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Power

The power of stereotypes is extravagant. No matter how different someone can be from a stereotype, people still don't trust them based on that stereotype alone. Kendi also mentioned that parents would pay loads of money to make sure their kids would go to other schools away from children of color or students that fit a specific stereotype (Kendi, 35-36).

The use of race as power has been around for a very long time. Kendi agrees that it can be dangerous for others: "It felt big, bigger than me, bigger than my parents or anything in my world, and threatening. What a powerful constriction race is – powerful enough to consume us" (Kendi, 37). I remember one time I had a discussion with one of my friends who had mentioned that in her class, they discussed racism. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of racist is "of, relating to, or characterized by the systemic oppression of a racial group to the social, economic, and political advantage of another." Our perspective is that people of color could use their minority status, or the color of their skin, as an excuse for acting a certain way or to be able to do or not to do something. People of color could use their power over white people in multiple occasions. One of the best examples that I could think of that happened to me personally is that while I worked at a water park over the summer, I sold cabanas. On rainy days, people would receive a partial refund and many people were upset about that. One time, a black couple came up to my window and when I told them their partial refund, they yelled at me saying, "Look at my color! Do you REALLY think that we will be able to afford this again?!"

To be fair, I was following protocol, however, they didn't see it that way. I completely understand their situation and I would have been upset about it too, but there was nothing that I could have done. I believe that they used the color of their skin as an excuse to take advantage of me and that is a main power move. In some cases, people of color could use those stereotypes, that have been created by society, as an excuse. Maybe they would not be able to afford the cabana again, but I don't think that gives them any right to yell at me or assume that even I or my family would be able to afford it either. I have even seen this happen to other co-workers who are also a different race than white.

Most parts in history don't make sense to me. They claimed to be part of the church so what made the white men back in the day believe that it was morally right to "own" another person or forcefully move the "Indians" from their land and take their things. For some reason, white people felt that they were the ones to get all the power. Somehow, Europeans advanced quicker and had an advantage above everywhere else. They had better weapons, vaccines, better food, better tools. Just because they had the advantage, didn't mean they should have abused that power into the America's. They killed almost everyone and everything. We are all the same on the inside so why not get treated that same on the outside. I believe that there is no difference between the color of someone's skin or the color of someone's hair or eyes. I wonder what the world would be like if the races were reversed. I am glad, however, that most people have moved on from the idea and that people of color have the ability to live freely. Sadly, it is taking WAY too long for everyone to become equal.

Power is not just abused through race, but gender as well! I think it is so ridiculous how people can just assume that men are better than women. I would have to disagree. There are many known facts of men taking the ideas of women and taking it as their own. My favorite

example, F. Scott Fitzgerald got his words for the Great Gatsby from his wife's diary. When she claimed that he took her diary's pages (word for word), he claimed that she was crazy, and she was put into a mental institution. There are so many more women who did not get credit for what they found/made or that men just took the idea. In so many cases, men's words were taken over a woman's. Another big topic not talked about enough is Reproductive Justice. Women had to come together and study each other's bodies so they can take back the power of their own bodies because men "gynecologists" never cared enough for them. I think that over the years, so many women have done amazing things and they have taken back their power, choice, and created their own lifestyle. Now women can study in school and make a living for themselves, without having to "rely" on men.