



MIREN IN THE PAST, MISLEADING THE PRESENT: KOREAN DRAMAS AND THE DISTORTION OF THE MODERN WOMEN

Na Kyung Kim
United World College South East Asia, Singapore, Singapore
Corresponding Email: juliakim111159@gmail.com

Abstract

In the past decade, Korean popular culture has grown exponentially throughout Asia, as well as globally. One particular media form, Korean dramas, also referred to as K-dramas, have developed into a billion-dollar industry. These dramas, which are generally centered around a romantic focus, have seen an explosive rise in popularity in recent years.

Korean Dramas portray a particular version of Asian women that is rooted in traditional and cultural female archetypes. This portrayal is manifested in an idealized physical appearance, and socioeconomic situation of the protagonists, both male and female.

This paper will examine the particular gender stereotypes of woman rooted in Asian society as depicted in Korean dramas. Through an analysis of the female representation as rendered in these series, this study will demonstrate that these depictions, which are subliminally delivered and predominantly viewed by female audiences, provide misleading perceptions of women and therefore reinforces conventional gender and cultural stereotypes. Typecasting women in traditional and cultural gender roles is contradictory to the modern view of female empowerment that focuses on elevating the social and economic status of women that is simultaneously rising in Asia, particularly in South Korea and China. Korean dramas serve as a regression of feminist ideals by reinforcing female stereotypes of submissive, dutiful and docile individuals who are subservient to their male counterparts. Additionally, this study will focus on the impact that these representations have on women, with particular emphasis on the rise of cosmetic surgery in South Korea.

Keywords: Woman, Feminism, Media, Cosmetic Surgery, Gender Stereotypes.
