

Clarity Workshop

Draft 1

Race and gender are inescapable states that are unfortunately often associated with stereotypes that, in this case, revolve around traits associated with threatening qualities and threat perception. Thus, I agree with Cadogan that his race gives way to stereotypical assumptions and misperception which, for example, may cause the police to apprehend Black men without explicit cause. These stereotypes are racist and thus function as means to discriminate against people and not recognize their full worth. A similar complex issue arises as women are not free to walk city streets since they, rightly, perceive everyone and everything as a threat. Those threats towards women are based on stereotypical assumptions that women are easy targets as they are unable to put up a fight if attacked, which is not a trait predatorial men should feel free to capitalize on. This is not always true and many women today are becoming skilled in self-defense or constantly have pepper spray in their purses. Being of a particular race and gender is not something that should promote an insecure state of being, yet they do certainly contribute to a few problems, in this case the prohibition of walking freely in a city.

Draft 2

Stereotypes associated with different races and genders affect the way people are considered either “threatened” or “threatening.” The police, for example, stereotype Cadogan as a threat, and therefore apprehend him without cause. In cases like this, stereotypes amount to nothing less than out-and-out racism. Sexism presents a similar problem for women, who are no more free than Cadogan to walk city streets without vigilance due to the stereotype of women as “victims.” On one hand, the frightening levels of gender-based violence shows that women are absolutely right to perceive threats all around them. On the other hand, the trope of women as easy targets is a damaging stereotype, which gives predatory men the idea that they can capitalise on this vulnerability. Moreover, the stereotype is often wrong; many women are skilled in self-defence or constantly have pepper spray in their purses. In any case, people of all races and genders should feel free to walk around a city without feeling unsafe. The unfortunate truth that both examples show, however, is that walking is a privilege.