

“You can’t be a man. Be a woman, it’s a powerful business when done correctly:”

Women and Work in *Mad Men*

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1. Introduction

In this thesis, my main focus is to analyze the gender-related obstacles that are present in the American period TV drama series *Mad Men* (2007-2015), specifically the problems female copywriter Margaret 'Peggy' Olson faces. This thesis also focuses on a social history of women in the workplace and the issues that are discussed in the theoretical background of this thesis are then discussed in the context of *Mad Men*. The main themes of this thesis pertain to appearance, gender-related obstacles in the workplace and biology, and all these themes are linked to the central theme, which is discrimination against in the workplace. The research questions that will be analyzed and studied in this thesis include: how is women's career development affected by prejudice? How does *Mad Men* portray the role of women in the workplace? In what ways does *Mad Men* address these issues? It should be noted that this thesis focuses on white white-collar women and that other ethnic groups and social groups will not be considered.

Mad Men is period series drama that is set in New York City in the 1960s and it follows the storylines of employees in a fictional advertising agency, Sterling Cooper. The main character is Donald 'Don' Draper, a talented and successful creative director who supervises the creation of the adverts. The other main characters include, among others, head of secretary Joan Holloway, account executive Pete Campbell, Don's wife Betty Draper and finally, secretary Margaret 'Peggy' Olson, who is the main focus of this thesis. Sterling Cooper is a fictional advertising company, but the issues that are explored in the series were also happening in real life. During the 1960s, women worked in occupations that had been traditionally associated with femininity, such as secretarial work. Women found it difficult to advance in their careers because of lack of advancement options: men occupied the higher and more prestigious jobs and women had difficulties to enter male-dominated occupations. In *Mad Men* women occupy lower paid secretarial jobs while the men work as advertising executives, directors and copywriters. Peggy begins her career as a secretary because that was the only option for women at her time, but she successfully advances in her career and becomes a copywriter after her talent is recognized.

The women of *Mad Men* face obstacles that are dictated by the organization itself and their individual employers. Peggy advances in her career and becomes a copywriter but she faces problems such as a "glass ceiling" that prevents her from getting promoted and getting a raise, sexual harassment in the workplace and bias based on her outward appearance. Her male colleagues and employers recognize her talent in work situations but she is shunned because of her gender. This reflects the stereotypical views men held, and still hold, about women and their abilities as employees who are equal to men. Women who occupy lower positions than men can be seen as less competent and men are allowed to treat them as they please, but when women and men occupy equal positions, men may perceive women as a threat to their position. The unequal power dynamics between the two genders are manifested in issues such as sexual harassment at the workplace.

Because *Mad Men* is a fictional television series that was broadcasted during the 21st century, its portrayal of these issues is not merely the result of the ideology of the 1960s, but also a critical analysis of the issues women faced in the 1960s. This is apparent because Peggy's problems are discussed in detail as are other women's problems, which likely would not have been the case in the 1960s. In 1960, the setting of the first season of the series, second-wave feminism had not yet influenced American society as it only began to gain popularity after the publication of Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). After WWII it became common for women to be housewives instead of pursuing their own careers and the number of college admissions dropped, and, according to Woloch, "in 1940, women were 40 percent of college students, but by 1950, they had dropped to 31 percent and earned only 25 percent of bachelor's degrees" (p. 507). Domestic ideals were popular at the time and women were encouraged to become homemakers. Woloch also argues that women, who worked in sex-typed professions and often worked part-time in order to be able to take care of their children, were discriminated against, but that they "rarely objected to sex-typing of occupations or wage discrimination, which were seen as part of the rules of the game" (p. 503).

Mad Men has received critical acclaim and reviews have praised the character development and the storylines. Reviews by *The Independent* and *The Guardian* praise the series finale and argue

that the series is realistic and its characters are three-dimensional and credible. The review by The Independent states that the ending of season 7 portrayed "the wonder of life in all its messy glory." (Hughes par. 6) Since the series has been well received and perceived as realistic and believable, it can also be assumed that its commentary on the social issues is relevant. Even though the series is set in a historical period the viewer is able to relate to the experiences of the main characters because the attitudes it explores concerning women in working life are still prominent.

1.1. History of Working Women

In this section, the history of working women in the 1960s, which is the decade where *Mad Men* is set, is discussed, and of particular interest are the following topics: economic, political and cultural reasons behind the changes that took place for women at the time. The period in which *Mad Men* is set, the 1960s, was a decade of a variety of economic, societal and cultural changes, of which some of the most prominent ones were the civil rights movement, the emergence of women into the workforce and the sexual revolution. First, I will discuss the historical background behind the entry of women into the workforce, after which I will discuss economic reasons, the demand for women workers and the types of jobs they occupied, the introduction of contraceptives, and, finally, political changes.

When looking at the history of women in the workforce, the most significant changes regarding women's emergence into the workplace are related to WWII. After the war, the concept of women as wage earners was established after WWII when working wives entered the labor force because of lack of young female workers, and according to history professor Nancy Woloch, "the social status of the woman worker also rose" (p. 500). Woloch also states that the number of women in the workplace grew steadily after WWII: "before the war, only one out of four women over sixteen years old worked [...] but in 1960, two out of five held jobs, twice as many in number as in 1940" (p. 500). Despite the wave of middle-class working wives who entered the labor force, other groups of women also constituted an important share of the female work force, but working mothers were the most substantial group. These groups include single women, widows and separated and divorced women who worked to support or help support their families. According

to Woloch, by 1960 so many as “two out of five (women) held jobs, twice as many in number as in 1940” (p. 500).

The 1960s was a decade of growing economic wealth, and according to American history professor Robert L. Daniel, “in the course of the decade the labor force increased by 13,187,000 a 19.5 percent gain,” which meant that women were increasingly recruited into the labor market as the number of jobs available grew steadily and the men were already working (p. 263). Women made up three fifths of the workforce. According to Daniel three main factors contributed to this substantial change pertaining to women in the labor force: “first, the highest growth rates occurred in the service sector,” that is, in clerical and professional fields, “which grew by 40.5 percent and 49.1 percent respectively during the sixties, absorbed 5.2 million of the 7.8 million women who joined the labor force” (p. 264). According to Woloch, “clerical jobs multiplied so quickly that by 1960, one of three women wage earners held one” (p. 501). Secondly, the number of women workers grew essentially in traditional sex-typed women's jobs, which was apparent in fields such as clerical employment, where, according to Daniel, “3.6 of the 3.9 persons added to the clerical occupations were women” (p. 264). Thus, it is apparent that women were centered in such occupations that were traditionally considered appropriate for female workers, and men were concentrated in traditionally male occupations, such as doctors or engineers. Women typically worked in clerical occupations and in other traditionally female occupations, such as a nurse or a teacher. It is important to note that these figures depict the entry of one group of women into the workforce, namely white-collar white women, and the entry into the workforce took place very differently for other groups, such as black or Hispanic women.

The third factor that contributed to the changes in women’s labor force participation was the shift that took place in male-dominated professions. According to Daniel, “women scored modest inroads in occupations that had long been male-dominated,” especially in blue-collar occupations such as mechanic workers and construction workers (p. 266). The fourth and final factor pertains, according to Daniel, to the question that to what extent is the changing demand for female labor be attributable to the growth of different occupations and how much it has to do with “an expanded employment share for women.” (p. 266). The women who in large numbers entered the labor force in the 1960s chose occupations that were already largely female-oriented and had

large numbers of female employees. The majority of these women went on to have clerical jobs, which was an occupational field that, according to Daniel, grew steadily because of the growing number of corporate enterprises that emerged in the 1960s that “required increasing numbers of secretaries, business-machine operatives and clerks” (p. 264). As the economy rapidly expanded, demand for low-paid qualified workers in such occupations as sales, service and office work grew. Clerical jobs multiplied so quickly that by 1960, one of three women wage earners held one.

The abrupt emergence of women into the labor force in the postwar period of the 1950s and the 1960s became a permanent aspect of work life in the United States, and the fields of employment which women chose played a significant part in this. According to Woloch, the "woman worker of the 1950s and 1960s did not challenge traditional gender roles because she was likely to enter a sex-typed occupation," where the majority of workers were women and the work itself was considered traditionally female (p. 501). Therefore, the majority women workers in the postwar decades did not choose such occupations that were traditionally male or more prestigious, although some women entered male-dominated fields and became e.g. lawyers, and Woloch states that women in "prestigious professions" were "rare compared to the anonymous hordes of middle-aged office workers" (p. 501).

Cultural changes include the emergence of the oral contraceptive pill, ‘the Pill,’ which radically transformed the lives of women since sexual contact no longer necessarily lead to pregnancy. This is something that allowed women sexual freedom and also marked a significant change in women's attitudes towards life as a single working woman. Political changes include the passing of Title VII and The Equal Pay Act of 1963 which signified that working women were officially recognized and supported. These bills ensured that women could no longer be discriminated against in job-seeking, promotion or wages, which of course, was more difficult to realize in practice despite the fact that President Kennedy established a commission especially for women's rights in the workplace. Finally, Betty Friedan's feminist book *The Feminine Mystique* contributed to the emergence of second-wave feminism in the United States and had a profound effect on the 1960s American society. Because of these changes, women's rights were taken into consideration and women's new position as mothers and workers was finally recognized on a legal level.

In *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan addresses "the problem that has no name," which pertains to the phenomenon of discontented American housewives who are unhappy with their lives as homemakers but who believe that they are alone (p. 12). Since the problem was not recognized until Friedan's book proved that it was more widespread than anyone had previously thought, *The Feminine Mystique* sparked a new awakening in the feminist movement that had died down in the decades that followed the Second World War. Friedan argues that the reason why not everyone understands the fatigue that housewives feel is because it is not due to material means or due to the unfemininity of women at the time: "women who suffer this problem have lived their whole lives in the pursuit of feminine fulfillment" (p. 16). According to journalist and author Lionel Shriver, "Friedan challenged the assumption she'd grown up with that females are necessarily homebodies, who find their true contentment in polishing furniture" (p. vii).

As the 1960s was a decade of tumult and political and social change, it was a suitable landscape not only for the coming of second-wave feminism but also the sexual revolution that started with the introduction of "the Pill" which changed the lives of young working women and gave them freedom. According to Daniel, the attitudes towards sexuality and sexual freedom changed in the 1960s when "society's attitudes toward sexuality were more permissive than ever before," and women's entry into the workforce enabled them to meet more men (p. 310). Despite this, Daniel argues that birth control faced opposition from different groups, and that women themselves oral contraceptives because of health reasons: "oral contraception also came under a shadow as research linked long-term use of the pill to an increased risk of tumors, blood clots, strokes and heart attacks" (p. 329). Therefore, although oral contraceptives proved to be a revolutionary change for women and it was an integral part of the sexual revolution, and it allowed women to express their sexualities without fear of becoming pregnant, these contraceptives also faced opposition.

The most important political changes of the 1960s in terms of women's rights in the workplace was the passing of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 during the Kennedy administration and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It is stated in the Equal Pay Act that it is illegal to discriminate against an employer on the basis of gender alone, and according to Daniel, it "further prohibited an employer

from reducing any employee's wages in order to comply with the law" (p. 257). Although the Equal Pay Act was the first legislation that banned gender discrimination, the Civil Rights Act was more prominent since it took matters further and, according to Daniel, "expressly prohibited discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, or sex by private employers, employment agencies, and unions" (p. 258).

Thus, these economic, political and cultural changes contributed to the emergence of women in the workforce and also helped them to be more appreciated in their jobs. As women were more appreciated in their jobs and more women were able to enter male-dominated industries and fields, the stereotypical view of women as homemakers began to slowly change, and the concept of a career woman slowly became accepted. These real-life issues that women faced in the 1960s and the changing societal and political landscape that helped change the way women were perceived in society are also a topic of discussion in *Mad Men*. The topics of cultural, political and societal changes are also represented in *Mad Men*, where Peggy, in particular, defies traditional gender roles and who, despite the changing attitudes regarding women's role in society and in the workplace, constantly has to fight in order to be recognized.

2. Appearance

This section focuses on appearance bias, weight, beauty ideals and clothing as the issues are explored in the fictional TV series *Mad Men*. In this section, I will analyze themes that are related to the view that a woman's appearance in the workplace, be it beautiful or ugly according to conventional standards of beauty, is always under scrutiny. Themes relating to thinness and fatness are also explored as thinness has for a long time been the preferred body type for women, and also men. A woman who does not conform to a certain physical beauty standard may be harassed or ridiculed. Clothing is another important theme that can either help a woman to gain self-confidence or respect among her colleagues, or diminish her potential if the woman's attire is too sexual. Gender also plays an important role in determining how a woman is perceived in the workplace: masculine-style clothing is popular and may create a positive image of the worker, but only if the work attire also contains feminine elements.

2.1. Appearance bias

Physical attractiveness is a characteristic that is often thought of as positive, and, although it is difficult to define attractiveness and beauty, according to psychology professors Jeanette N. Cleveland, Margaret Stockdale and Kevin R. Murphy, physical attractiveness is closely linked to social status as "attractive individuals are viewed as more intelligent, sensitive, kind, interesting, sociable, and likely to attend college" (p. 69). Therefore, less attractive women are viewed as less intelligent and likeable than their more attractive counterparts. Perceptions of attractiveness can thus create a bias for women in the workplace and affect their evaluation, especially by male but also female co-workers and employers. This real-world problem is explored throughout *Mad Men*, which is apparent in the way women are encouraged to use makeup and look attractive in order to please the men in the office.

Attractiveness as a trait, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, "appears to have a stronger effect for women than for men on perceptions of job performance" (p. 74). Thus, this indicates that the job performance of physically attractive women is of higher value than a less attractive individual's performance. In Peggy's case, the boys secretly ridicule Peggy because of

her appearance and although they remark that she was quite good at her job, her skills are dismissed because of her unappealing appearance. Film and television historian Mary Beth Haralovich states that appearance is of utmost importance at Sterling Cooper and that Peggy "cannot move forward without changing her look" in order to appeal to and be valued by the men at the office (p. 167). Attractiveness and beauty are valued traits that may influence the way an individual is treated, and according to sociology and gender studies professor Wendy Chapkis, "a woman will be valued and rewarded on the basis of how close she comes to embodying the ideal" (p. 14). Thus, it is the woman's job to always conform to beauty ideals and standards in order to be valued as part of society, in this case the fictional advertising agency, Sterling Cooper.

Physical attractiveness can be an advantage for female workers in terms of treatment and advancement possibilities, but it can also be an obstacle for women who work in sex-typed lower-paid professions, such as secretarial work, and also for women who do not work in sex-typed occupations. Although physical attractiveness may be an asset for a man in a professional job, according to Cleveland, Stockland and Murphy, women may face biases because of attractive physical appearance and "male associates may patronize or be sexually attracted to them" while female co-workers may be jealous of them (p. 75). Male co-workers might desire a sexual relationship instead of a professional relationship. "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" focuses on Peggy's first day on the job and she attracts the attention of the men who work at Sterling Cooper, especially account executive Pete Campbell who starts to flirt with her the minute he sees her, despite the fact that she is in their boss, Don Draper's, office. He smiles at her and makes remarks about her appearance and later remarks to Don that he should have the right to hit on her first: "Do I get first crack with her? The word is she took down more sailors than *Arizona*." ("Smoke Gets in Your Eyes", 17:30). Thus, since Peggy occupies a lower position than Pete and the other male workers are allowed to treat women as they please. This is, according to psychology professor Joyce Slochower, because of the prevailing notion that at Sterling Cooper "women are sexual objects to be used and discarded" (p. 382).

Women attempt to become part of society by conforming to beauty standards and, according to Chapkis (1986), women seek "the rights of citizenship through acceptable femininity" (p. 5). Since

attractive individuals are considered successful and desirable, both female and male employees at Sterling Cooper attempt to assist Peggy in order for her to dress in an appealing manner. During her first scene in *Mad Men*, Peggy is seen in the elevator with Harry, Kenny and Paul Kinsey, who work at Sterling Cooper, and when the men realize that Peggy will work at Sterling Cooper, they remark that she should pay attention to them. The men state by paying attention to the men and what kind of men they are, Peggy should be able to know how to behave and she will “know what kind of girl to be” (“Smoke Gets in Your Eyes”, 06:54) in case she was to be their secretary. Pete Campbell remarks that Peggy should wear more form-fitting and sexy outfits after noticing that she is wearing a conservative outfit, a sweater and a long, grey circle skirt: “It wouldn't be a sin for us to see your legs. Pull your waist in a little bit, you might look like a woman” (“Smoke Gets in Your Eyes”, 16:58). The men openly comment on Peggy's appearance, appearing rather condescending and confident, while the female workers are less crude. Joan remarks that Peggy should show off her legs and encourages her to honestly evaluate her good sides and bad sides, without the crude tone of the men. Therefore, Peggy is expected by both her male and female colleagues to be attractive and dress in an appealing and revealing manner in order to satisfy the men she works for.

Thus, it is apparent that in the fictional world of *Mad Men*, women are harshly judged according to their appearance and they are under pressure to look appealing in the eyes of their male co-worker. This indicates that women at Sterling Cooper, including Peggy, are mainly judged according to their appearance instead of their abilities, which creates an unequal power structure at the company. Peggy, whose appearance and looks are generally considered average, is initially adored by her male co-workers because she is the new girl at the company. *Mad Men*, especially the earlier episodes, also perpetuate a view that women have to be beautiful and that it is socially acceptable for a man to comment on a woman's appearance in the workplace, although it is unrelated to their work performance.

2.1.1 Weight

In *Mad Men*, thinness is often associated with attractiveness and success, while different body shapes are considered less attractive and desirable. The beauty of body shapes is subjective, but thinness has become the Western ideal of beauty due to, among other things, the introduction of mass media. According to sociologist Allan Mazur, feminine body ideals have changed drastically since the early 1910s, when “the heavy-bodied voluptuous woman was a favorite in burlesque” and also in magazines, but this ideal quickly changed (p. 287). By the 1940s and 1950s a more voluptuous hourglass figure was fashionable. The women in beauty pageants, according to Mazur had “a norm of bust-hip symmetry,” meaning that their bust was larger than their hips, but the ideal entailed a slim stomach and proportionate curves (p. 290). In *Mad Men*, the majority of women can be considered slim, with the exception of office manager Joan Holloway, who has a curvaceous but yet proportionate body. Thus, the women are expected to look slim in order to be appreciated in the workplace. Otherwise they will be ridiculed and mocked if they fail to meet the standards. For example, during “Shoot”, where Peggy has gained weight because of her pregnancy, and is thus not slim and attractive anymore, she faces ridicule because of her appearance. As Peggy rips her dress and is forced to borrow a spare dress from Joan, the men in the office laugh at her behind her back when she walks by in the dress that does not fit her properly. Laughingly, they taunt and make fun of her, commenting that “she is having a very bad freshman year,” (“Smoke Gets in Your Eyes”, 20:08) and although they acknowledge that Peggy did a good job on her first copy, a Belle Jolie-lipstick account, “she obviously let it go to her head and other places.” (“Smoke Gets in Your Eyes”, 20:15) Therefore, Peggy is ridiculed because of her weight due to the pressure to look attractive according to the beauty ideals of the 1960s.

Thus, it is apparent that in order to be valued, Peggy should lose weight in order to be physically appealing in the eyes of her co-workers. Joan, however, makes a remark that she heard Peggy was only chosen for a Belle Jolie-lipstick account once the client's wife saw Peggy and thought that she was unattractive enough not to tempt her husband, after Peggy stated that she is proud to be the first female copywriter in years, which means that Peggy is made aware of her less desirable appearance. This indicates that beauty in the workplace may in fact hinder a female worker in her advancing endeavors. These problems that Peggy faces in Shoot indicate that beauty plays an important role at Sterling Cooper and, according to film theoretician Kim Akass and film and television studies lecturer Janet McCabe, her less appealing appearance “means that nobody is

taking Peggy seriously," and that attractiveness correlates with opinions and success (p. 188). Peggy, who is no longer desirable in the eyes of the men at Sterling Cooper, is an outsider in the office and her work-related successes are also undermined because of her appearance.

Despite the fact that Peggy is discriminated against because of her weight, it seems that weight itself is not necessarily a negative thing, but the positive or negative response depends on the shape of the body. Feminine beauty is subjective but seems to follow some key characteristics: according to Mazur, "roundness rather than angularity, fleshiness rather than flaccidity" and symmetry are traits that have been considered beautiful throughout history (p. 283). In *Mad Men*, Peggy, who gains weight due to her pregnancy and is ridiculed and devalued because of it, is treated very differently when compared with company office manager Joan. Joan has a large bust and curvaceous hourglass shape, but she is never ridiculed because of her size although she in fact is bigger than Peggy. The difference between the two women seems to be in the way the women carry themselves since Joan is confident and openly flirtatious, while Peggy still has not found her self-confidence. Joan and Peggy fight for recognition, but seek it in two different ways as Joan sees her body as her tool, the way of acquiring power and acknowledgement in the workplace. According to gender studies director Ann Ciasullo, Joan treats her appearance as a product: "in her form-fitting, dresses of pinks, reds, purples, and blues, she understands how to make the customer look twice" (p. 21). Thus, Joan accentuates and celebrates her curvaceous body, using it as a tool to get recognition, which results in her being celebrated and adored by the male customers and co-workers. Peggy, however, refuses to use her body as a tool and refuses to draw attention to her body so that, according to Ciasullo, "her colleagues pay attention to what she thinks matters most: her mind" (p. 23.) It seems that Peggy's lack of self-confidence and reserved nature in the earlier seasons is at least partly a conscious decision to make herself seem professional.

Another difference is the shape of the women's bodies: Joan's body, although wider and more shapely than most of the women's bodies in *Mad Men*, is curvaceous and could be described as being a hourglass shape, which has typically been considered as the most appealing shape for a woman to have. During the 1950s and 1960s, feminine beauty ideals favored a curvy figure which,

according to Mazur, consisted of a “large cleaved bustlines (with falsies) and tiny cinched waists (and girdles)” (p. 291). Peggy's weight, however, is not distributed evenly on her body and she carries most of the weight on her behind and waist because of her pregnancy. This shape is not considered as appealing by the men in the office, and neither does it follow the beauty ideals of the time, which according to Mazur, began to change during the 1950s from a slender figure to a voluptuous figure: “the ideal torso required conspicuous curvature, with fat redistributed away from the waist to hips and breast (p. 291). Thus, since Joan is adored because of her flirtatious and open personality, and her body weight is distributed evenly on her body, with the help of undergarments to create a perfect hourglass shape, she is considered highly desirable and attractive despite the fact that she is not thin. As Peggy is considered average in her looks, and she is shy and does not have such an open personality, she is quickly dismissed by her co-workers. Another reason might be the fact that Peggy has been promoted to copywriter and the men in the creative team are angry with her because of it, or even threatened by her, and decide to ridicule her because it is the only way that they can degrade her in the workplace.

In conclusion, weight definitely affects the way Peggy is treated at Sterling Cooper: when she is slim, she is celebrated during her arrival and her appearance is otherwise rarely commented on, but as she gains weight, the men in the office laugh and ridicule her behind her back. Her heavier appearance does not go unnoticed in the office and it affects the way she is seen in the eyes of her male co-workers. She is no longer the object of desire or merely a co-worker, but she is seen as the butt of a joke. This even reflects onto the way her male co-workers see her as a co-worker: she is rarely praised by her co-workers, at least in the first season, and her weight gain also seems to diminish her worth as a copywriter. Thus, the evaluation of feminine beauty does in Peggy's case depend on several factors: her body shape, the way the fat is stored on her body and possible jealousy because of her success in the workplace.

2.1.2. Beauty ideals

The 1960s had two prevalent feminine beauty ideals, a sexy and curvaceous, usually blonde, bombshell and a slender ideal, of which the latter, according to Mazur, “symbolized a subdued and classy sensuality, often associated with the aristocrat and high fashion.” (p. 294). In *Mad Men*, the men in the office have a stereotypical view of women and the women, who all are young, slim and dressed in such a way that pleases the men, which makes them flirt with them all the time. In the sixth episode of the second season, “Maidenform”, while the creative team is working on a pitch for Playtex-brassieres, the men define all women as either Marilyns or Jackies. As Peggy questions this stereotypical view of women, Paul Kinsey replies: “women want to see themselves the way men see them,” (“Maidenform,” 20:16) which sums up the view that the men of Sterling Cooper have of their female co-workers and secretaries. This reflects the wish that the men have for women workers, and that the woman worker should always be attractive and dressed in an appealing way. The two types of women are different: the Marilyn type is blonde, sexy, and curvaceous, who wears form-fitting clothing that enhances her figure, while Jackie is petite, demure and stylish in her manner of dress. Yet, these stereotypical types of women support the sexist view that every woman should aspire to be attractive in the eyes of men, and they also perpetuate the belief that a woman can only be beautiful if she belongs to one of these categories.

The case of Peggy is more curious since she is not considered as attractive as some of the other women, although the men do flirt with her. After she becomes a copywriter, some of the men, such as account executive Peter Campbell, continue to flirt with her, but most do not, and her appearance is rarely discussed in a positive light. The men do not consider Peggy to be a Jackie or Marilyn, but a Gertrude Stein, which is intended to diminish and hurt Peggy because Stein, a novelist, did not fit the stereotypical description of feminine beauty. This indicates that the men are unable to group Peggy into one category and instead resort to insulting her and calling her unattractive as they are unable to do so. Thus, Peggy is not perceived in as a stereotypical way as the secretaries are and her modestly attractive appearance is more often mocked than praised by her co-workers, and her looks seem to work for her in the sense that, according to clothing and textiles professor Susan B. Kaiser, “highly attractive women are stereotyped as being too feminine for the job” (p. 260). Peggy proves to be a good copywriter, who also is a good decision-maker and able to work under pressure. She is thus able to prove her abilities as an able copywriter, but she is

never celebrated as a beautiful and attractive copywriter, who is admired by the men in the office, such as Joan.

Beauty and attractiveness might also affect the way one is perceived in the workplace and also in work interview situations, which is also true in *Mad Men*. It is apparent that attractive and unattractive individuals are treated differently. Attractive women are generally preferred and favored in sex-typed professions, while, according to Kaiser, physical attractiveness can hinder a female applicant “when the job in question emphasizes the need for instrumental or masculine skills,” although attractiveness is valued in such high-level jobs where the person has contact with clients, such as managerial jobs (p. 260). *Mad Men's* fictional world seems to follow this pattern to some extent as the secretaries are expected to be young, slim and attractive, and women who do not fit these categories are ridiculed and shunned, like Peggy was during her pregnancy. Thus, it seems that attractiveness is a trait that is valued among those female employees who occupy lower-status jobs, such as secretarial jobs, but beauty can be an obstacle for women in higher positions. Such is the case for Joan, the head secretary of Sterling Cooper, who in “Severance” is assigned with the task to present a Topaz pantyhose pitch to the leaders of the advertising company with Peggy Olson. As the women pitch their pantyhose account to the all-male board of the company, the men listen to Peggy and Joan's presentation, but proceed to comment on Joan's curvaceous appearance: “you should be in the bra business, you are a work of art” (“Severance,” 17:40). Peggy is completely ignored and receives no such comments in the situation, possibly because her appearance is lacking in the eyes of the men. This indicates that Joan's beauty distracts from her abilities as an employee.

Another example of the juxtaposition between Joan and Peggy in terms of career success and appearance in correlation to it are their career developments: Peggy is promoted early on because of her talent, which would help the company financially, while Joan gets disappointed time after time until she finally decides to leave in the series' final season because of sexual harassment. Joan also has to make a tough decision in the eleventh episode of the fifth season, “The Other Woman”, when the company is in financial difficulties and a Jaguar dealer wants to seal the deal by sleeping with the beautiful redhead. Although Joan is not directly forced to agree, it is clear that

the head of the company expect her to accommodate herself to their wishes. The men of the Sterling Cooper Draper Pryce had already made the decision beforehand and they are, out of desperation, trying to persuade Joan to agree, and she agrees for a share in the company. Account executive Peter Campbell comments that it is strictly about business, not prostitution: "I'm talking about business at a very high level," ("The Other Woman" 7:32) which degrades Joan and her image as a professional worker at the company. Peggy, who is average in her looks, never has to be put into such a situation since potential clients hardly ever even comment on her appearance, only on her work. Thus, beauty and attractiveness can hinder the career development of a woman in a company.

In conclusion, beauty ideals are used to define the women of Sterling Cooper. As all women either are Marilyns or Jackies, it is clear that the view of women in the eyes of the men in the office is very limited. When these women are defined according to their appearance and stereotypical beauty ideals, their professional status is forgotten. Attractiveness might also distract the men from understanding that a woman is a worker and not a potential mate, which is also the case with Joan. When she is asked to sleep with a dealer, she is seen as a sexual being instead of ahead secretary, which she actually is. Peggy, who is neither a Marilyn nor a Jackie, is never defined according to her sexuality because she is considered average in looks and does not display her sexuality. Beauty is also highly regarded in lower-status jobs, such as Joan's beauty and flirtatious nature is valued, but her attractiveness becomes an obstacle in higher-status jobs, which is also true for Joan as she attempts to assume a professional role in a meeting. Therefore, beauty ideals affect the way a woman is perceived in the workplace and beauty can both be a positive and negative trait.

[2.1.3. 1960s Work Attire](#)

The clothing style of women changed radically during the postwar decades, and the key changes of the 1960s happened due to the entry of women in the workforce as opposed to the women who stayed home. Betty Friedan's concept of the feminine mystique which "says that the highest value and the only commitment for women is the fulfillment of their own femininity" coincides with the

clothing and style of the time (p. 43). According to Kaiser, the shirtwaist dress was a popular attire among homemakers which included “hose and high heels” combined with makeup and a few pieces of statement jewelry (p. 86). This look is also popular in the fictional office of Sterling Cooper, where the women workers closely follow the 1950s and early 1960s fashion rules, especially in the early seasons of the series. Form-fitting knee-length dresses, A-line skirts and dresses, high heels and make up are frequently seen on the secretaries in the office, as are pencil skirts. Peggy, unwilling to be subjected to being a mere object of desire to the men, initially refuses to wear makeup and form-fitting clothing that shows off her figure as she is determined to advance in her career and be respected for her talent, not her looks. She, however, begrudgingly changes her mind after Joan and Don Draper’s romantic interest Bobbie Barrett instruct her to use her femininity to her advance in order to gain respect from the men. In “New Girl” Bobbie tells Peggy to find pride in her femininity and use it to her advantage: “you can’t be a man. Be a woman, it’s a powerful business when done correctly.” (“New Girl,” 35:37) Thus, *Mad Men* seems to perpetuate the idea that a woman should be able to be a woman instead of trying to be a man, and that women’s clothing affects the way she is perceived in the workplace.

In *Mad Men*, Peggy quickly adopts a look that consists of a matching tailored jacket and skirt, which became synonymous for working women in the 1970s, after their emergence into the workforce. According to textiles and design teacher Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, design emerita Joanne B. Eicher and textiles professor Kim KP. Johnson, the landscape of workplace fashion began to change in the late 1960s when mainly feminist women who were “working in white-collar jobs began to choose tailored business suits with a jacket similar to a man's suit jacket, worn with either trousers or skirts” (p. 105). The new business suit that was adapted by working women eventually changed in time as women were able to assume long-time male-dominated positions and were able to experiment with their fashion choices, e.g. in terms of structure, color and pattern. According to Kaiser, this experimentation showed “a willingness on the part of working women to experiment more with appearance by obtaining ideas from fashion media and by becoming less reliant on one's co-workers for fashion guidance” (p. 87).

In *Mad Men*, Peggy's clothing seems to change and evolve during the decade of the 1960s and as she advances in her career, she is seen wearing feminine A-line skirts and dresses and skirted business suits as the series goes on, which thus implicates that she feels the need to dress appropriately in the workforce, while following the fashion of the time. During the series, Peggy's wardrobe consists of earth tones and plaid patterns, and these styles are consistent throughout the series, although she begins to wear brighter colors and different styles nearing the end of the series, even trousers and a pantsuit. The timespan of the *Mad Men* storylines goes from 1960 to 1970, during which the fashion had changed from a feminine 1950s aesthetic to a shorter, more relaxed and sharp aesthetic of the 1960s. Thus, the style changes that Peggy undergoes during the course of the series is both due to the fashion changes of the era, her promotions in the company, and her own growing self-esteem as a working woman.

2.1.4. Clothing and external image in the workplace

Beauty and attractiveness are traits that as we have seen may hinder or help advance someone's career in the workplace, and clothing is a significant part of attractiveness. According to professors of management Joy Peluchette and Katherine Karl, women pay more attention to workplace attires and that dressing to impress was believed to impact "the way they feel about themselves and their workplace outcomes" (p. 45). This is also apparent in *Mad Men*, where the female characters are expected to dress well and to wear tight form-fitting dresses and skirts at the office, presumably for the male workers' viewing pleasure, and this trend carries on from the first season to the final one. When Peggy first arrives at Sterling Cooper, she is wearing a conservative circle dress and a sweater on top of it that hides her shape. She, however, quickly adapts to the style of the other girls and eventually starts wearing form-fitting dresses, pencil skirts and cuts her long hair to a stylish bob, without, however, losing her personal style. As Peggy begins her transformation from a modest and demure teenager to a stylish and modern young woman, this evolution of style goes hand in hand with her evolvment to a capable and later on also respected copywriter. Peggy's clothing seems to mature as she does, and this is apparent in her storyline in *Mad Men*: after her initial reluctance to conform to the wishes of the men in the office, she uses her new, more mature look to gain respect from her male co-workers. According to film and television historian Mary Beth Haralovich, she, alongside Joan, embraces "the professional

expectations of 1960s beauty culture as a means to their own authority and power” (p. 164).

Peggy’s authority and power grows as she succeeds in her job and her professional look helps her do so.

Clothing and the style of a workplace attire may also be a conscious decision to make a positive impact on the co-workers. Karl and Peluchette argue that “individuals actively monitor their environment for clues as to how others perceive them and are motivated to construct an image to change or influence others perceptions,” which is a practice that they call “impression management” (p. 49). Thus, an individual may endeavor to construct a positive image of themselves in the eyes of their co-workers in order to gain respect, and this is something that can also be seen in the fictional advertising agency, Sterling Cooper. In *Mad Men* it is impossible to say with absolute certainty that Peggy intends to impress her colleagues with her wardrobe, but her wardrobe combined with her growing self-confidence nearing the end of her storyline work seamlessly together.

This phenomenon is especially clear in “Lost Horizon”, where Peggy, who is transferring jobs along with other co-workers after Sterling Cooper gets into financial difficulties, proves that she is equal to her male co-worker by showing her confidence and she is dressing to impress. During the episode, she gets drunk with co-partner of Sterling Cooper, receives an obscene Japanese painting from him, and she is seen leaving the old Sterling Cooper building with a newfound confidence. Not long before had she been mistaken for a secretary by her new boss at McCann-Erickson and much to her dismay: “They thought I was a secretary?,” (“Lost Horizon,” 10:22) but when she is strutting down the corridor in her navy blue skirt and striped blouse, holding the painting, with a cigarette on her lips, sunglasses on, red lipstick on her lips and a confident look on her face, she is the epitome of a successful and confident career woman. As unknown men walk down the hallway, turning their heads in amazement as she walks by with her head held high, it is apparent that Peggy causes both amazement and bewilderment since no other woman has behaved in such a way during the course of the series. Thus, Peggy is able to convey that she is able to behave like a man and successfully so, but without losing her femininity. In fact, she seems to be enjoying,

reveling in her feminine look that is not the cause of her self-confidence but which certainly helps her make an impact.

In conclusion, clothing and external image in the workplace affect the way a worker is perceived, which also is true for Peggy in *Mad Men*. Peggy's style changes from a plain and conservative look to a more streamlined and business-like style. Peggy's wardrobe changes as she is promoted to copywriter and is successful in her career, but it also happens because the fashion changed during the decade. Peggy's style undergoes a lasting development during her storyline and it happens simultaneously as she advances in her career, and the evolution of her style also goes hand in hand with her growing self-confidence, assertiveness and authority. Therefore, as Peggy wears such clothes that are regarded as professional and she pays attention to the way she looks, she is simultaneously gaining respect and self-confidence.

2.1.5. Gender and clothing

Workplace attire may also reflect self-reflection and individuality inside the boundaries that are created and maintained by the workplace. While employees, both male and female, are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate for work, attire and style may also convey notions about the employee or interviewee. For women and men alike a masculine clothing style may help the candidate or worker to be perceived positively and are associated with more desirable qualities. According to Professors Sandra M. Forsythe, Mary Frances Lake and Charles E. Cox, applicants for a job were perceived more favorably if they were dressed in masculine-styled clothing: "the more masculine the costume, the more favorable the hiring recommendations associated with it" (p. 378). This notion of masculinized workplace attire, however, may not only be considered a positive thing as professional women who wear a feminized version of a male uniform, which consists of a jacket, skirt and a blouse, may be considered too harsh or masculine because of the unfeminine nature of the attire. According to Roach-Higgins, Eicher and Johnson, women who wear professional suits at work and who possess aggressive attitudes may be considered too masculine, which may "diminish their professional image and chances for promotion" (p. 132-133). In their study, Roach-Higgins, Eicher and Johnson study the use of a necktie on a woman and the focus is

on the meaning assigned to the object. A symbol such as a necktie is interpreted in such a way that it attempts to “organize behavior toward the wearer based on the interpretation,” which thus indicates that a piece of clothing may determine the way in which the individual is perceived (p. 134).

In *Mad Men*, women employees, who are mostly operators and secretaries who work below the male employees, mostly wear dresses and skirts in the office, but Peggy wears a pantsuit on one occasion which is also significant for her character and especially career development. This occasion when she wears the pantsuit is significant in many ways, mainly because it can be seen as a symbol for rebellion and self-reflection. Women in the workplace are expected to wear a professional-looking suit that is similar to men's office wear. However, according to Roach-Higgins, Eicher and Johnson, “the recommended uniform is supposed to be feminized (i.e., softer) version and not a direct copy of a man's suit.” (p. 135). This notion is also supported by Forsythe, Cox and Drake (1985), who found in their study that masculine-inspired clothing is received favorably among interviewers, but a line was crossed when the suit was considered too angular and masculine in form. Thus, although women are supposed to wear professional suits and masculine-styled clothing may be seen as a positive characteristic in interview and promotion situations, women are not supposed to copy menswear and are instead encouraged to wear skirts and high heels. Roach-Higgins, Eicher and Johnson also state that a woman who is considered too “mannish” or adopt an appearance too closely aligned with a masculine gender role” may receive a negative response (p. 135).

In the sixth season finale, “In Care Of,” creative director Don Draper is fired and Peggy is seen sitting in his office. This symbolizes her ability to climb the corporate ladder against all odds, and here Peggy significantly debuts a plaid pantsuit. Her fashion choice is revolutionary and aptly symbolizes the liberation of women in the *Mad Men* era as women’s trousers were not an appropriate piece of clothing to be worn in the office until the late 1960s, when, according to Lurie, they “became elegant as well as respectable” (p. 226). Although her pantsuit is styled to fit a woman, it can be considered masculine in style when compared with the skirts and dresses of the secretaries in the workplace who all wear form-fitting and feminine blouses, skirts and dresses.

The red plaid pantsuit definitely is a sign of empowerment for Peggy as she has, for the time being, advanced in her career, and now wears masculine-style clothes which possibly indicates that she belongs to the 'men's world'.

The plaid pantsuit is not only a sign of empowerment and a sign that masculine-typed clothing is a key to success for Peggy, but it also challenges the rigid gender stereotypes that are expected of a woman in a 1960s workplace. Peggy's pantsuit also symbolizes rebellion and refusal to conform to rigid gender norms regarding her workplace attire. Since women in the workplace, in the eyes of their co-workers and bosses, would be seen as women because of their gender, attire that is deemed too masculine may be detrimental to the worker herself as she may be seen as too aggressive or incompetent. Thus, as Peggy wears a pantsuit which was not the norm of women's workplace attire in the late 1960s and something that the other women in the fictional workplace would never wear because it would not please the men, and the pantsuit symbolizes a willingness to break the rules although the pantsuit itself is tailored and modeled to suit a female body.

Peggy is also able to reinvent the masculine suit in a way that suits a woman and reinforces her femininity, which thus aptly symbolizes her work journey as well: she indeed is a woman in a male-dominated workplace, but is able to stay true to her gender although she is expected to act like a man. The plaid red black and white pantsuit is tailored to suit a woman's body and it shows off her figure, and the color palette of the whole style: a patterned pantsuit, a red turtleneck and bright red lipstick are distinctly feminine in style, although the pantsuit is modelled after the masculine suit. The color of the pantsuit also plays an important part and studies have shown that the color red, which is the dominant color of Peggy's attire, may evoke strong sexual and biological responses in an individual. These responses correlate with sexuality, masculinity, power, success and aggressiveness, but even with fear and failure. According to Hill and Barton, the color red is strongly correlated with the concept of success and winning in sports: "the presence and intensity of red coloration that correlates with male dominance" (p. 293).

This idea is also supported by behavioral ecology lecturers Craig S. Roberts, Roy C. Owen and anthropologist Jan Havlicek, who suggest that in mate selection "clothing color affects perceived

attractiveness of males as well as females” (p. 361). Thus, the association of the color red with success, aggressiveness, attractiveness and pervasiveness shows that the color of Peggy's clothing is probably deliberate and is consistent with the scene of the episode and her career success: she wears a dominant color that is associated with power, which demonstrates her personal and especially professional power in the scene. Her red lipstick also creates a similar effect, the fact that she is wearing makeup feminizes her appearance, but in no way diminishes the power of it. Her red lipstick symbolizes femininity and attractiveness, while her red turtleneck sweater, printed red black and beige pantsuit allow her to express her success and masculinize her appearance. Thus, the selection of this pantsuit is groundbreaking in the sense that it is a piece of clothing that accentuates Peggy's feminine appearance, but it is still modeled after a man's suit.

Therefore, gender plays an important part in the workplace, especially when it comes to women's work attires. It is apparent that women in the workplace are subject to judgement according to their clothing, and that masculine-style clothing can be considered both positive and negative: masculine-style clothing can have a positive influence, but women are not encouraged to wear wholly masculine business suits. In *Mad Men*, Peggy debuts a red plaid pantsuit that symbolizes her journey in the workplace and her ability to overcome gender-related obstacles in the workplace. The pantsuit, however, is styled to suit a female body, which also aptly symbolizes Peggy's role as a copywriter and later copy chief: Peggy is a woman who works in a male-dominated workplace, and she has adopted some typically male characteristics, such as being straightforward and even more aggressive. She, however, does not have to become a man and completely change her personality and the way she acts; thus, she is able to be a woman in the workplace and succeed in doing so without acting like a man.

2.1.6. Clothing and Sexuality

The style of women's clothes that is considered appropriate for a workplace also affects the perception and treatment of said women in the workplace. Women who wear feminine-style clothing or sexualized clothing are, according to psychologists Neil Howlett, Karen J. Pine, Natassia Cahill, Ben C. Fletcher and assistant professor İsmail Orakçioğlu, perceived negatively, especially

women in a high status role, who are “expected to be appropriately attired as well as being able to moderate the extent to which she displays her femininity” (p. 107). Women who occupy lower status roles were also negatively judged in Howlett, Pine, Cahill, Fletcher and Orakçioğlu’s study, but to a lesser extent than a woman in a higher position. Therefore, the pressure is higher on a woman who occupies a higher-status job than one with a lower one.

In *Mad Men*, Peggy’s manner of dress cannot be described as revealing or sexualized in the series, but instead, during the course of the seven seasons her style evolves from modest to business-like. As she struggles to find her place as a female copywriter in the sixth episode of the second season, “Maidenform”, Peggy attempts to emulate the feminine style of the secretaries of the office in order to fit into the group, and she wears a blue low-cut dress that reveals her décolletage, make-up and large jewelry. Peggy, who hopes to be respected and included into her co-workers’ conversations, fails to gain respect by dressing in revealing clothing and wearing heavy makeup and is glared at by co-worker Peter Campbell. This scene shows the difference between subtly sexual clothing that covers the bust and knees, and inappropriately revealing clothing. This look and her inappropriate behavior that includes her touching her own breast, are a far cry from her professional image. According to Haralovich, “unable to access information in the office, Peggy presents herself as a playgirl,” which diminishes her worth as a professional copywriter and instead reduces her to a sexual plaything (p. 169).

According to Howlett, Pine, Cahill, Fletcher and Orakçioğlu, “minor clothing manipulations were sufficient to generate certain stereotypical reactions of professional competence in a working context,” which indicates that certain outfits that fail to meet the criteria of appropriate office attire may result in a harsh judgement of the individual in question (p. 112). As Peggy decides to wear feminine-styled inappropriate clothing to a work meeting in a bar, she is subject to sexual objectification and ends up sitting in the lap of the client, which is perceived as degrading for a woman who holds an equal position to all the men in the meeting. Thus, a clothing-related mistake on Peggy’s part, instead of helping her gain respect, showed her in a negative light despite her intentions. This correlates with Howlett, Pine, Cahill, Fletcher and Orakçioğlu’s view of clothing manipulation and stereotypes in the sense that as Peggy’s clothing, which can usually be either

described as conventional or later on, sharp and business-like, is manipulated and her style changes into an alluring and sexy one, it diminishes her professionalism in the eyes of her co-workers. Thus, since Peggy occupies a high position at Sterling Cooper, she is also more harshly judged when she fails to look the part of a professional copywriter when compared with the secretaries of the company, who occupy a lower position. While the women who occupy sex-typed professions are celebrated for their form-fitting clothing that show off their legs and accentuate their curves, Peggy is judged for it because of her higher position.

In conclusion, sexualized clothing may generate negative responses, which is also true in Peggy's case as she is immediately seen as a sexual plaything instead of a professional when she wears revealing clothing and heavy makeup. There seems to be a double standard when it comes to sexualized work attire: the secretaries, Joan included, are encouraged to wear formfitting dresses, but not ones that are too revealing. Although Peggy's dress is not too revealing or suggestive, she is immediately sexualized and not seen as a professional, which is detrimental for her own image. It is apparent that although secretaries are encouraged to flirt and dress in tight dresses and skirts, they are not encouraged to wear too revealing clothes or act inappropriately as Peggy does when she touches her breast. It can also be assumed that higher-level working women are held to a different standard when it comes to sexuality and even a small clothing manipulation can result in a negative response.

3. Obstacles in the workplace

This section focuses on obstacles for women in the workplace, such as the wage gap, gender-based prejudice, and attitudes towards women, acting like a man and finally, how to overcome these gender-related obstacles. In this section, the main themes that are analyzed pertain to the view that women in the workplace face unjust treatment solely because of their gender. These obstacles exist because men in the workplace hold stereotypical views of women as less capable of succeeding because of their nurturing and less aggressive nature. A woman who behaves like a man is expected to succeed better in more prestigious jobs than a feminine woman, and this is another theme that I will be analyzing in this section, as is how a woman can overcome obstacles in the workplace and be treated as an equal to her male co-workers, without losing her personality and her femininity. These themes will be discussed in the context of *Mad Men* and Peggy Olson's experiences in the series.

Women faced resistance in the labor force during the 1960s and they were mostly working in sex-typed professions where the majority of the workers were female and their wages were typically lower than men's wages. Despite this, some women also had more prestigious jobs and held higher positions at their workplace, but they also faced resistance in terms of job advancement opportunities and promotion opportunities. According to history professor Rochelle Gatlin, women often chose occupations that were sex-typed and received lower wages than men, rarely "did they begin entry-level jobs which promised a well-defined route of promotion," and even if women did reach "the point where further advancement involved supervising male workers, she was typically passed over." (p. 35). The term "glass ceiling" pertains to gender-specific conditions that affect women and their opportunities to advance in their careers and be promoted. These conditions include, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy "work-family conflict, sexual harassment, and wage discrimination" (p. 312). The term specifically refers to the lack of women in executive, management and leadership positions, and a glass ceiling seems to exist at the general management level. Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy argue that a glass ceiling most likely exists because of stereotypical views held by decision makers that "may lead to unfair promotion decisions" (p. 312). Individual stereotypical views do not alone negatively affect women's promotion opportunities, but also systemic barriers that cause discrimination "because they are

structured such that women are systematically disadvantaged in comparison to men” (p. 313). This is apparent in sex-typed occupations where women find it very difficult to advance to top levels because of lack of representation in career paths that lead to such jobs.

The reasons for women’s obstacles in the workplace were the prevalent sexist attitudes towards women. These attitudes were based on stereotypical views of women and the female nature, such as, according to Gatlin, "the primary desire for and commitment to domestic roles." The organizational top-level jobs were structured in such a way that the structure of the institution or organization unjustly favors men and gives them rights that women are not given. Gatlin argues that this is because the companies required "rationality and efficiency and a single-minded devotion to the corporation" (p. 35). Women in the workplace in the 1960s undoubtedly faced unjust treatment and judgement based on their sex. During the 1960s women's issues in the workplace were recognized on a high political level when President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women was established in order to ensure that women received just and equal treatment, and legal acts such as Title VII and the Equal Pay Act of 1963 were legalized in order to protect women. It is stated in the Equal Pay Act of 1963 that both women and men should receive equal pay "for equal work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions” (Equal Pay Act, Section 206, Minimum Wage). Thus, according to Woloch, “by the early 1960s, moreover, public policy recognized the working woman” (p. 504).

Working women in the 1960s were subject to discrimination according to stereotypes about women. Women received lower wages for same jobs and their legitimacy as wage earners was questioned. Woloch argues that working women were less likely to defend themselves when they were treated as less than their counterparts, and a working woman “was likely to defend paid work in terms of family need, not personal aspiration or individualism” (p. 503). Therefore, women often had sex-typed jobs with low wages and it was thought that they worked for their families, not themselves. This real-life phenomenon is also reflected in fictional stories about women. Fictional women on television are often portrayed as less driven and independent individuals who work in sex-typed professions. According to Tedesco, in her study about the way female

characters are portrayed in prime-time drama series, of the women in her sample “17 per cent were professionals and 14 percent were either managers or clerical workers,” while two-thirds of the fictional women were unemployed (p. 120). Most of the women worked in entertainment, health or education, while Tedesco argues that “employed male characters included professionals (24 percent), law enforcement agents (15 percent), and managers (14 percent)” (p. 120). *Mad Men* is a good example of this as the women of Sterling Cooper work in sex-typed clerical professions and only one, Peggy Olson, is able to advance in her career and becomes a copywriter. Peggy’s storyline explores the gender-specific obstacles that stand between a woman’s recognition and promotion at her workplace: Peggy has her own career goals and she wants to advance on her career instead of remaining a mere secretary, someone in a typically sex-typed occupation.

Despite Peggy’s enthusiasm and growing boldness at work, the patriarchal system that is at work at Sterling Cooper proves to be an obstacle for her in terms of career advancement. According to Haralovich, although Peggy becomes a clever and successful copywriter who is a good match for her male co-workers, she is reminded “of the gendered power structure and that she has misstepped on the fine line between assertive and pushy” when she attempts to fight for equal rights at Sterling Cooper (p. 170). It is apparent that although Peggy’s talent for writing copy is recognized, she still is not appreciated in the same way as her male co-workers, which is made very clear when her boss denies her promotion and takes her off a task because of her gender. *Mad Men*, however, being a 21st century television series that is set in the 1960s, is also able to critique the gender portrayals of women both in television and also in real life in the 1960s, and this apparent in the way the women in the office, Peggy in particular, repeatedly shows resistance to accept her situation in the office as the only female copywriter, receiving low pay checks and being denied career opportunities solely based on her gender.

In conclusion, a woman in the workplace, in this case Peggy, may face a myriad of different obstacles during their working careers that are specifically related to her gender: men in the office do not receive low wages for the same amount of work and the same job description and they are not denied promotions and job opportunities because of the same reason. Peggy is also negatively

judged because of rigid gender stereotypes that insist that she is unsuitable for her job as a copywriter because her gender is considered weak: the men in the office are automatically considered intelligent, competent and outspoken, which are qualities that are needed as a copywriter, because the male stereotype allows them to have all these qualities. Therefore, Peggy's journey as the only copywriter is different from her co-workers' and she has to work hard to be able to overcome the stereotypes and negative perceptions of women.

3.1. Wage Gap

The wage gap as a phenomenon is a topic of conversation in *Mad Men*, where Peggy struggles to be recognized as an equal to her male co-workers. The first significant step towards equal wages for women and men was the Equal Pay Act of 1963, which, according to Daniel, "barred an employer from discriminating in the payment of wages" for equal work, and this was the first time when women's equal input in the workplace was taken into account in legislation 257). This legislation was one of the driving forces that helped women be equally appreciated in the workplace, along with the civil rights movement and the feminist movement, which helped change rigid gender stereotypes of women and men alike. In *Mad Men*, Peggy struggles to be equally appreciated as a working woman and her attempts to get an increase of salary is one of her many ways of attempting to find her place at Sterling Cooper. In this section, the most famous scene relating to Peggy's attempt to get an increase of salary is analyzed.

It is apparent that there is a reluctance among the employers at Sterling Cooper to acknowledge Peggy as an equal to her male co-workers in terms of equal pay. In "The Fog" Peggy discusses her job situation with Duck Phillips who was recently fired from Sterling Cooper. Duck presents Peggy and fellow co-worker Pete Campbell, an accountant, with a job opportunity: he wants them to work at his advertising agency, Grey, because he needs "creatives (who) are supposed to be geniuses," ("The Fog", 28:50) indicating that he believes in Peggy and her talent. Peggy is not sure about the job opportunity despite the fact that she is unhappy with her current work situation as she is paid less than her male co-workers. She discusses her wages with Don and states that she is paid too little and that her secretary does not respect her because of it. Don does not seem to

take her worries seriously and comments that she should get a cheaper secretary. Peggy states that the Congress passed “a law where women who do the same work as men will get paid the same thing,” (“The Fog”, 37:55) the Equal Pay Act of 1963, indicating that she is legally titled to a higher salary and is also as competent if not more competent than her male co-workers: “Paul Kinsey does the same work I do, and not as well sometimes” (“The Fog”, 37:53). Don refuses to give her a raise because times are difficult at Sterling Cooper which is why it is not going to happen, commenting that “you are going to be fine, Peggy” (“The Fog”, 38:42). Don’s behavior in this scene is very patronizing and it is apparent that he does not believe that Peggy deserves equal payment for her work, despite the passing of a law.

In conclusion, Peggy also faces discrimination based on both personal stereotypical views and systemic barriers, of which the former, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy “suggests that women are discriminated against by power holders because of a perceived lack of fit with top leadership positions,” and the latter is based on organizational bias (p. 313). Peggy's situation differs from this description in the sense that she is not looking to be promoted in this episode, but she is discriminated against by her employer, Donald Draper, who refuses to give her a raise although the Equal Pay bill had been passed. His reluctance to promote her might be based on both personal stereotypical views and systemic barriers since this is not the only time he refuses to promote Peggy or to give her a job opportunity.

3.2. Gender-based Prejudice

In this section gender-based prejudice or discrimination against women in the workplace is discussed, particularly when women are denied work opportunities and tasks solely because of their gender, which is the case for Peggy. She is denied work opportunities due to her gender several times, usually either because of customers who have stereotypical views of women or because of her employers for the same reason. In “The Other Woman”, as Peggy and the rest of the creative team present their Jaguar advertisement that would be shot in Paris, to Don, her co-workers praise Peggy on her idea, but Don calmly remarks that another copywriter, Allen Ginsberg, should be in charge of the project. Don is angry when Peggy questions his choice and

angrily throws money at Peggy: “You want to go to Paris?! Here, go to Paris!” (“The Other Woman,” 12:56). Peggy, upset about it and sure that she needs to find a job that is not a dead end, has a job interview and manages to get a job with a better salary. Peggy then tells Don that she gives her notice, to which Don replies that Peggy “finally picked the right moment to ask for a raise” (“The Other Woman,” 41:46). Peggy refuses, stating that it is time for her to move on and the two part amicably.

This refusal to allow Peggy to take part in a job opportunity shows that the all-male management team reinforce the stereotype of women being incapable of working in management roles that stems from the traditional view of women being weaker and more nurturing. According to Tedesco, in television, “females are less powerful, rational, smart, or stable than males” and are often portrayed as less independent and adventurous (p. 123). In *Mad Men* the portrayal of Peggy differs from this description in the sense that Peggy is indeed independent and ready to accept challenges but is denied them because of gender stereotypes. In this episode, Peggy is tired of working for a company where she cannot advance and where she is left outside, and she faces unjust discrimination that is solely based on her gender. The organization where she works, and also the clients she has, are according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy specifically “structured such that women are systematically disadvantaged in comparison to men” (p. 313). This is apparent in the way Peggy was rejected from the Jaguar advertisement because the client would not find a girl credible enough to successfully sell the idea. According to Akass and McCabe, Peggy is put in a difficult position: her ideas may be good but they are regulated by male authority and “their superior status” that in fact “manages those ideas and put them into discourse that matters” (p. 188).

Women's lack of representation in higher-level jobs also affects the decision making of Sterling Cooper's management – since Peggy is the first female copywriter in years, she has no female role models in her workplace who would understand her situation as a woman in a male-dominated advertising agency. Instead, she alone has to face the discrimination and deal with the gender-related conditions that prevent her from getting a raise and being part of every project. Therefore, Peggy has to become her own role model and find her own path as a copywriter, while emulating

the mannerisms of the men in the company. Akass and McCabe argue that because she is the only female copywriter, she "must prove herself better than the men" and that although Peggy is desperate to advance in her career and change her life, she is in fact "confronted with the same old traditional roles and impossible changes" (p. 191). Thus, it is possible that the lack of female role models in higher-level positions also means that the men might have prejudice against female copywriters, and Peggy's storyline is an example of this.

Because of this, Peggy's biggest challenge as a copywriter is not the work itself but how to fit in at her workplace, which can, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, be achieved through "good education, hard work, line responsibilities, and mentors were key to their success" as well as positive attitudes and the belief that women and men are equal" (p. 315-316). Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy also argue that successful female managers had such qualities that men had, despite the fact that women were restricted by a belief shared by "bosses, subordinates, peers, and customers that only certain forms of leadership are acceptable for women" (p. 316). Thus, women had to pay close attention to the way they behaved as they could not be too aggressive or masculine or too soft or feminine in order to succeed. Therefore, Peggy's storyline mirrors the real experiences of gender-based obstacles, of the lack of a woman's success being due to her lack of mentors, particularly female ones that could understand her situation as a woman, and the stereotypical views held by her employer and client about her suitability for a specific job. Slochower argues that Peggy "fights for recognition but never quite gets it" (p. 382). Therefore, it can be said that her lack of success is not due to her work ethic, lack of talent or schooling since Peggy is good at her job and is continually praised for it, but instead due to both institutional and individual prejudice.

Another obstacle that Peggy faces is her struggle not only to overcome the stereotypical views of working women but also to be appreciated as Peggy is sometimes punished harder than her co-workers due to her gender, despite the fact that she has many times proved herself. This may be because women are held to a higher standard than men and they are also easily criticized than men, which is attributed to stereotypes of women's abilities. According to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, stereotypes are damaging in the workplace because they "lead us to expect that

women fail (due to lack of ability) and men succeed (because they are competent)” (p. 58). An example of this is the first episode of the fourth season, "Public Relations," where Peggy is, because of a failed previous task, punished by being taken off a Jantzen swimsuit account. Although the failure was a team effort between Peter Campbell and Peggy, he receives no punishment. Don Draper remarks that a woman is only trouble for him: "I think it'd be better not to have a girl in the room" (39:31). This implies that Don is unhappy with Peggy and possibly willing to punish her, but it also shows his stereotypical views of women and their lacking capabilities in advertising. Thus, it is apparent that Peggy does not fit the stereotype of a copywriter, although she has several times showed that she is talented, and that sexism is more the norm than the exception at Sterling Cooper. This creates a double standard, which is also apparent in this scene: Peggy is punished because she, as a woman, was expected to fail, while Peter is not punished because his failure, as a man, was not attributed to his skills and capabilities but external factors, such as luck.

In conclusion, despite the fact that Peggy is often praised for her work, she is still scrutinized more strictly because of her gender, which indicates that there is a double standard in her workplace. As Peggy is punished for making a mistake while her partner in crime receives no punishment, and she is taken off an account due to her gender, she is discriminated against, and she is powerless to fight against it. Peggy also do not have any female role models who could help her balance her feminine qualities and adopt masculine qualities in such a way that they would create a working balance. Instead, she has to learn from men only and also has to deal with her discrimination on her own.

3.3. Attitudes towards Women in the Workplace

In *Mad Men*, the men in the workplace often perceive the women according to stereotypical notions about women being unfit to have prestigious jobs, and these stereotypes perpetuate the notion that the fact that women work in less prestigious and lower occupations is correct. Business and society expert Sarah Oerton argues that “women’s work cultures centre on their marriages, home lives, families and domesticity,” which indicates that women are more interested

in their lives outside work and are less competent (p. 55). Peggy is, due to her gender, treated badly and patronized due to her gender: she is ignored and her opinions and ideas are belittled in discussions and office meetings, and it seems that her opinion is only valued when she is consulted about a women's product. Women's abilities and successes are also not taken seriously, which also happens to Peggy, and her successes are undermined and belittled. Women in *Mad Men* are also subject to being ignored and belittled when they speak in front of their male co-workers and bosses. According to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, a woman who enters a male-dominated work environment may enforce negative stereotypes of women because of "the lack of fit between their gender and the stereotypes of the job," which may "increase people's reliance on gender stereotypes when observing and evaluating women." (p. 166). In Peggy's case, she is perceived negatively by her co-workers because of her gender and she is only consulted if her creative team needs a woman's opinion on a product or idea that is targeted to a female audience. In "Maidenform," Peggy and the creative team are working on a Playtex brassiere account, and Peggy is only included in the conversation when she is asked about her experiences of using a Playtex bra. Kenny enquires whether she has worn one: "Peggy, do you wear Playtex and if so, why?" ("Maidenform," 02:40).

Although she is in charge of different accounts and even pitches them, it seems that her opinion is only fully valued by her teammates when it comes to pantyhose, makeup or brassieres. It is, of course, natural for the men to ask about things that they do not have firsthand experience about, but only asking Peggy about a 'woman' thing indicates that her opinion is not fully valued because she is not a man. She is evaluated according to gender stereotypes and sexist notions perpetuated by society in the 1950s and 1960s about women's occupation as a housewife and a homemaker. According to Betty Friedan, anything that encouraged a woman's liberation was a problem: "career is a problem, education is a problem, political interest, even the very admission of women's intelligence and individuality, is a problem" (p. 44). Thus, Peggy is only appreciated when the men need a woman's opinion, and this happens because of her choice of having a creative career in a male-dominated workplace, which is why the men evaluate her according to stereotypes of women.

Peggy may also intimidate her male co-workers, especially if they have stereotypical and/or negative perceptions of women. Men who are confident and promoting themselves are often evaluated positively, while organizational behavior professor Fiona Wilson argues that confident and self-promoting women scare men: "confidence by women can result in rejection, especially from men whose power is threatened by such displays in women" (p. 46). In "The Inheritance" Peggy is pitching her idea to the creative team and the men in the team are ignoring her as she is presenting. Don Draper, however, threatens to send Peggy to the pitch instead of them: "Did you read anything she prepared?!" ("The Inheritance," 2:16). Thus, it is clear that Peggy is ignored because her male co-workers in the creative team have a sexist view of women and believe that she is not suited for a job as a copywriter that requires wit and creativity. It is possible that the men in her creative team, who are already accusing Peggy of having sexual relations with their boss Don, and who ignore and belittle her achievements, are jealous of her success in the company, and threatened by her skills and capabilities. Although Peggy has been promoted to copywriter, she has no real power in the company and does not have a significant role in meetings with clients. She, however, is a talented copywriter whose skills have not gone unnoticed by the management, and she is continually praised for her good work, which indicates that Peggy possibly will advance in her career and gain more power. It is possible that her male co-workers are threatened by her confidence and the positive response that she gets. This indicates that she might be promoted in the future, and which is why she is ignored and belittled.

Because the men in the office are threatened by Peggy, she is treated roughly, and it seems like they do not think of her as an equal, someone who has advanced because of his or her talent. Instead, Peggy is seen as someone who does not take her job seriously or have enough credibility or talent to succeed on her own, although she has received praise for some of her ideas. The men apparently also feel threatened by Peggy and this idea of a powerful woman being threatening and even unnatural in some people's eyes is supported by Cleveland, Stockland and Murphy who state that "the idea of a powerful woman is disconcerting and uncomfortable" (p. 54). For the men of Sterling Cooper, the idea of Peggy being a powerful woman is almost paradoxical, something that they have not considered, but that they have to consider now that Peggy got copywriter Freddy Rumsen's office. In "The Mountain King," Peggy gets her own office after she complains about her having to share an office with a Xerox machine to co-owner Roger Sterling: "I need my

own office. It's hard to be credible when I'm sharing with a Xerox" ("The Mountain King," 28:20), and an impressed Roger applauds her for her confidence as none of the men dared to ask for Freddy Rumsen's office. This positive event, however, is diminished by the sexist treatment she receives afterwards. As her co-workers in the creative advertising team find out that the coveted office space was given to Peggy, they are livid and accuse Peggy of not being worthy of an office space of her own: "You got your own office? You?!", ("The Mountain King," 36:38) because she is a woman. As the men are upset and bewildered, they attempt to attack Peggy and accuse her of being unworthy of the office because her lack of skill, thus, attempting to strip away her power and show that they are more worthy of the office than what she is. Peggy, however, is not fazed by their negative comments and walks away with a smile on her face, which indicates that she recognizes her own victory.

Therefore, Peggy is judged harshly by her co-workers because they believe that she, as a woman, should not behave in a manner that suggests that she is their equal. According to traditional gender roles, women's behavior in the workplace involves, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, "serving, helping and supporting others" (p. 168). As men often are the bosses in male-dominated fields and women work below them, women are expected to listen to their orders and support them. Don and Peggy's relationship in *Mad Men* can be described as a mentor-protégé relationship, where Don pushes Peggy to become better and offers her advice. Despite the fact that Peggy has benefited from Don's mentoring, it is apparent that he takes her for granted and expects her to do as he says. One example of Peggy being taken for granted by Don, and of Don's unwillingness to appreciate Peggy for her skills and own wishes happens in the third season finale, "Shut the Door, Have a Seat". Don and the partners of Sterling Cooper are starting a new advertising agency, and Don invites Peggy to his office to tell her that he wants her to join the company without asking her. Peggy is surprised and annoyed that Don did not ask her and when he reluctantly does so, she refuses and says that Don does not value her, takes her for granted and mistreats her: "I don't want to make a career out of being there so you can kick me when I fail" ("Shut the Door, Have a Seat," 21:33). In this scene, Don fails to appreciate Peggy as his employee and fails to take into account her opinion and wishes, and indeed believes that Peggy's wishes align with his own. Thus, although Don has helped and praised Peggy for her work efforts, he takes

her and her work efforts for granted. Therefore it could be said that Don appreciates Peggy's ideas and contributions to the company, but not herself.

Peggy, however, is confident and knows her worth and is unwilling to submit to the submissive and nurturing stereotype of women. According to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, stereotypes of women (and men) are subject to change, and these changing stereotypes also change people's perceptions of gender and work performance by bringing forward positive role models for women and "reduced by something as simple as an open discussion" (p. 378). Peggy, as the only female copywriter at the fictional Sterling Cooper, not only is a role model for the secretaries, but also shows to the men in the company that a woman is not limited to her stereotype. As Peggy stands up for herself and asks for recognition and fair treatment, she shows Don that she is not a secretary who will do everything he asks him to do, and Don seems to understand this. He visits Peggy's apartment, admitting that he has been taking her for granted. Don says he is hard on Peggy "but only because I see you as an extension of myself," ("Shut the Door, Have a Seat," 34:29) which in fact is a compliment, and it indicates that Don indeed does respect Peggy, her views and her input. This scene is groundbreaking in that it clearly shows the mutual respect between the two, but it also explores the more difficult sides of an employer-employee relationship: there is misunderstanding on Peggy's side regarding her value in the company and an unwillingness on Don's part to express to Peggy exactly how important she is to the company. As Don states that he is leaving with or without you "and I don't know if I can do it alone" ("Shut the Door, Have a Seat," 36:08), he expresses her value to the company, which he has earlier denied. Don has praised Peggy for her work tasks, but not outright expressed how valuable she is to the company, which is something that Peggy has been wanting to hear. As Don tells Peggy how valuable she is, he finally sees her as an equal, and she accepts his offer as she is able to do it on her own terms, by demanding the respect and recognition that has many times been overlooked.

Another example of Peggy feeling undervalued by her boss in the workplace happens in "The Other Woman": Peggy feels unvalued in her workplace and is angry that she was left outside of a Jaguar pitch although she supervised it, and thus decides to go elsewhere to find a job and ends up in a job interview with Ted Chaough at a rival advertising company. This shows Peggy asserting her

own power and knowing her own worth as a copywriter as she is unwilling to give in to the sexist treatment and instead opts for a new job. Peggy is hired on the spot and gets a raise from 18,000 that she proposed. When Peggy tells Don about her leaving, he misunderstands her motives for leaving, apologizes for not being able to have her in the Jaguar stunt, but Peggy's reasons are different – she demands respect and proper treatment for her work and also the need to try something new. Don misunderstands this and offers her money, after which he insults Peggy and tells her that he is responsible for her good fortunes at Sterling Cooper: "let's pretend that I'm not responsible for every single good thing that's ever happened to you" ("The Other Woman," 42:34). It is, however, apparent that Don is not angry at Peggy for leaving, merely disappointed as the scene ends emotionally: Don kisses Peggy's hand and Peggy cries, which indicates that their relationship ends on good terms, which is also apparent in the final scene of the season when Peggy and Don accidentally meet at a movie theater, where they embrace and Don admits that "I'm proud of you, I just didn't know it would be without me." ("The Other Woman," 37:24). This indicates that Don is disappointed that Peggy would be able to succeed in her career without him. This scene is a crucial one when it comes to Don and Peggy's relationship: both respect one another but yet find it difficult to get on with one another and express their gratitude to one another. Here Peggy is an assertive woman who is unafraid to take a leap and look for another job to find her worth as an equal employee instead of staying at Sterling Cooper, where she continues to receive sexist treatment and is oftentimes overlooked and taken for granted. Knowing her worth, she looks for a new job where she can be respected and it seems that she has found one.

Women in the workplace are also judged according to professor of business Rosabeth Moss Kanter's (1977) idea of tokenism, which, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, pertains to individuals who "are often treated as representatives of their category, as symbols rather than individuals" (p. 382). Kanter also argues that tokenism leads to discrimination in such ways that the token is be thought of as a stereotype, it increases scrutiny of a token person and polarization because "there is a tendency to exaggerate the extent of the differences between tokens," (p. 384). Peggy is clearly a token in the creative team at Sterling Cooper as she is the only woman there and she is often treated like a token by her co-workers. In "The Color Blue" the creative team is working on an Aquanet hairspray account, and Paul had an idea for a pitch, which Peggy ended up improving. Don loved Peggy's presentation and Paul was livid that Peggy got all credit

for the idea instead of only helping him: "it looks like you carry the load because you are spontaneous, and because you are a girl and his favorite" ("The Color Blue," 8:28). Paul angrily criticizes Peggy for being a girl and accuses her of being favored because of her gender: "wearing a dress is not going to help you with Western Union" ("The Color Blue," 8:32). Although the accounts are based on team efforts, not individual ideas, Paul is angry because he was upstaged by a woman, and accuses her own advancing on her career because of being Don Draper's favorite, not because of her own abilities. Thus, it is clear that Peggy is a token at Sterling Cooper, simply because no man in *Mad Men* has been accused of succeeding because of his gender, and that Paul only notices the differences between him and Peggy instead of realizing that they both got their jobs fairly and have succeeded in their jobs without foul play.

In conclusion, despite her talents, Peggy's gender limits her as her male co-workers and employees turn it into a problem. Peggy herself does not seem to devalue her own gender or think less of herself because of it, at least not after she achieved success in the company. In fact, Peggy seems to find pride in her femininity and the fact that she was able to advance in her career against all odds, despite the fact that she faces oppression and discrimination, which irritates her. Peggy's worth as an employee is undermined when she is taken off tasks and accounts because of her gender and also when she is judged more harshly than her male counterparts: this indicates that although Peggy's work is appreciated, it is not sure if she is appreciated by her employees.

3.4. Acting like a Man

Women in the workplace, in order to succeed, are often encouraged to act like a man to be respected in the workplace and to be able to advance in their careers, which is something that Peggy also does in *Mad Men*. Men and women in the workplace may be judged and evaluated according to stereotypes of personal traits, and, according to Stockdale, Cleveland and Murphy, traits such as "decisiveness, confidence, ambition and recklessness" are masculine, "whereas warmth, sensitivity, understanding and dependence" are feminine (p. 160). During Peggy Olson's storyline in *Mad Men*, she quickly adapts to working in a male-dominated workplace and is able to utilize her skills as a copywriter, her wit and personality to her advantage. Peggy's behavior

changes drastically during her storyline: in the beginning, while she is working as Don Draper's secretary, she is timid, quiet and polite and she does not question her treatment or work tasks. As she gets promoted and she understands that her treatment in the company might not be kind or appropriate, she begins to stand up for herself and starts to adopt some stereotypically male character traits, such as confidence, decisiveness and ambition. Her successes at Sterling Cooper are sometimes undermined and ridiculed by her co-workers, possibly because of jealousy or/and a negative view of women, but she is often appreciated by her boss, who does not scold Peggy for being assertive and confident.

Since Peggy is a woman working in a man's world, she has to adopt typically male behavioral patterns, such as aggressiveness, which is apparent from the third season onward when Peggy begins to be more valued as a copywriter at Sterling Cooper, and it is apparent that her relationship with Don has changed for the better (and also for worse) that Peggy feels comfortable showing aggression. Peggy, who has expressed her confusion and even distaste about behaving like a man in the office, however, seems to do it quite naturally as the series progresses and Peggy becomes acquainted with the workplace. Peggy is not afraid to show her feelings, be they positive or negative, which seems to be her nature as she is not afraid to stand up for herself in front of family, friends and relatives. This aggressive behavior, which is consistent with some of the male character's reactions and treatment of their co-workers and bosses, however, might not be as believable for Peggy as the series is set in the 1960s when women faced unjust discrimination and harassment and were mostly occupied in sex-typed professions, below men. Thus, it might not be believable for a female copywriter to act aggressively and assert her power in such a way as Peggy does. Here it is very apparent that *Mad Men* is a 21st century product with 21st century values: Peggy demands respect, resists harassment and sexism and acts aggressively, if needed, just as the men in the office do, but this is something that the other women are not permitted to do for fear of losing their jobs. What is interesting to note is that Peggy is never seriously threatened with getting fired, because of her skills, and her being a talented and ambitious copywriter helps her gain and keep the respect that she has gained, despite her sometimes harsh and unfeminine behavior and her unrelenting seeking of respect.

Peggy's behavior changes drastically during the early episodes of the sixth season, "The Doorway" and "The Collaborators," when she has transferred to Cutler, Gleason, and Chaough in order to find new job prospects: Peggy did not feel appreciated and valued at Sterling Cooper. Although she has openly displayed her confidence and assertiveness in the earlier seasons as well, her behavior changes again when she gets promoted and becomes a copy chief for Cutler, Gleason, and Chaough and has her own all-male creative team. As her new creative team present their pitch for a headphone account, she grows restless and angry when the ideas do not please her. Peggy frowns and openly criticizes her team: "when you bring something like this to me, it looks like cowardice" ("The Doorway," 22:45). This stereotypically male behavior that Peggy displays here indicates that she finds it important to lead her team in a stereotypically masculine way in order to gain respect, and because she has learned by observing her male co-workers and bosses at Sterling Cooper. Studies have found that women managers and male managers often behave in a similar manner, and according to Wilson, women who want to succeed as managers and leaders often are "forced to adopt a male model of managerial behavior," and may even be encouraged to adapt even more masculine traits than the men themselves: "many women managers survive by being more male than the men themselves" (p. 141). Thus, as, according to Wilson, "executive jobs are almost considered to require and achievement-oriented aggressiveness and emotional toughness," it is no wonder that Peggy finds it necessary to adopt these qualities and to emulate the masculine ways of leading her creative team (p. 142).

As it has already been discussed in this section, working women are often held to a different standard in the workplace because of pervasive gender stereotypes that may limit the woman from advancing in her career or being appreciated for her work. Stereotypes can be very detrimental and increase inequality between the sexes, and according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, "women are more limited by a feminine stereotype to demonstrate socially desirable behavior," while the socially desirable behavior for men is more varied (p. 47). When it comes to job performance, competence and stereotypes, according to Cleveland, Stockland and Murphy, "women are less competent than men," and "women report lower pay expectations," which may partly influence the wage gap (p. 62-63). An example of this happens in "Mystery Date," where Roger hires Peggy to come up with a new Mohawk Airlines campaign and corporate image in order to get back at Pete Campbell. He is willing to pay her for her work, but only ten dollars, which

indicates that he does not truly value Peggy as a copywriter or even an employee as he does not want to compensate her for her work.

His request also perpetuates the stereotype that women are content with less and that they are less competent as he is unwilling to pay her for her work. This infuriates Peggy, who incredulously questions his request: "you want me to work up an entire corporate image campaign for ten dollars?," ("Mystery Date," 21:02) and she demands him to pay her more, although he threatens to fire her. Realizing that he could not possibly find a replacement for Peggy in one night, he gives in and Peggy demands him to "give me all of it," ("Mystery Date," 21:42) when he is about to give her 400 dollars. Peggy, who knows that Roger would not want this to get into the ears of anyone else, and that she has him cornered, feels joy when she has successfully been able to extort him. Thus, in this scene, Peggy is confident, assertive and knows her worth as she is not willing to comply with such terms that are not fair for her: that is, to work for free. Her succeeding in getting what she wants is a small victory for Peggy, and it shows that Peggy will not be pushed around or discriminated against because of her gender and that she is willing to stand up against gender stereotypes.

Women who adopt stereotypically male character traits are not always well-received in management positions, especially in sex-typed professions. Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy also argue that "the stereotypes of some traits are so strongly sex-typed that traits viewed as positive in men (e.g., assertiveness) are viewed negatively in women" (p. 160). Thus, it is apparent that women are held to a harsher standard than men because of the stereotypical view of women, according to Oerton, women are often viewed as "passive, fatalistic and prey to fortune," and these assumptions affect the perception of a woman (p. 53). Women, who are characterized as aggressive and as having agency may be discriminated against by their co-workers and, according to Wilson, aggressive and independent women may be negatively stereotyped as the "iron maiden or too successfully masculine" (p. 142). Therefore, a successful woman who acts like a man might be negatively judged because of it, which is also apparent in *Mad Men*: as Peggy acts dominantly and aggressively towards her new creative team, they retaliate by leaving a "Quest" feminine hygiene powder product in her office with a note attached to it that reads "target: professional

women and other Olsons" ("The Collaborators," 19:12). Although Peggy acted exactly like a man in her place would and treats her creative team harshly, this prank shows that the men who work for her are a bit overwhelmed by her as it can be assumed that they have not had a female boss before. Thus, it is apparent that Peggy adapting a male point of view confused her subordinates and made them ridicule her because of her behavior.

Adopting masculine character traits may, however, not necessarily mean that women, such as Peggy, is a better leader than a woman who has feminine attributes, although, according to Wilson, "females are often evaluated less favorably than males" (p. 47). However, when it comes to character attributes, both men and woman have feminine and masculine attributes, of course depending on the individual, and studies have shown that an androgynous person might be best suited for leadership positions. According to Wilson, an androgynous manager or executive "is likely to perform more effectively" because they, for example are more flexible (p. 156). This idea can be applied to Peggy's situation in *Mad Men*, where she finds it difficult to navigate the male-dominated workplace as a woman, and she is unsure how to act. During much of the series, Peggy has acted like a stereotypical woman, who is agreeable, kind and does not dare to question her employers, but also at times like a stereotypical man, who is dominant, assertive and aggressive. It is apparent that Peggy has more stereotypically male character traits, or she at least displays those more often, and she can be described as assertive and confident. As a woman, it is difficult for her to find a balance between her feminine and masculine traits, but it is clear that as she is promoted to copy chief and is responsible for her own team, she also needs her feminine qualities to get along with her teammates as they did not respond to her harsh behavior. When Peggy tries to be more understanding and kind towards her team: "I don't want to think that just because I have high standards that means I'm not happy with you," ("The Collaborators," 8:25) she is able to connect with her subordinates. Thus, it is probable that *Mad Men* as a fictional series encourages Peggy to value her own personality and not to become man although she adopts some masculine traits, but instead be assertive and confident in their womanhood.

In conclusion, Peggy's storyline is an example of how adopting patterns of distinctively masculine behavior may have both positive and negative consequences. When Peggy is assertive, confident

and intelligent, she is respected by her colleagues and succeeds in her job, but when her behavior becomes so masculine that her own personality seems to fade away, she is feared instead of respected. Therefore, it seems that when Peggy allows herself to be confident in herself and her abilities but still herself, a woman, she succeeds best and is able to build a connection between herself and her co-workers, especially when she is working as a copy chief and has her own subordinates.

3.5. Overcoming the Obstacles

Despite Peggy's difficulties in her workplace, she is, in fact, able to rise above it and remove the gender-related obstacles, albeit never completely. During her storyline she is able to prove herself as a talented copywriter and finally gets the recognition, respect and acknowledgment that she craves. Peggy is, despite her gender-specific obstacles and discrimination she faces is able to gain experience, respect and job opportunities in the workplace. As Peggy gets acquainted with her co-workers and they accept her as a part of the team, they begin to treat her differently. During Peggy's journey in *Mad Men*, although she is the only career woman in the company, the way she is perceived by her bosses and co-workers slowly starts to change for the better, and she begins to be respected and recognized.

As we have seen, Peggy is several times undermined at Sterling Cooper by her male co-workers, her position at the company continually changes for the better, until she becomes a respected copy chief. Her boss, Don Draper, is pleased with her accomplishments and work tasks in her early days as a copywriter and she slowly gets more and more responsibility. In "Six Month Leave" when senior copywriter Freddy Rumsen is fired Don asks Peggy to take on all his accounts. Despite the fact that she only receives these copy opportunities because of the dismissal of Rumsen, it is apparent that she is appreciated by Don Draper, who was proud of her previous Samsonite account. This scene shows the mutual respect that Don and Peggy have for one another and how proud Don is of Peggy and her talent: "don't feel bad because you are good at your job" ("Six Month Leave," 40:48). Thus, it seems that the fact that Peggy is praised and respected when she has succeeded and is awarded for a good work performance, and the way she is perceived

continually changes for the better as she herself evolves as a copywriter and a person. Despite this, she still faces discrimination and sexist treatment.

Women in the workplace may also be able to bring about positive changes in the workplace by asserting their own power and by changing the stereotypes. According to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, awareness helps people pay attention to their actions and become "more likely to pay attention to other aspects of other aspects of men and women" instead of the stereotypical notions of gender (p. 378). In "Waldorf Stories," Peggy attempts to change the notion of women, and also of herself, in the eyes of art director Stan Rizzo. Peggy and Stan do not get along, but they are forced to work together on a Vicks campaign. Stan is very derogatory, dismissive and sexist towards her, making inappropriate remarks about her body and sexual repressiveness, and accuses her of being on her period when Peggy pushes him to work: "Jesus, are you on the rag?" ("Waldorf Stories," 11:09). When they find it difficult to get down to business, Stan reads Playboy in order to get inspired and orders Peggy to take notes of his ideas: "toots, grab a pencil, someone is going to want to get it down" ("Waldorf Stories," 15:25). This sexist remark indicates that Stan has no respect for Peggy, perhaps no respect for women, and that he considers his ideas superior to Peggy's. As the topic of nudism is brought up, Peggy dismisses it and Stan judgmentally insults her body: "I know you are ashamed of your body, or you should be" ("Waldorf Stories," 27:14). After being verbally judged by Stan, Peggy shows assertiveness and stands up for herself by taking off her bra, calmly sitting down and working. Stan is completely dumbfounded and finds it difficult to concentrate, while Peggy has no problem working or keeping her composure while Stan is naked. This indicates that in this scene Peggy is able to get back at Stan by showing that she is not ashamed of herself and is able to change his sexist view of women either being nurturing or sexy. Peggy, while naked, is not portrayed as sexy in this scene, and she is in control of the situation as she is able to work normally under the non-normal circumstances. Thus, Peggy is able to gain power by using her sexuality, which strangely enough does not diminish her power in Stan's eyes: the two become friends, and later on, lovers.

Women and men's career developments differ, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, in the sense that "there are different expectations for men and women regarding the

appropriateness of specific jobs" (p. 260). Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy also state that women are held to a different standard than men, such as sexism and discrimination even though women do well at the job: "a job [...] done by women will lead to lower pay, lower status, and lower value" (p. 169-170). This is also true for Peggy in *Mad Men*, where she has had a successful, rewarding and tough career, who is in the final season finally able to gain the respect that she desperately needed in the previous seasons. During "The Strategy" and "Waterloo" in the seventh season Sterling Cooper has negotiated with a fictional hamburger company, Burger Chef, to whom Peggy has been working on a pitch for. The pitch was supposed to be presented by the person in charge, Peggy, but Peter Campbell decides to have Don as the main presenter for the pitch, which surprises and disappoints Peggy. While Pete claims that Peggy did a fantastic job on the presentation and says that it is Peggy's choice, the client has not "seen Don at his best" ("The Strategy," 10:03). This indicates that Don's presentation and copywriting skills are supposedly better and that the clients would surely have chosen him if the presentation had not been led by Peggy. Thus, it is clear that Peggy, although successful and respected by her colleagues, is held to a different standard when compared to Don Draper, who is considered more believable.

It is clear that Pete values Peggy's expertise and talent in copywriting, but it seems that he does not believe in her authority or believability. Wilson argues that "when judging by the standard set by men, women frequently fail to measure up" (p. 52). Therefore, when Peggy is compared to Don Draper, she is deemed unsuitable for such situations because she is being compared to a man in a male-dominated workplace. Peter Campbell also states that Peggy should play the part of the sweet and emotional mother, while Don would play the lead role, the authoritarian father figure: "I prefer you as an expert witness, you will introduce him." ("The Strategy," 10:37). This sexist remark completely disregards Peggy's successful efforts and ideas as such a situation would mean that Don gets all the credit and the spotlight for a work he was not in charge of. Peter's view of women being inferior to men is also apparent as he praises Peggy for being a very talented female copywriter: she is "as good as any woman in this business!" ("The Strategy," 11:04), which indicates that Peggy is a talented copywriter that is as good as a woman can be in copywriting, but never as good as a man. Therefore, Peggy, while being respected for her copywriting skills, it seems that she is deemed unsuitable for a major presentation because of her gender. This remark

disregards all her talent and knowledge, not to mention expertise as a copy chief, because of her gender.

This, however, changes as she and the creative team, Don included, fly to Indianapolis to present the pitch to the company. Don had previously supported Peggy in her endeavor to pitch the idea on her own, and he urges her to pitch it even after he gets it as an assignment, after he tells her that he got fired. Peggy, panicking because of the deadline being the following day, says that she cannot pitch the idea - a family lunch at burger chef - from a male point of view because she is a woman, to which Don replies: "maybe that's better, maybe that's the way it always should have been." ("Waterloo," 30:29) He states that Peggy knows most about the Burger Chef pitch and the company, which indicates that Don respects and believes in Peggy and her abilities in pitching the idea to the company.

This behavior is indicative of mutual respect and belief in one another, and it also indicates that not everyone in the fictional world of *Mad Men* hold old-fashioned ideas about women being unsuitable for responsible and authoritative settings, but rather suggests that Peggy is in Don Draper's eyes equal to him in terms of capability, and gender has nothing to do with that. The pitch is Peggy Olson's career-defining moment, one of the only scenes where she is able to show her full potential without interference or doubting on the behalf of her audience or co-workers, but rather she speaks confidently and presents her pitch believably. No-one speaks during her pitch and the all-male audience looks at her and truly listens to her. One man remarks that "that's beautiful," ("Waterloo," 36:00) and all men smile, even Peter Campbell, who initially doubted her. This scene is Peggy's most victorious during the course of the whole series – despite doubting herself and her abilities and being denied the opportunity of pitching, with the help of Don gets permission to pitch it, and receives instant respect from her audience. This scene symbolizes the journey of Peggy in the workplace and how she was able to become as good, if not better, as the men who work with her, and finally gets full recognition of it.

In conclusion, Peggy's moment of glory as she successfully leads a pitch and her audience loves her, is the proper conclusion and also compensation for the discrimination that she has faced

throughout the series. Her journey in *Mad Men* is complex in the sense that she is able to advance in her career and receive recognition for it, but she is discriminated against due to her gender until the final season of the series. She is also held to a different standard than her male colleagues, which limits her and diminishes her professional capability, such as when she is denied the Burger King presentation. Her gender, however, is not merely a limitation as she is also able to prove herself and has by the end of the series gained respect in the eyes of her colleagues.

4. Sexual Behavior in the Workplace

In this section, relationships in the workplace, and relationships and gender roles will be analyzed in the context of the TV series *Mad Men* and one of the main characters, Peggy Olson. Peggy is a product of the 1960s – a single working girl who wants to express herself, and she has several relationships and affairs during the course of the series, both long- and short-term relationships. Peggy is thus able to bend the rigid rules of appropriateness at the time as she uses oral contraceptives in order to prevent a possible pregnancy, has casual sex and has several relationships. Another main theme that is discussed in this section is sexual harassment and the ways in which it happens and is discussed in *Mad Men*. In this section, sexual harassment as a phenomenon will be defined, physical and verbal harassment will be discussed, as well as the response to sexual harassment.

4.1. Relationships in the workplace

Physical attraction between men and women happens naturally, and it is not bound to a specific time or place. Physical attraction in the workplace is a phenomenon that can result in either positive or negative consequences, but romantic relationships can have different effects for women and men in the workplace: according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, these effects “may depend on factors such as one’s level in the organization, organizational climates, and the nature of the work” (p. 68). Therefore, for example, a relationship between a two employees who are on different levels in the workplace, might be more easily frowned upon, or it may create unequal power relations in the workplace. However, equal and functional romantic relationships in the workplace may not necessarily generate such negative responses, and they may even increase productivity in the workplace. In *Mad Men*, Peggy has several relationships during the course of her storyline, of which her fling with account executive Peter Campbell and relationships with ad agency boss Ted Chaough, journalist Abe Drexler, boyfriend Mark Kearney and journalist Abe Drexler. Each relationship represents different possible outcomes that may take place in workplace romances.

According to Quinn & Lees, workplace romances can be divided into three categories, true love, a fling and a utilitarian relationship. A fling, according to Quinn, is “characterized by high excitement on the part of both participants and is often accompanied by the belief that the relationship is going to be temporary in duration,” (p. 4). This description fits the description of Peggy and account executive Peter Campbell's relationship. Peter sees Peggy and is immediately attracted to her, and makes attempts to flirt with her as soon as he sees her, even asking Don whether he is allowed to pursue her. Peggy, however, deeply dislikes Peter and the way he treats her the first time they meet each other. Despite this, however, when Peter knocks on her door after his bachelor party in “Smoke Gets in Your Eyes,” Peggy lets him in as he pleads: “I wanted to see you tonight” (“Smoke Gets in Your Eyes,” 48:39). Later on during the first seasons of *Mad Men*, Peggy genuinely falls in love with Peter, but their affair never advances from a fling to a relationship because of Peter's marriage, despite the fact that the two clearly love each other. According to Quinn and Lees (1984), “it seems clear that power and attraction are deeply intertwined in romantic relationships at work,” (p. 37) and it is also very common for the woman to have a lower position than the man: “in 74% of the romantic relationships that occur at work, the male is in a higher position than the female” (p. 37). The woman in question is often a secretary who works for the man in the question, or another subordinate who works for him. This is also the case in Peggy and Peter's case since although Peggy works as Don Draper's assistant, she is in contact with Peter during meetings.

Another example of a fling in *Mad Men* is Peggy and agency boss Ted Chaough's case: although their feelings for one another seem to be genuine, the relationship is short-lived because of a negative response and the fact that Ted is married. This budding romance, which begins in the sixth season as Peggy begins to work as a copy chief for Chaough's advertising company, Cutler Gleason and Chaough. It is apparent from the beginning that Peggy and Ted are romantically interested in one another, and the defining moment for their relationship happens in the sixth episode of season six, “For Immediate Release” where Ted kisses Peggy, although he is married and she has a boyfriend. The two ignore their feelings after the kiss, but eventually begin a secret relationship. As this relationship eventually ends in failure as Ted decides that he cannot leave his family, it is clear that the definition of romance in a *Mad Men* context is challenging. It is not

certain whether this relationship can be described as true love or a genuine romance as it was doomed to fail and also since it was rejected by Ted and Peggy's co-workers.

Workplace romance can generate different kinds of responses from colleagues, and romantic relationships may affect not only the mood in the workplace but also the way the employees involved in a relationship are viewed and appreciated in the workplace. According to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, if the relationship happens between a lower-level and higher-level employee, which is the case in Peggy and Ted's situation, the higher-level employee may be judged and "other workers may lose respect for the higher level employee" (p. 88). Gossip among co-workers about office romances may be positive or negative, which, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, depends "on the perceived motive of the office romance" (p. 89). Therefore, sincere romance may generate more positive gossip than one with an ulterior motive. In *Mad Men*, Ted and Peggy's relationship is frowned upon in their workplace by their colleagues, and it can be assumed that this is partly because of the fact that Ted is married as, according to Wilson "there is a greater deterioration in the work groups social climate" (p. 200) if one or both are married. The bigger problem, however, is the fact that Peggy and Ted openly flaunt their relationship before their colleague's eyes.

This is especially apparent in the twelfth episode of season six, "The Quality of Mercy," where they flirt at each other in a copywriter meeting, ignore everyone else. The pair also laugh at each other's jokes, and Ted only pays attention to Peggy's ideas. This behavior leaves no question that the two are having an affair, and it irritates the colleagues who despise Ted favoring Peggy: "I just wanted to see if he responds to an idea that is not hers" ("The Quality of Mercy," 7:16). Thus, Ted and Peggy's relationship is negatively perceived because Ted, who is the boss, refuses to pay attention to anyone else but Peggy, and the relationship is out in the open despite the fact that Ted is married. The negative response towards Peggy and Ted's relationship in the final seasons of *Mad Men* may also exist due to a belief that, according to Wilson, "the relationship is being exploited for personal gain," in this that Peggy would not be in the relationship for sincere reasons (p. 200). Questions are also raised about career dependency, or, according to Wilson, a situation where one of the relationship uses the other one "for evaluations that affect their career or

progress in the organization.” (p. 200). Despite the fact that the gossip and negative evaluation of Peggy and Ted’s relationship are due to jealousy and the belief that Peggy is exploiting her boss, it seems that the relationship and their feelings for one another are genuine.

Considering the fact that power is key to office romances and that the man often has a higher position than the woman, the motivation for seeking a romantic relationship may be suspect. This is also the case for Peter and Peggy as it seems that not only personal motives but also unequal power standards and a hostile view of women in the workplace affected the beginning of Peggy and Peter's fling. According to Quinn, motives for a workplace romance include job motives, love motives and ego motives, of which people with the last motives “were perceived to be after such personal rewards as excitement, ego satisfaction, adventure and sexual experience” (p. 4). Peter's motives for initiating a romantic relationship are in the beginning based on sexual experience and ego satisfaction: he wants to sleep with Peggy not only because she is attractive, but also because she works below him, which makes it easier for him to use her for his own advantage. This stems from the prevalent belief in the Sterling Cooper that women are commodities for men to use, which is enforced even by the women themselves. In “Smoke Gets in Your Eyes,” Joan instructs Peggy on her first day to dress and act in such a way that pleases the men, and states that the men wants the women to act flirtatiously. Because of this belief that women should please the men, Peggy lets a drunk Peter in her apartment, and they have sex. This happens despite the fact that Peggy's initial opinion on Peter is less than admirable: she overhears him talking about her and her looks and he insults her appearance. Therefore, it seems that Peter's motives for pursuing Peggy are ego satisfaction and sexual experience, but Peggy, it seems, only lets Peter pursue her because she believes that it is expected of her.

Workplace romance may affect the two parties involved and the workplace positively as, according to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, a romance “appears to increase motivation,” but this might depend on “other factors such as the stage of the relationship” (p. 87). In Peggy's case, her office flings and relationships are usually doomed to fail and it is clear that some of these relationships hold her back from advancing in the workplace, which is especially clear in her relationship with Ted Chaough. When the sixth season begins and Peggy works as a copy chief for

Ted's advertising company, Cutler Gleason, and Chaough, she dresses and acts like a businesswoman who takes her work seriously. This, however, changes when Peggy begins to fall in love with Ted: she acts emotionally and irrationally, which is apparent in "A Day's Work," where Peggy, who is so anxious because Ted ended their affair to be with his family, steals her secretary's flower bouquet despite the fact that there was no card from him. This indicates that love has clouded Peggy's judgement and affects her actions and behavior negatively. According to Quinn and Lees, romance in the workplace brings forward behavioral changes and it is apparent that love makes the participants preoccupied and they become "less rather than more effective" (p. 38). This is also the case for Peggy as she spends her time thinking and obsessing on Ted and it seems to have affected her thinking, judgement and understanding.

In conclusion, it is no wonder that Peggy's defining moments in the series, such as her promotion from secretary to copywriter in the first season and her succeeding Burger King pitch in the seventh season, happen when she is not in a relationship. Her failing relationships with Ted and Peter and the change in her behavior when she is in love indicate that these relationships are holding Peggy back from being the best version of herself in the workplace. Despite this, romance and relationships can also be portrayed as positive and rewarding: Peggy is able to find a boyfriend and get her happy ending in the season finale without sacrificing her career. Therefore, her failure in previous relationships might also have happened because of secrecy, negative response and perhaps also failing compatibility.

4.2. Relationships and Gender Roles

Romance is a crucial theme in *Mad Men*, where Peggy struggles to find her place in the changing environment of the 1960s, and Peggy is able to successfully defy the prevalent stereotype of women as homemakers. The sexual revolution took place in the 1960s and it was brought forward significant changes to dating and sexual relations. Attitudes to sex and dating had been slowly changing since start of the century, but the introduction of the Pill in the 1960s completed it. According to Daniel, "the Pill gave women highly effective control over reproduction and contributed to spontaneity in relationships," which meant that women were able to have short-

term relationships without fear of getting pregnant (p. 310). In *Mad Men*, the Pill is something that almost all secretaries in the office use and it is highly popular, which is why Joan instructs Peggy to go to a gynecologist on her first day. Despite the fact that the women and men at Sterling Cooper seem to have progressive views about sex, dating and contraceptives, it is clear that negative perceptions about women who are on the Pill prevail. The gynecologist who examines Peggy and prescribes her the contraceptives seems to be judgmental towards women who date and have casual sex as he comments that “even in these modern times, easy women do not find husbands.” Therefore, there seems to be a double standard in the series when it comes to the sexual revolution and woman’s role in society, especially when it comes to dating.

A main challenge for Peggy in the dating world is the fact that she has to balance relationships and work, especially as some of the men she dates have traditional views of womanhood and relationships. According to Betty Friedan, woman’s role in the 1960s was focused on the role of a homemaker and a woman's main pursuit in life should be finding a husband, whether she was working or not: “the only goal a woman is permitted is the pursuit of a man” (p. 23) Since Peggy puts her career before everything else, including love, this creates problems for her and her dating possibilities. In “The Suitcase,” it is Peggy's birthday and she is supposed to be celebrating with her boyfriend Mark and her family, but she has to stay at work with Don Draper on a Samsonite suitcase account. Although Peggy is initially reluctant to stay at work, she calls Mark to cancel her plans, and he and her family get angry about her decision. Peggy's mother scolds Peggy for not appreciating her boyfriend: “I don't know how many nice boys are lining up for you? You should be grateful,” (“The Suitcase,” 19:25) and Mark agrees with her. This reinforces the belief that a woman's primary task is to find a husband and become a homemaker, a view which, Peggy, dismisses. It also is apparent that among some people, in the series, the emancipation of women and the concept of a career woman are met with hostility and negativity, especially among people who have traditional views. Despite this, Peggy is able to get dates and find boyfriends, but these men usually have more progressive and liberal views: her boyfriend Abe is a journalist who has progressive views about the rights of African Americans and her eventual boyfriend Stan Rizzo is an art director who supports nudism. Therefore, Peggy's success in dating might partially have to do with the views of her dates and boyfriends, and the fact that she favors men with such views.

Despite the sexual revolution and the emergence of women in the workforce in the 1960s, traditional views of women as homemakers were still favored. According to Friedan, as the acceptable path for a woman was to get married and become a housewife, a prevalent belief in the 1950s was that "the root of women's troubles in the past is that women envied men, women tried to be like men, instead of accepting their own nature, which can find fulfillment only in sexual passivity" (p. 29). This limitation of a woman's role also extends to relationships, and it can be assumed that as the definition of acceptable forms of relationships began to expand during the sexual revolution, people with traditional views about marriage and sex opposed to them. During the 1960s, however, the concept of marriage began to crumble and new alternatives became more accepted despite prevailing notions about sexuality: according to Gatlin, sexual gratification was supposed to be restricted to a single, legal heterosexual relationship" (p. 99). In *Mad Men*, Peggy defies the traditional aspects of relationships not only by having premarital sex, but also by living together with her boyfriend instead of getting married in "At the Codfish Ball." This, however, is rejected by her religious mother, who reacts negatively when Peggy tells her that she is moving in together with her boyfriend Abe, and is upset that her daughter wants to live in sin. Peggy's mother's rejection is an example of what happens when traditional concepts of womanhood are rejected by the younger generation, and how the older generation likes to hold on to the traditional values. Thus, during the turbulent times of the 1960s, working women and sexually liberated women who chose other types of relationships than marriage, could face resistance from people who have traditional views.

Peggy's bold decision to move in with her boyfriend without getting married shows that she embraces the fact that times are changing, and this scene is important in terms of Peggy's independence and emancipation. Although Peggy values marriage and is initially disappointed that her boyfriend Abe did not propose to her, she embraces the concept of living together, stating "I don't need a piece of paper, not that marriage is wrong or anything" (27:44). This indicates that, possibly because of her traditionalist Catholic background, Peggy still values the more traditional views of marriage and that her mother's words hurt her. According to Huffington Post journalist Berben, Peggy is conflicted because she does not want to live in sin and is worried that Abe is only using her as a practice before getting married: Peggy wants to be with Abe but "her upbringing is telling her it's not right and perhaps they should be married" ("Mad Men: Adulthood Looms "At

the Codfish Ball"). This is a conflicting scene for Peggy as on the one hand, Peggy is finally coming to terms with the new possibilities of being a working woman living in the big city, and she is leaving behind the views of a traditional woman's role as a married homemaker. On the other hand, though, Peggy's religious background makes her question her decision to move in together, but she decides to do so because she wants to be with him. Therefore, as Peggy decides to move in together with her boyfriend, she makes a decision that affects her future: during the series, she never gets engaged or married. Peggy's progressive views regarding sexuality goes hand in hand with her life as a self-supporting working woman: as she defies traditional gender roles, both in the workplace and outside it, she is able to find fulfillment.

In conclusion, Peggy is throughout her story arc affected by her traditional and religious upbringing that conflicts with her own views about sex and relationships. Although Peggy is eager to begin her life as a working woman and enjoys supporting herself, she still yearns to get married and is disappointed when she cannot do so. However, she does not share her mother's views about sex and she seems to adapt more modern views of relationships as the series progresses: she has casual sex and several relationships, and she ultimately does not get engaged or married, which shows that she is first and foremost a career woman. Thus, the changing definitions of what is appropriate and what is not allow Peggy to express herself in ways that she could not have done otherwise.

4.3. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment pertains to unwanted sexual attention at institutions, in education or at work, which, according to Gatlin "reinforces women's traditionally inferior role in the labor force" (228). MacKinnon defines sexual harassment as "the use of power derived from one social sphere to lever benefits or impose derivations in another," and sexual harassment of women in the workplace is either clear "when male superiors on the job coercively initiate unwanted sexual advances to women employees" or male co-workers or customers (p. 1-2). The treatment of women in *Mad Men* is an example of sexual harassment and what the 1960s work environment could have been like. Haralovich argues that Sterling Cooper is an inherently sexist work

environment where there is a "gendered disparity of power" and men are favored over women (p. 159). Sexual harassment is very common and it happens frequently but it is not addressed and very rarely a topic of discussion among the female workers. The men of Sterling Cooper repeatedly call the women of the office 'girls', 'honey' and make passes at the women at the office in professional situations.

Sexual harassment is also often the topic of discussion in different television series, and sociology professor Beth Montemurro found that it is often trivialized and the topic of jokes in situational comedies. According to Montemurro, "behaviors ranging from sexual innuendo and jokes about sexual encounters to inappropriate touching and making specific requests for sexual favors" are frequently found in situation comedies (p. 443). Despite the fact that *Mad Men* is a drama series and has a different format and plot structure than a situation comedy has, gender and sexual harassment are issues that are discussed in Peggy's storyline. Peggy, who during her storyline has a successful career as a copywriter encounters belittling, joking at her expense, unwanted touching and inappropriate requests as she develops from an inexperienced secretary to an experienced copywriter who gains confidence and is able to resist the harassing treatment. Then again, the majority of women are openly harassed in the series without the possibility to stand up for themselves. Thus, the fictional 1960s advertising agency provides a fruitful setting for the men of the company to openly harass the women because women work below them, and because they have sexist views of women.

Sexual harassment is an important topic in *Mad Men* because of the way it is portrayed: although Peggy is verbally and physically harassed during her storyline and sexual harassment frequently happens in *Mad Men*, she is able to resist the offensive behavior by standing up for herself, and she is no longer sexually harassed when the series ends. Although many of the other female characters in the show are unable to resist sexual harassment and the men never stop harassing women, they finally stop harassing Peggy. This possibly depends on Peggy's position in the company as a copywriter as opposed to a secretary, and that the men respect her more and more as she is successful in her career and is able to prove herself. Thus, as according to Wilson, sexual harassment pertains to men's attitudes towards women and "is inextricably linked with women's

disadvantaged status at work and subordinated position in society" (p. 221). It can be said that as Peggy's position in her workplace is equal to the men's positions in the workplace and the men begin to appreciate her skills, she is no longer harassed.

Sexual harassment in the workplace may only occur once or it may be a continuing phenomenon and such behavior can be understood to be a threat for the victim, thus, the victim might in some cases be threatened to lose her job. Professor of law Catharine MacKinnon divides sexual harassment into two categories, the quid pro quo and a persistent condition of work in which the former is exchanged for employment benefits and the in the latter case it is a problem that exists because of unequal power relations. Peggy's situation can be described as a persistent condition of work as the harassment occurs frequently, and continues even when she is promoted to copywriter. Those men at Sterling Cooper who occupy higher positions than Peggy and thus have more power than she does, especially when she works as a secretary. MacKinnon argues that sexual harassment is a more prominent problem in sex-typed work, such as office work, where women have lower positions than men who "thus have power over the female workers who work for them" (p. 32). MacKinnon also states that employers, co-workers, judges and even the victims themselves dismiss the incidents as trivial and personal, or as "natural" or "biological" behaviors" (p. 2). Therefore, sexual harassment is viewed as something normal that the victim should accept and even play along, and it does not need to be dealt with. MacKinnon argues that sexual harassment happens to women in sex-typed occupations and "token women" who men may see as a challenge (p. 40). This is also true for Peggy, who is at first encouraged to flirt with her superiors, which happens because she works below the men in the office.

In conclusion, sexual harassment is a prevalent issue at Sterling Cooper, where women are repeatedly harassed, both physically and verbally. This unwanted sexual attention belittles Peggy, who does not accept such behavior although no-one seems to be doing anything to change the situation. Such as in other fictional series, sexual harassment is also a topic of discussion in *Mad Men*, where the men are largely allowed to harass women without facing consequences. This, however, is not true in Peggy's case, who is finally able to stand up for herself after she has established her position as a copywriter. It seems that as Peggy becomes more and more

successful in her career, she is not harassed as frequently, and this behavior finally stops. This indicates that, in *Mad Men*, sexual harassment largely depends on the position of the female worker as the lower-level female workers are repeatedly harassed throughout the series.

4.4. Physical and Verbal Sexual Harassment

Physical sexual harassment, which, according to MacKinnon, includes being "felt or pinched, visually undressed or stared at" or kissed (p. 40). This is a topic of discussion in *Mad Men*, where the women are often perceived as sexual beings instead of professional women. "Ladies Room" offers a prominent example of physical sexual harassment, where Peggy goes to tell copywriter Paul Kinsey that she cannot go to lunch with him that day, as usual. Paul, who apparently has misinterpreted Peggy's friendly behavior for flirting, abruptly kisses Peggy in his office and remarks that they could push the couch in front of the door, which implies that he wants to have sex with her. What indicates that it is not a question about an office romance is that Paul and Peggy had never talked about going on a date or having sex, and their previous interaction can be described as friendly, not flirtatious. As Paul closes the door and kisses Peggy without asking her permission, he enforces the belief that women are, according to MacKinnon seen as "men's sexual playthings" since male employers deliberately choose attractive and seemingly "sexually compliant" women who work in sex-typed jobs (p. 41, 43). When Peggy rejects him, he believes that she has someone else and immediately feels ashamed, which indicates that Paul would probably not have felt ashamed or backed away if he had known that Peggy was single. Thus, it is possible that he would have continued to harass her, as was the case with Kenny who made clear that he would not back down in his pursuit of Peggy. Therefore, it is clear that women in the Sterling Cooper office are expected to be flirtatious to men and have sex with them, and that the women are seen as sexual beings instead of workers.

Sexual harassment, although most often occurring among females who work in sex-typed occupations, can also occur for women in higher positions. In "Chinese Wall," Peggy's situation is different as she is a copywriter and thus has a higher job position than during the first season, but she still faces sexual harassment by her co-workers. Therefore, despite her higher position at

Sterling Cooper and her higher status at the company, her co-workers still make sexual jokes about her and even physically harass her. Because she is part of the creative team at Sterling Cooper, she is supposedly equal with her male co-workers, but she is still treated as they did when she was a secretary. According to MacKinnon, physical harassment comes in many forms which “range from repeated collisions that leave the impression of “accident” to rape” (p. 29). In “Chinese Wall,” Peggy faces physical sexual harassment when she is preparing for her Playtex gloves presentation and her co-worker, art director Stan, tricks Peggy into closing her eyes and taking a deep breath when in fact it is apparent that Stan only wanted her to do so to be able to stare at her breasts. Thus, Peggy is being involuntarily stared at and it is apparent that Peggy does not expect to be stared at or kissed: she gets very angry when he abruptly kisses her and refuses to let go of her when she says no. Stan tries to convince Peggy to give in and remarks that Peggy is “so horny I can smell it on your breath” (“Chinese Wall”, 29:44). It is apparent that Stan only thinks of Peggy as sexually accessible because she made sexually suggestive comments earlier in the episode when she, Stan and Dan, another copywriter, work on a sales pitch, and although this situation in question cannot be constituted rape, it seems that Stan sees Peggy as a potential sex partner and that his attempt to “help” Peggy was indeed a masked attempt to get close to her.

As sexual harassment is a complex issue, it might be difficult to determine what is constituted sexual harassment and what is not, especially if the intention of the perpetrator is innocent in nature. Wilson argues that despite the intention of the perpetrator “what distinguishes sexual harassment from friendly sexual banter is that it is not mutual” (p. 204). In “Maidenform,” Peggy is disappointed that she was not included in a meeting about a pitch that took place in a night club, and talks about this with Freddy Rumsen, with whom Peggy has always got along with. He completely dismisses her concern as he thinks that she would not fit in: “believe me, you did not want to be in that bar,” (“Maidenform,” 21:47) after which he encourages Peggy to continue working and slaps her on her behind with his folder. It is apparent that he means her no harm and that the gesture is meant as an encouragement or a joke instead of a threat or a sexual advance. Although Peggy and Freddy are friends and get along well, it is apparent that Peggy responds negatively to his actions and is dumbfounded, which is why she does not say anything to Freddy. Therefore, his actions constitute as physical sexual harassment because she responds negatively and it is not welcome as, according to Wilson, “it is primarily about men exercising power over

women" (p. 204). Freddy's actions indicate that there is a double standard in the fictional company of Sterling Cooper, where men are rarely, if ever, sexually harassed by women or men, and never inappropriately touched, while women often endure verbal harassment and even physical harassment. Thus, the gesture perpetuates the belief that women should endure the harassment and even find it flattering, when it in fact violates their personal space and belittles them.

Sexual harassment can also occur in verbal form, and Peggy faces verbal harassment in "Ladies' Room." When she goes to lunch with Joan, Ken, Harry and Dale, she faces verbal sexual harassment when the boys wink at her, call her 'baby' and place wagers on who would be the lucky one to sleep with her first: "you are the subject of much debate, money riding on the outcome" ("Ladies' Room", 11:41) This behavior embarrasses her and prompts her to leave, which indicates that she is feeling uncomfortable. She, however, is too afraid to stand up for herself, perhaps because she is afraid of being ridiculed, and because she is expected to flirt with the men in the office. It is apparent that the men in the office have a toxic and degrading view of women, which is made clear when Kenneth Cosgrove, an account executive, leans close to Peggy, puts his hand on her hips and leans close to whisper in her ear, asking her to go to the zoo with him. Although Peggy feels uncomfortable, he is adamant in his pursuit of Peggy, vowing to get her: "my persistence is my charm." As he touches her and makes sexual jokes about her, Kenneth is in fact invading her personal space without consent, which, according to MacKinnon constitutes as verbal sexual harassment because it can be anything from comments on a woman's body or appearance, pornography or "discussions of a sexual nature between an employer and an employee" (29). The verbal harassment that Peggy faces in this situation can be described as being a hostile work environment, which pertains to a harassing situation without work benefits exchanged. According to Cleveland, Stockdale and Murphy, "repeatedly asking a person for a date" is also considered hostile work environment harassment, such as in Peggy's case (p. 223).

In conclusion, physical and verbal sexual harassment is a prevalent issue in *Mad Men* and it happens frequently. Sexual harassment is a complex issue that was hidden and unnamed for a long time, and which is due to the fact that women are seen as sexually accessible in the labor force, which makes them vulnerable to men who may exploit and harass them because of their

inferior position in the workplace. Peggy continually faces physical sexual harassment during her storyline and she is several times touched without consent, and these attempts to touch and harass her are initially accepted by Peggy, but her attitude later changes. It is also apparent that the men who harass her do not recognize or believe Peggy when she obviously feels uncomfortable, which indicates that Peggy's opinion is not taken into consideration, and that harassing behavior may not have been meant to be sexual in nature. Thus, it can be said that physical sexual harassment in *Mad Men* happens because of an unequal power structure: the men work above the women, and that the men who sexually harass women may not be aware of its negative consequences to women.

4.5. Response to Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment has a powerful effect on those women who have been sexually harassed in the workplace. According to MacKinnon, harassed women "feel humiliated, degraded, ashamed, and cheap, as well as angry" (p. 47). This indicates that these women have very negative feelings towards being harassed, and they are not flattered by the sexual advances, which is also the case for Peggy who does not find sexual harassment appealing or flattering. According to media theory history researcher Mimi White, Peggy openly shows that she is disgusted by the unwanted attention she receives and is unhappy about the double standard the men have: on the outside, they appear to support traditional family values but at the same time they are "flirting with anything in a skirt and guzzling booze" (148). Peggy's reaction does, however, change over time and there is a clear difference between her reaction in season one and season four: in season one, Peggy is confused and embarrassed by the situation but is afraid to say anything about it to the men who harass her. According to MacKinnon, women often subtly accept the harassing behavior, which is "a male-enforced reality," as women are afraid that they will only "have their job only so long as they are pleasing to their male superior" (p. 48). This may be the reason why Peggy did not take action, the fear that she might lose her job because of it. Another reason could be that she is the new girl at Sterling Cooper who might be shunned or ostracized because of it, despite the fact that Joan openly speaks her mind to the men at the office without being shunned.

In the beginning of her story arc, Peggy is afraid to resist the different forms of sexual harassment that she faces in the office. Women are afraid to complain about these incidents to the perpetrator, or more often to female friends or family, in case, according to MacKinnon, "that their complaints will be ignored, will not be believed" or that they will be accused of asking to be harassed (p. 49). MacKinnon also argues that women often tend to ignore the situation and to appear to be flattered, which "may be interpreted as encouragement" as in fact even a lack of response may be interpreted (p. 48). Other women at the office, such as Joan, seem to be flattered by sexual harassment and accept the behavior as normal and characteristic of men. When Peggy complains about her treatment by the men after being kissed by Paul and expected to have sex with him: "why is it that every time a man takes you out to lunch around here, you are the dessert?" ("Ladies' Room", 36:23) Joan states that men always treat women in such a way and that Peggy should enjoy the attention because she is the new girl. In season four, however, Peggy refuses to hold her tongue and accept the behavior. When Stan harasses her, she is very angry and even remarks that he keeps making her reject him and his advances. She does not, however, complain about the situation to her superiors, only to the perpetrator, who seems to believe her since he does not physically harass her again.

According to MacKinnon, men who sexually harass women in the workplace often try to validate their behavior by stating that "they were only trying to initiate a close personal relationship with a woman that they liked," and women who refuse sexual advances are often accused of "job incompetence and poor attitude" if they refuse the advances, thus resulting in competent and skilled women being wrongly accused (p. 35). In Peggy's case she is not offered job benefits in exchange for sexual compliances, but the men she refuse apparently do not believe that they did anything wrong when they harassed her. The men with whom Peggy and Joan ate lunch did not stop or apologize when Peggy felt uncomfortable and left the situation. She expressed her distaste by signaling to Joan that they should leave but the boys did not stop, and Kenny even touched her and asked her out, later telling Joan that he would not back down, which indicates that Peggy's opinion was second-rate and did not matter.

It seems that the 'Mad Men' of *Mad Men* are allowed to do as they wish: White argues that they have the right to express sexuality and “be angry, zany, creative, manipulative and excessive” while openly objectifying women (p. 151). Paul kissed Peggy without consent and immediately jumped to the conclusion that Peggy was seeing someone when she rejected him, which indicates that the woman's own opinion does not matter as much as a man's opinion. In Paul's case, men even seem to believe that buying a woman lunch means that she needs to have sex with him afterward. Stan tricked Peggy into standing close to him so that he could stare at her and as he kisses her and she angrily rejects him, he refuses to let go of her and tries to convince her to give into his kiss. This indicates that a woman's 'no' does not mean no and that if the man tries to help, even if it constitutes sexual harassment, she should accept the help. In all these cases, men try to validate their behavior in some way, whether it is that they believe that women are their playthings whose opinions do not matter, that women should exchange sexual favors for lunch or dinner, or that they tried to help them.

At Sterling Cooper, the men are not the only ones who have biased and problematic views on women and sexual harassment in the workplace. As sexual harassment as an issue is not even recognized in the fictional workplace, it is not openly discussed and the women in the office let it happen without consequences. When sexual harassment happens, others might blame the victim for it, as is also the case *in Mad Men*. According to Martha R. Burt, director of the Social Services Research Program, attitudes to sexual violence are often connected to other attitudes, such as “sex role stereotyping, distrust of the opposite sex (adversarial sexual beliefs), and acceptance of interpersonal violence” (p. 229). Burt also argues that victim blaming of victims of sexual violence will only change unless sex roles and society's view of sex are changing: “rape is the logical and psychological extension of a dominant-submissive, competitive, sex role-stereotyped culture” (p. 229). In “Severance,” which is an episode that has already been analyzed from another point of view, Peggy and Joan present a Topaz pantyhose account to the board of their advertising company, where their efforts are not only undermined and ignored, but Joan is also verbally harassed by the men. They make suggestive jokes about Joan's appearance and her abilities as a serious working woman are continually undermined: “you should be in the bra business, you are a work of art” (“Severance,” 17:40). This behavior angers Joan, who tells Peggy that she hates them all, but Peggy, however, states that Joan was asking to be harassed during the meeting because of

the way she looks and because she wears tight dresses: “You can't have it both ways, you can't dress the way you do,” (“Severance,” 20:38) indicating that Joan will never be taken seriously because of the way she looks. Peggy's reaction and remark can be considered victim blaming, as she believes that Joan's appearance justifies her harassment.

In this scene, the juxtaposition between these two working women is made very clear: Peggy has advanced and succeeded in her career on her own, while Joan became company co-partner by sleeping with a potential investor. Peggy judges Joan for being upset about being sexually harassed because she believes that Joan deserves it, not only because of her appearance and flirtatious nature, but also because Joan has been sexually promiscuous and used sex as a method for career advancement. Peggy ignores the fact that Joan was practically forced by her co-partners to have sex with the investor in order to save the company, and that Joan is her friend. This indicates that Peggy has a toxic view of women and the sexuality of women in the workplace, and it is apparent that sexual harassment in the workplace may not always be recognized or accepted by women, who may dismiss the complaints of other women as attention-seeking or irrelevant. In this case it may also be that Peggy is jealous of the attention that Joan gets, and that she looks down on a woman who slept her way up to the top.

In conclusion, responses to sexual harassment may be varied and outsiders may place the blame on the victim of sexual assault or harassment, which depends on the attitudes regarding women. Peggy, who understands the struggles working women face in a male-dominated workplace, but it is still apparent that she has a negative opinion about women and sexuality in the workplace, which is why she judges Joan for her promiscuity and appearance. Men who sexually harass women often judge women if they reject their advances, which is why women might be afraid to express their true feelings to the men who harass them. Because of fear of ridicule, belittling, or being blamed themselves for sexual harassment, women find it difficult to complain about the issues and be taken seriously. This also happens to Peggy, who initially silently accepts the harassing behavior, although she finds it disgusting, and her friendly behavior is often misinterpreted as flirting, which indicates that the men in the office expect to have flings and office romances with their secretaries. Later on in the series, however, Peggy stands up for herself

and refuses to accept harassment, which is a sign of her becoming a woman who is more assertive and independent.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is safe to say that *Mad Men* offers examples of the issues women faced in working life in the 1960s. Prejudices against and stereotypes of women were prevalent at the time, and they affected the career development of women, which is clearly demonstrated by Peggy's storyline in the TV series. Women's career development in *Mad Men* is affected by prejudice in the way that appearance affects the way a woman is perceived in the workplace, gender-specific obstacles, and sexual harassment enforces the unequal power relations that exist between women and men in organizations and institutions.

However, *Mad Men's* portrayal of women in the workplace is problematic since women are portrayed as less competent than men: all women in *Mad Men*, with the exception of Peggy who begins her career as a secretary and Dr. Faye Miller, a strategist who works for Sterling Cooper in season four, work in clerical occupations and have little hope of advancing in their careers. The men who work in the company occupy a wide range of jobs at Sterling Cooper, ranging from management duties to copywriting, but the women are unable to advance beyond the clerical professions. Peggy is the only exception and she is able to advance in her career because of her sharp wit and talents in copywriting, but her career development only takes place by accident. As Peggy's talents are recognized by senior copywriter, Freddy Rumsen, she is quickly promoted to copywriter because of her skills. Therefore, Peggy's initial success is mostly due to luck which is partly the reason why the men of the creative team refuse to give her a warm welcome: Peggy is abruptly promoted because of her abilities but she has not been trained to be a copywriter.

The stereotypical views of the men at Sterling Cooper prevent Peggy from advancing on her career and getting a raise when she would legally deserve one, and she is kept off a work task plainly because of gender as the client was opposed to a woman being in charge of a car commercial. It is also apparent that men expect women to be good-looking and attractive and that the lack of these attributes can influence the way a woman and her abilities, which are completely unrelated to her appearance, are perceived by her male co-workers and employers. When Peggy gains weight and becomes unattractive to her colleagues, since a slim body is considered ideal and attractive in

society, they begin to question her abilities and the men claim that Peggy has become too confident about her abilities. This indicates that Peggy is expected to be thin and appealing in the eyes of her male colleagues, and the way she is viewed in the workplace also depends on the beauty ideals of the 1960s. Clothing also affects the way Peggy is perceived at Sterling Cooper, and it seems that those women who in lower-level jobs are expected to wear sexy, form-fitting dresses. Although these women in lower-level jobs are perceived positively when they wear sexy clothing and look appealing, it seems that Peggy, who has a high-level job, is not perceived as positively when she attempts to wear revealing clothing. Masculine clothing and the color of the clothes may also affect the way Peggy is presented: her red pantsuit is a symbol of power and her being able to climb the corporate ladder. In Peggy's case, clothing may also be a conscious attempt to affect the perceptions of her colleagues in a positive way as it seems that Peggy's clothes also evolve when she advances in her career.

Peggy also experiences discrimination because of her gender, which limits her potential: she is the only female copywriter and she is held to a different standard because of it. Her colleagues perceive her as a potential date or sexual companion instead of a respected work colleague, which indicates that Peggy is viewed according to sexist stereotypes of women not being competitive. As Peggy is the only female copywriter at Sterling Cooper, she does not have a female role model, which means that Peggy looks up to and emulates Don Draper, and his way of working. This means that Peggy naturally adopts male behavioral patterns, which is especially clear in her own efforts to be a copy chief. This, however, is a challenge for Peggy who is confused: she is unsure whether she wants to act aggressively like a man and whether she actually is capable in doing so. This indicates that the absence of female role models in managerial positions have shaped Peggy's way of acting and thinking, and that although she is successful in her career, she is conflicted because she is a woman who is expected to act like a man. Peggy also experiences discrimination when it comes to her wages as she is repeatedly denied a rise in salary. However, despite the discrimination and sexism that she faces at Sterling Cooper, she is finally able to overcome her obstacles and become a respected and successful copywriter.

Sexual harassment is another theme in this thesis, and this phenomenon is very common at Sterling Cooper, where men flirt with and act suggestively in the company of almost all secretaries. Peggy also experiences sexual harassment due to the unequal power relations at Sterling Cooper and the harassment only stops after she has clearly opposed to it. The harassment continues even when she becomes a copywriter, she is respected and her position is established at Sterling Cooper. Thus, this indicates that Peggy faces sexual harassment and gender-related bias and prejudice that is unrelated to her position at the advertising agency, which might change if she were part of the agency's management or occupied a senior position. *Mad Men* is able to discuss sexual harassment and the other issues in such a way that TV series and films in the 1960s were not able to do as the issues were not as widely recognized as they are now.

As *Mad Men* is a 21st century product, it is also able to criticize and bring up these topics regarding women's issues in the workplace, which are also relatable for the modern audience. The modern viewer is able to relate to Peggy's problems and working life obstacles since sexual harassment, appearance-based bias and a gender-specific issues still exist. It is relevant to study the issues that are analyzed in *Mad Men* because they are in one way or another still present in women's working lives and the modern audience can relate to Peggy's struggles in *Mad Men*. Thus, Peggy's complex journey as a copywriter in a man's world is relatable to the modern working woman, and her obstacles are such that they still exist in today's institutions and organizations.

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