” (Lorde, 2007).

- Addresses gender and social inequalities
- Considers different perspectives and experiences
- Protection and acceptance of all
- Promotes change
- Attacking Gender Studies will silence the “other”

Breaking the Mold

“I celebrate teaching that enables transgressions—a movement against and beyond boundaries. It is that movement that makes education the practice of freedom” (Hooks, 1994).

- Education key to mitigation of exclusion
- Budget and programs cuts to university programs (e.g. Hungary, Iowa State University, University of South Carolina, and University of Wyoming)
- Florida’s “Don’t Say Gay Bill”

Education as a Weapon

“Masculine and feminine roles are not biologically fixed but instead socially constructed”
(Butler, 1990).

- Gender as a taught construct
- Different societal expectations imposed on “men” and “women”
- Compulsory Heterosexuality

The home “...reflected male needs, fantasies about women and interest in controlling women—particularly sexuality and motherhood” (Rich, 1980).

- Education begins in the home
- Taught construct impacts further education

“Any stranger becomes the Other.”

-Lilia Melani

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