

Central Material Extract

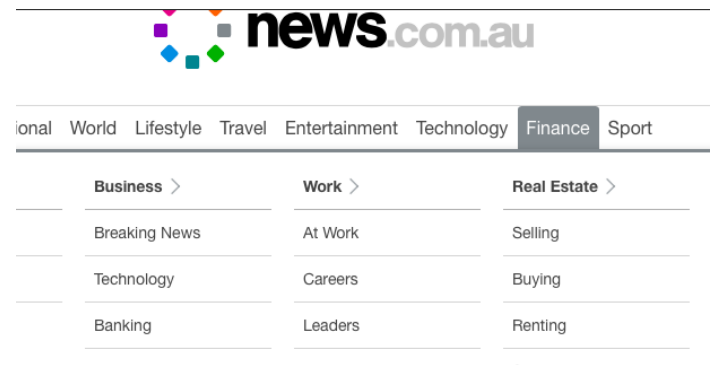
Title: The making of the other: An investigation into the role of the media in maintaining the process of othering, with a specific focus on perceptions of Indigenous Australians and women in the workforce.

The extract below has been taken from Chapter 2: Do men own the most powerful source of socialisation? An investigation the role of the media in *othering* women in the workforce

It can be argued women have been presented as subservient and with a 'lesser' status to men in the media. This construction is because men dictate mainstream stories by dominating the journalism industry. Suzanne Franks, professor of Journalism at City University London explains that the number of females in

journalism has seen a minimal increase since 1901, growing from around 9% to 37% in 2020. Franks continued to explain that the male authority over the 'newsworthy' content has led to a lack of female voices in the media.¹ This masculine hegemony arguably may account for the continued process of *othering* females in the media.²

I wanted to understand how a male-dominated journalism industry presented the female as a lesser identity in modern society. I utilised a content analysis, analysing 400 articles on the nature of female representation in the media from news.com online.³ I focused on categories within Finance such as "At Work", "Leaders" and "Careers" (See figure 1 for categories of analysis).⁴ In analysing the 'At Work' category, I found that only 25% of the articles in the sample pool mentioned women. Similarly, in the 'finance' category, women were mentioned in 10% of the articles.⁵ In multiple of these articles, women were labelled as '*insane*' and



¹Franks, S. (2014). Women in Journalism: Backwards, Forwards Onwards, Upwards - Sometimes Sideways. Media Report to Women, 42(2), 12-18. [online] Available at <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/research/files/Women%2520and%2520Journalism.pdf>.

²Franks, S. (2014). Women in Journalism: Backwards, Forwards Onwards, Upwards - Sometimes Sideways. Media Report to Women, 42(2), 12-18. [online] Available at <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/research/files/Women%2520and%2520Journalism.pdf>.

³ Content Analysis of News.com.au conducted on 16/2/2020- 20/2/2020

⁴ Content Analysis of News.com.au conducted on 16/2/2020- 20/2/2020

⁵ Content Analysis of News.com.au conducted on 16/2/2020- 20/2/2020

'inappropriate'.⁶ My findings show that authors in the 'At Work' category were 70% male.⁷ As such, I can consider that men are the primary demographic responsible for the characterisation of women in the workforce, reinforcing the notion that men have the power to dictate women's status in the workforce. The underrepresentation of women as the focus of articles suggests that this media source is accountable for the *othering* of women through tactics of exclusion. Academic research by Tonny Krijnen from Erasmus University Rotterdam has indicated that the stereotyping and underrepresentation of women in the media has continuously led to the 'symbolically alienating' women.⁸ This notion was consistent across multiple categories, including the category 'Leaders', where I observed that women were only mentioned 16% of the time.⁹ I also noted that women were often introduced with the title of 'wife of' while men were referred to by their full names, suggesting women have less status than men.¹⁰ This description of women as the subservient *other* corresponds with Fowler's interview, where she explains "*there are many ways that women have been labelled and characterised in the media. For example, a woman will be labelled a mother, yet a high-flying businesswoman*".¹¹ A further content analysis conducted by the Erasmus University Rotterdam reinforced this clear pattern of *othering*. The study reveals that the media often undermines female success by presenting women in the domestic sphere 'as mothers or sisters' rather than as businesswomen, workers or executives. Conversely, men are consistently represented as the breadwinner in the media.¹²

From my interviews with Fowler and my content analysis, women were revealed to be dismissed and misrepresented by the media. Due to stereotyping, labelling and minimisation, the female voice has been "*dimmed*" by media co-operations such as news.com.au and the Australian Financial Review.¹³ ¹⁴In turn, as the media is a significant agent of socialisation, women are often socialised into building their identity on what they lack in comparison with men. It can be argued that the perpetrator of gender-based *othering* is found within the

⁶ Content Analysis of News.com.au conducted on 16/2/2020- 20/2/2020

⁷ Content Analysis of News.com.au conducted on 16/2/2020- 20/2/2020

⁸ Krijnen, T. (2020). Gender and Media. Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. [online] Available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/9781119429128.iegmc016>.

⁹ Content Analysis of News.com.au conducted on 16/2/2020- 20/2/2020

¹⁰ Content Analysis of News.com.au conducted on 16/2/2020- 20/2/2020

¹¹ Interview with Elouise Fowler, a journalist at the Financial Review conducted on February 20th, 2020

¹² Krijnen, T. (2020). Gender and Media. Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. [online] Available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/9781119429128.iegmc016>.

¹³ Interview with Elouise Fowler, a journalist at the Financial Review conducted on February 20th 2020

¹⁴ Content Analysis of News.com.au conducted on 16/2/2020- 20/2/2020

gendered social roles presented by the media and gender-biased opportunities in journalism.¹⁵ There is still much progress to be made before women are seen as equal and not the *other* in the media.

From my research, it has become apparent that there is a responsibility for industries that influence socialisation to accommodate a more equal and inclusive image of these marginalised identities. The modulation of these issues has been concentrated on the continuities of gender identity, gender-based authority, socialising forces of the patriarchy, and the interaction between the desire for change and pressing continuities. As my generation becomes more socially aware, the future might open opportunities for drastic changes. So, I ask myself, what is the future role of the media in dictating minorities into the category of the *other*?

¹⁵Krijnen, T. (2020). Gender and Media. Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. [online] Available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/9781119429128.iegmc016..>