There are many shows popular today that deal with the real-life problems of discrimination, which comes in many forms. These discriminations can be related to gender, culture, and representation, and these shows can help work towards destigmatizing certain groups of people, and to go against many unjustified forms of stereotyping, among other discriminations. One show which exemplifies these efforts to go against discrimination is *Brooklyn Nine-Nine.* This show follows the story about a detective, Jake Peralta, and how he has to change the way he does things in the workforce after a new captain has been sent to the precinct. There are many different characters on the show with their own dreams and ambitions, and throughout the show we get to see all the characters grow and evolve into different people with a better understanding of themselves. The show has a very diverse cast, and the many problems addressed in this show can be very relatable to many people of the general public. But many times when we see discrimination, it is rarely focusing on only one sole aspect of a person.

Very often are people discriminated against for many different reasons, all of which work together to create a thing called intersectionality. Intersectionality is a complex way in which many forms of discrimination and its effects combine against a group of people or the individual. This show is no different in its use of portraying this intersectionality, though it does go about solving some of the problems of discrimination seen by people in day to day lives very effectively and in a relatable context. For this, there are some key moments and people in this show which deal with these problems, making light of a serious issue or acknowledging the problem in today’s culture. While there are some major moments in the show which address the problem of intersectionality, there are also many smaller, but no less important, moments in the show which address this topic, some of which are also addressed in this paper, which are focused on when important to the main topic. The main focus of this paper will be looking at three different, major contributions which *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* makes in exploring intersectionality in different ways with different discriminations focused on: one of the main characters of the show - Captain Raymond Holt, another main character of the show - Sergeant Terry Jeffords, and an episode from the show titled “Halloween III”, with a focus on the character Amy.

The character Captain Raymond Holt is a great character to show the effects of intersectionality in media artifacts. He is a gay black man in a force that was predominately white males when he was first going through the precinct as a lower rank. Though we see a workforce that is a lot more diverse, there is still a workforce that is predominately white males when he is captain. In one episode of the show, Captain Holt has new black detective trying to take charge of the organization he founded while still a detective called the “African-American Gay And Lesbian New York City Policeman’s Association” or AAGLNYCPA. His creation of this association has made it easier for African American non-straight men and women on the force to have a place to come together against discrimination. When he first founded it, he was the only black man on the force in his precinct, as well as being gay, so no one else on the force would give him and credence or talk what he said seriously.

While many people may not think of it as such, one very major form of discrimination faced in this show against Captain Holt is the culture stereotypes. This can be seen with multiple characters, including Sergeant Terry Jeffords who is going to be focused on later in this paper. We often see gay men in this culture portrayed very feminine and exaggerate. The show goes against these stereotypes with a character that is very serious and by the book, not exclaiming he is gay but not hiding it. His seriousness is often a running joke of sorts on the show, often making a big deal of when he does something showing emotion or something that is not his usual serious self. This can help people to see that others are not characters with only one side, but that they are complex people who have their own days of ups and downs, as well as having the ability to express different emotions. Adding this stereotyping to other forms of discrimination like being gay and black, we get a character who has had to struggle his whole life to get where he is, and has to continuously struggle to keep some form of power and authority over others.

This sexuality discrimination can affect various aspects of life, including the interrelationship between his marriage to Kevin and Kevin’s relationship with Captain Holt’s coworkers on the force. Because of all the discrimination Holt faced with his previous precinct for being a gay black man, Kevin is reluctant to like any of his new coworkers, not even wanting to hear anything about Holt’s job because of this.

Another character which faces racism and stereotyping is Sergeant Terry Jeffords. Terry is a large, muscular black man, and with that comes some preconceptions of his attitude and who he is as a person, while in reality he is a sometimes emotional man with self-esteem issues, who does all he can to be there and caring for his family. Because of the way her looks, he is often the subject of some major discrimination. He even faces this in the workforce seeing as he is black. An example of this is when his daughter lost her cow blanket, called her moo-moo. Because she can’t sleep without it, he goes out walking in his neighborhood in the middle of the night to go find it for her. After he finds it, he gets stopped by a white male cop who is aggressively telling him to put his hands up while he is pointing his gun at Terry and not listening to what he has to say, even though Terry had no weapons at all and even shows the man his police badge. After this, Terry goes to Captain Holt to file an official complaint against this office, and Holt tells him he shouldn’t because he will face even more backlash and discrimination from the officer if he does that. This is a really good example of what some people have to face in life, being accosted even when they have done nothing wrong. Many black men have to deal with heavy discrimination against them constantly, it being made much worse when stereotypes are added because of the complete lack of knowledge of the person’s true character.

In *A Guide To Gender* Sam Killermann makes a valid point towards the privileges of certain groups of people. As one gets further away from the norm or majority, they often lose a lot of the privileges they otherwise would have had. Terry being a black man, he already loses many of the privileges a white man would have. It gets even worse for Captain Holt, who is a gay black man, leading him to have even fewer privileges than Terry. While we often don’t notice the privileges we receive just for being born the way we were, it is clear to see for people like Terry and Captain Holt to see when they are unable to be allowed them.

Stepping away from racism, we fall into sexism. While there are many examples that can be shown as sexism, one specifically can be seen in the episode “Halloween III” with a focus on the character Amy. It focuses on aspects of gender inequality and stereotyping, as well as ages in the workforce. Amy, one of the female leads, is a detective that is very by the book and a big perfectionist, while also being quirky and often awkward. She does everything she can to make people happy, especially Captain Holt whom she admires a lot. Her character fights the discrimination faced towards females in the workforce, as well as many stereotypes for a perfectionist woman in the workforce. It is often portrayed for women in the workforce to be older and more serious and well put together, which is the opposite for Amy. While she is often a serious character, there are many situations which make her out to be an awkward woman with a need for everyone to accept her. Because of these stereotypes and adding to this is the fact that she is a woman in a predominantly male dominated world, it is hard for her to be taken seriously.

In this episode, the previous two years have been won by Jake Peralta and Captain Holt, both males, and offers the reward of a title which gives airs of being sexist. Because neither Jake or Captain Holt want her on their teams for the heist, she decides to take things in her own hands to steal the item to win. After her win, they changed the name of the title, as well as adding in new rules. We can see from this what is being mentioned in *A Guide To Gender,* concerning privilege and when it is acknowledged. In this episode, the men create this title and this game without giving thought as to how it is discriminatory to others who may not have the same privileges as them.

Seeing these examples, it is not hard to recognize the intersectionality that exists for many different people of many different groups, and all the struggles they have to face to be at the same level as others, if they can even reach it. We see the effects of racism, sexism, and many different stereotyping situations which can make it much harder for the groups of people being pushed down by these. In many of the cases, showing and then overcoming this intersectionality makes it easier for people in real life to see and acknowledge these differences they may not even be aware of, but to also deal with big problems caused by the unknown. Like it says in the book by Sam Killermann, one must first be aware of the differences and their own privileges before they can start to lessen the divide. This show does a good job of sharing serious problems in today’s culture, making them aware, before showing in the show how differences don’t mean worse or better, just different, and gives ways in which people can overcome these problems to create a more equitable culture.