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Male and Female Role Models and Stereotypes in British Films of the Twentieth and the Twenty-first Century

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Čestné prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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vlastnoruční podpis

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to analyse male and female role models and stereotypes in selected British films of the twentieth and the twenty-first century. The work focuses mainly on the characters in selected films with regard to their gender roles in context of stereotypical features or characteristics which could serve as role models.

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

As well as books, films offer many various ways of how to interpret them. Unlike the novels, the screen provides limited space for expression of the main ideas of the plot, and it carries within the risk of forced simplification, which can significantly affect the final form of the film, especially those that were made as adaptations of books.

Characters play a very important role because they create the essence of the whole film. Character is the plot. Whatever happens in the film, it is passed on to the viewer through dialogues and acting of the characters. They reflect the reality of the world as well as all the opinions, attitudes and beliefs of the individual authors of the film. The character is the one who creates overall impression of the film. All this is accompanied by the setting of the plot, music, costumes, which can affect the impression of the characters, but their actions are the most important part of the film.

Watching films has become a popular way of spending free time. People probably do not realize it, but everything they perceive can have a big impact on them whether positive or negative. Especially stereotypes highly affect how people perceive reality and when films show it to the audience often, they may get the impression that this is the reality.

This thesis focuses on analysis of male and female role models and stereotypes in selected British films of the twentieth and the twenty-first century. It shows the way how they are depicted in the films and how they can be interpreted.

The aim of the thesis is to identify how the individual films over the course of two centuries, process stereotypes and role models and what possible negative or positive effects individual characters may have on the viewer. Another goal is to find out whether more role models appear in films or the films tend to portray rather stereotypical features.

I. THEORETICAL PART

STEREOTYPES

This chapter focuses on definitions of the term stereotype, which is commonly associated with negative connotations. Following subchapters describe the most frequent male and female stereotypes in the society.

1. Definition of the term stereotype

"*The first use of the term stereotype was in the late 1700s. At that time, it referred to a printing process in which metal plates were used to create reproductions of images and prints. It was not until the early 1920s that the term became common parlance when journalist Walter Lippmann likened stereotypes to "pictures in the head," or mental re-productions of reality. Since then, the term has evolved into its current usage – cognitive schemas or beliefs used by people to process information about or guide behaviour toward individuals or social groups.*" (Marx, 2019)

David Marx and Sei Jin Ko mention what *stereotype* meant in history in comparison with its use in present days. They connect it with the "pictures in the head" because it is precisely a certain image people imagine every time they think about a particular group of people. Other authors try to explain the term, and many of them comprehend it similarly.

Mike Cardwell defines the stereotype as "*a fixed, often simplistic generalization about a particular group or class of people. These stereotypes are based on predictability in people's behaviour and are often negative and unflattering and may underly prejudice and discrimination. Stereotypes may not necessarily be false assumptions about the target group, as they often contain a "grain of truth ". A stereotype must be a widely shared set of beliefs, thus further reinforcing the fact that some degree of accuracy is often evident.*" (Cardwell, 1999, s. 227)

Anne Cranny-Francis et al. delimit gender stereotype as "*a radically reductive way of presenting whole communities of people by identifying them with a few key characteristics. Individuals from the group who do not fit that stereotype are then said to be atypical.*" (Granny-Francis, 2003, s. 141)

Based on these definitions, stereotypes are perceived as typical characteristics (including mostly appearance and behaviour) of a specific social group. Anyone to whom these qualities cannot be attributed is then regarded as the "odd one out". Even though internal elements of truth in certain human qualities may support the stereotypical classification of society, willingness to accept it as credible reality results in inequitable categorizing, for instance, not every person identified as a rebel must necessarily have all the qualities associated with that appellation. Undeniably, stereotypical features exist, nevertheless they are often distorted and presented inaccurately in a very simplified form, especially in films.

In the book *Stereotypy, předsudky, diskriminace* doc. PhDr. Karel Hnilica, CSc. tries to sort out and simplify theories and opinions about stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination of different authors. He points to the existence of a large number of works devoted to these issues. The term stereotype has a specific definition in different fields of human occupation – law, economics, psychology, sociology, literature, journalism and many others. The most likely stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination are the consequences of living in a multicultural society. (Hnilica, 2010, s. 9-12)

1.1. Social labels

Stereotypes may be associated with social labels. Professor Douglas Raybeck mentions in his study *Becker's labelling theory* which focuses on how society defines and creates deviance. "*Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labelling them as "outsiders." From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an offender. The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behaviour is behaviour that people so label.*" (Raybeck, 1988, s. 371-372)

Social labels influence the whole personality of those who are labelled. The author of *www.brainfoodblog.com* describes how labelling works in practice in the life of an ordinary person. It has a significant impact on thinking because it may result in a change in a person's behaviour. "*If people constantly tell me that I'm an athlete, I'm going to start believing it myself, and thus start changing my behaviour to match the mold of that label. If other people tell me I am something on a consistent basis, regardless of whether or not I believe it myself, I'm significantly more likely to incorporate that into*

my identity. When we are labeled, people have certain expectations of us. We regularly conform to those expectations in order to fit the mold the people have set for us. Our conceptions of ourselves are based almost entirely on what others think of us." (Who Do You Think You Are? How Labels Influence Identity)

2 Common male and female stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are relatively abundant in films, and that is the reason why they do not provide an accurate reflection of reality. In society, there is a mispresented idea of attributes which makes a "real man". Every person is unique with specific characteristics, but people tend to be highly influenced by the opinions or beliefs of the majority. Although this behaviour is natural, it leads to the perception of the world based on defective thinking and films play a significant role in this.

Karel Hnilica mentions in his book a stereotypical conception of male category which he took over from Rosenkrantz. The overall view involves characteristics like "*strong, independent, aggressive, competitive or resolute. Man thinks logically, and that is the reason why he is independent or brave. He possesses all these qualities only because he is a man.*" (Hnilica, 2010, s. 13) This statement would mean that every man is supposed to behave in a certain way because he basically must or at least he should since it is required from him as a man. Hnilica does not proclaim that it is true, but he demonstrates how the stereotypes are created – "*its recurrence strengthens the extent of all features which humans associate with specific social categories.*" (Hnilica, 2010, s. 14) Repetition thus helps to consolidate these qualities in public opinion.

Another frequent symbol of masculinity is that males do not cry. Teardrops are regarded as a sign of weakness. It does not correspond with the ideal vision of a strong man. Crying is considered to be a very feminine feature, and men who cry are commonly described as effeminate. On the other hand, women sometimes claim that they want to have by their side a man who can show his vulnerability but expressing emotions in public, especially sadness, is a social disgrace for men. Films depict them rather as strong, brave, aggressive, smart and charming human beings. Otherwise, they look more like a caricature of a man. Qualities that do not represent man-worthy attributes are often exaggerated.

Women are regularly rendered as fragile beings who will not survive without help from men. There is a strong, handsome man who saves the lady in troubles, or at least he takes

care of her, and when she needs, he appears at the right time and helps her. Their dominant role is to look pretty, fall in love with a man, and live happily ever after. When they want to be more independent, they always have to fight harder in order to succeed in life. Even though they are successful, they are permanently doubted because they lack sufficient authority. On the other hand, it is generally believed that men are not capable of taking care of household and children (at least not as well as women). This view of males and females encourages the development of more stereotypical prejudices towards both sexes and brings clichés into films.

Women were confronted with much discrimination in history, and they still do nowadays (depending on their social status or cultural environment). In addition, not only women undergo discrimination, even men experience similar situations. All this is the result of the images and values that society creates through the media and conveys them to people as right.

2.1 Sissy and Tomboy

Sissy and *tomboy* are the terms associated with behaviour of usually young boys and girls. Professor Richard Green describes the terms *tomboy* as "*a romping, boisterous, boyish young girl*" and *sissy* as "*an effeminate boy or man, a timid or cowardly person. For a boy to be called sissy can be devastating. It pierces a boy's self-image at its most vulnerable point. By contrast, "tomboy" is said with approving tones, and does not detract from a girl's sense of worth.*" (Green, 1979, s. 1)

"*Tomboyism generally describes an extend childhood period of female masculinity. The term tends to be associated with a "natural" desire for the greater freedoms and mobilities enjoyed by boys. Very often, it is read as a sign of independence and self-motivation, and "tomboyism" may even be encouraged to the extent that it remains comfortably linked to a stable sense of girl identity. Teenage "tomboyism" presents a problem and tends to be subject to the most severe efforts to reorient.*" (Halberstam, 1998, s. 5-6) Professor Green also accurately claims: "*It is regrettable that the labels "sissy" and "tomboy" exist, that distinctions between typical and atypical gender-role behaviour are made, and especially that atypical children are penalized.*" (Green, 1979, s. 1)

Although Judith Halberstam mentioned positive aspects of *tomboyism* in the lives of young girls, that kind of specific female behaviour is not convenient for social standards. Girls who tend to be different from others undergo intense pressure from

a social environment which force them to conform. Boys are punished as well for being different. In their case, public derision is perhaps even sterner than in the case of girls. Their actions do not necessarily signal the beginnings of homosexuality, but society often severely suppresses any differences beyond its control. However, this can have fatal consequences for the development of these individuals, and it also encourages an increase in stereotypical thinking about how men and women should look and behave.

3. Gender roles

Gender role means "*patterns of behaviour, attitudes, and personality attributes that are traditionally considered in a particular culture to be feminine or masculine*." (Alters, s. 143)

Professor George Murdock has surveyed the data for two hundred and twenty-four societies (mostly preliterate) and shows that "*the tendency to segregate economic activities in one way or another according to sex is strong.*" (Oakley, 1978, s. 128) He took a list of forty-six different activities and tried to find out who performs these them more often. He suggests that some of these activities are definitely masculine rather than feminine and vice versa. *"For example, lumbering is an exclusively masculine activity in one hundred and four of his societies and exclusively feminine in six; cooking is exclusively feminine in one hundred and fifty eight and exclusively masculine in five. Hunting, fishing, weapon making, boat building and mining tend to be masculine while grinding grain and carrying water tend to be feminine.* (Oakley, 1978, s. 128)

As Oakley suggests based on Murdock's survey, *"every society does have rules about which activities are suitable for each gender, but the sample of societies which he observed is only a fragment in comparison with several thousand cultures and ethnicities in the world."* (Oakley, 1978, s. 128)

Gender roles are still distinguished according to the opposite sex. Although emancipation is increasing, films still provide their audience with stereotypical occupation mostly reflected in women being at home and taking care of children and men working and taking care of manual work.

ROLE MODEL

Role models have a valuable and irreplaceable position in human lives. They serve as an example of the way how to behave appropriately, and they encourage healthy self-

confidence by provoking the desire of being successful and admired. Role models are especially important for the young generation, because they are significantly involved in the formation of their personality. They also substitute authority, which is not explicit, but which incites children to be a better person.

Following subchapters focus on the definition of role models and manners how they affect human life.

4. Definition of the term role model

"The term "role model" first appeared in a Columbia study of the Socialization of medical students." (Holton, s. 514) "In 1957 Robert K. Merton coined it to refer to individuals in specific roles who serve as examples of the behaviour associated with this role. Since then, the term *role models* has become widely used both in the general public and in academia. According to Morgenroth et al. there are three recurring, and interrelated, themes among existing definitions of role models:

(a) they show how to perform a skill and achieve a goal — they are *behavioural models*;

(b) they show that a goal is attainable — they are *representations of the possible*;

(c) they make a goal desirable — they are *inspirations."* (Morgenroth, s.3)

A number of definitions describe role models as those from whom we learn particular skills and behaviour. For example, Kemper defines a role model as "*someone who demonstrates for the individual how something is done in the technical sense. The essential quality of the role model is that he [or she] possesses skills and displays techniques which the actor lacks (or thinks he [or she] lacks), and from whom, by observation and comparison with his [or her] own performance, the actor can learn.*" (Morgenroth, s. 3)

Bucher and Stelling theorized that "*role models may be classified into five types: partial, charismatic, stage, option, and negative. A partial role model, which they found to be the most common type among their participants, demonstrates a particular skill or characteristic. A charismatic role model inspires others to want to be as similar to them as possible, simply because they are perceived as attractive and admirable. A stage role model represents what someone should accomplish by a certain 'stage' in training or career stage. For example, a stage model would exemplify what it is like to be a young professional as opposed to a more established professional. An option role model provides alternate views or patterns of behaviour than the observing individual's*

perspective. Last, a negative model can be variations of the other types because each type can also have a negative influence modelling what someone does not desire to be." (Morgenroth, Ryan, and Peters, s. 3)

Various definitions signify how differently it is possible to understand the "role model". In simple terms, it is the object of admiration which affects someone's behaviour, most commonly in a positive way. This thesis focuses on male and female role models which will be described in more details in the following subchapters.

5. Prevalent role models in society

Role models are not difficult to find. Parents are the first option in the life of every person. They serve as the primary role model in childhood because family is a fundamental social group which has a significant influence on the individual. Outside the family, a single person chooses role models from sport, literature, film, politics, business, religion, philosophy and another sphere of human activities. Collectively they form the personality and create an exemplary model of behaviour, morality, determination, empathy, compassion or social relationships and many other qualities.

In sport, the most common role models are people who put a lot of effort into the sport they perform and those who achieved great results with immense perseverance, broke the record or were able to overcome the limits of human capacities. They can raise a good example not only by performing sports but also by the way they behave outside the time they do sports. This can involve financial support of charities, ill and disabled people, ecological organizations or other organizations supporting people in poverty or people with health, economical or different social problems. On the other hand, this involves also the way they present themselves to people, whether they are humble and modest, or they rather act as a bad example in some specific way. Being a role model for someone requires a certain amount of responsibility, especially for children's fans. Athletes, and not only them, often forget that they are being watched by a huge amount of people, and their actions affect a large number of people. Mostly children try to imitate them in order to resemble them to become famous one day. If children adopt bad habits associated with a certain behaviour, it can have a negative impact on their lives.

Money has become a measure of success, and it is not uncommon for businessmen to become role models. Many successful people built their empires out of nothing just because they had an idea that amazed others. More than any other social group, children

believe in miracles and fulfilled dreams. People like Steve Jobs, Bill Gates or Jeff Bezos are the embodiment for them that shows the possibility of a dream come true.

In nowadays society it is very important to distinguish between good and bad role models. The increasing interest in the Internet, social networks and other online sources brings a lot of risks into human life. Children grow up early thanks to easy access to information, but some lack the ability to reliably distinguish the thin line between a true role model and what just pretend to be a role model.

Role models can appear in any possible field of human activity. It can be man or woman, adult or child. Regardless of age or gender, it is important to choose role models wisely and carefully.

II. ANALYTICAL PART

It is difficult to strictly separate the characters into stereotypical ones and those that could be called role models. They have elaborated personalities, and regularly they are endowed with good and bad qualities altogether. The next part of the thesis deals with male and female stereotypes and role models in British films, and the only aspect of formal separation is the twentieth and the twenty first century. Other differences between male and female characters are compared together because they cannot be indisputably separated from each other.

Analytical part of the thesis provides an insight into the film characters and possible interpretations of their behaviour and activities with regard to stereotypes and role models.

BRITISH FILMS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Many films of the twentieth century are considered to be a classic piece of work, but some people do not realize that even these can be full of stereotypical features. Twentieth century provides the audience with a range of various films which depict men and women inequality as well as admirable heroes.

6. Male and female stereotypes and role models

Before Alfred Hitchcock, nicknamed the Master of Suspense, moved to Hollywood, he directed few British films.[1] One of them was the *39 Steps* which was released in 1935. The plot follows Richard Hannay who meets Anabella Smith (probably a false name), a secret spy who runs away from two men. She tells Richard about a secret organization called 39 Steps which wants to steal a secret about British air defence. Anabella is killed, but Hannay takes over her task to prevent leakage of information and travels from London to Scotland in order to find help. Even though he is depicted as a handsome man who helped a lady in troubles, he has some heroic qualities. Richard does not hesitate to rescue a stranger, and on the run, he treats everyone kindly except enemies. Even though Hannay knows nothing about 39 Steps and their plans, he does not give up and tries to defeat the real villain. On the journey, he meets another woman. Pamela refuses to help him, and for a long time, she treats him like a criminal. Fear takes control over her actions, and at the beginning, she seems to be a silly and coward woman. Anabella and Pamela were both saved by the same man, and men are the ones who have a more dominant role in the film. Anabella did not have many chances to show her potential and Pamela is too scared and feeble to put up resistance, and she is waiting instead.

A year later Hitchcock directed the *Secret Agent*. Novelist Edgar Brodie is forced to adopt new identity and to become Richard Ashenden. He is sent to Switzerland to stop a secret German agent during the First World War. Secret agents or spies are usually perceived as fearless persons who do not hesitate to kill the enemies in order to fulfil the orders or to save someone´s life. Ashenden is depicted as rather humanitarian. He does not have problems with searching for the German but when the potential target is about to be killed, he is not brave enough to take part in the act. He is smart, and he realizes that Caypor (alleged secret German agent) does not give the impression of enemy. He treats his dog gently, he has a wife, and he is very kind because he even offers Ashenden and his colleague help. Caypor resembles more a role model than a villain. Ashenden has doubts about killing him. In contrast to Ashenden is the General who works as his assistant. General is a professional killer and a great lover of women. He deals much easier with the fact that he killed a wrong and innocent person. He gets over it very quickly and wants Ashenden to continue looking for an unknown German agent. However, Ashenden fell in love with Elsa Carrington, his fake wife, and he is so affected by Caypor's death that he plans to resign and start a new life with Elsa. Elsa

[1] Alfred Hitchcock - Biography. IMDb [online]. [cit. 2020-03-06]. Dostupné z: https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000033/bio

and Ashenden are both morally good and kind people even though they work as British spies. That is the reason why they seem inappropriate for this job. They are too emotionally vulnerable. In addition, Elsa is portrayed as a trusting woman who does not even know that the secret German agent is her friend Robert Marvin. Marvin is a self-confident man who tries to seduce Elsa. He does not know that she is a spy too. Elsa and Ashenden could be considered role models on account of their moral good but they seem to be rather pushed into this position to create a counterweight to balance good and bad deeds and decisions of spies.

Another film-noir is the *Third Man* from 1949. Carol Reed directed a piece of work inspired by the novel from Graham Green. American writer Holly Martins comes to Vienna in order to visit his friend Harry Lime, but Harry is dead. Suspicious ambiguities arise around his death, and Martins starts to investigate what happened in order to discover the truth. He must make a tough decision and resolve if he stops the illegal activity and helps the police or he betrays his friend. Holly Martins is a very moral character who could serve as an example for others. Even though Harry is his friend, in the end, Martins decides to do the right thing and sacrifice friendship for the sake of the law. Anna Schmidt introduces a character of "femme fatale". As well as Martins, she is a very significant figure in the whole film. Anna loves Harry, and she is willing to do anything to save him. Martins did not yield to her pressure, and regardless of her persuasion not to help the police, he loses the opportunity to get closer to her. Anna remains faithful to Harry, even though innocent people are dying because of him. She is a role model in a particular aspect because she revolts against the majority, although not for a moral cause. Another example of a hero is a Sergeant Paine, a person of noble demeanour. He is not so distinct from Holly Martins. Paine works for Major Calloway and treats Anna in a very compassionate way, and he dies as a real hero.

Brief Encounter from 1945 directed by David Lean depicts extramarital affair of Laura Jesson and Dr. Alec Harvey who fell in love after meeting each other at the train station. Laura feels constantly guilty about this secret love but after a long time in her life she suddenly feels very pleasantly in Harvey's company. Until she met him, she lived in a happy marriage with husband Frank who cares about her and he is a very kind and generous person. She seems happy but as the storyline continues the viewer discovers that Laura's only amusement are regular Thursday shopping trips to Milford. Her life turned into a routine and Alec Harvey provided her with change. She tried to resist, but eventually she succumbed. These two characters are similar to each other they both

have families but their lives lost passion which is the reason why they are both attached to each other because they both desire for something more. Their lives have become a stereotype, they do the same activities every day and suddenly they have a chance to break free from everyday life.

Dolly Messiter is Laura's friend who lives at the same village. This person is an example of very garrulous and irritating woman who appears when you least expect her and do not want to be in her presence. She does all her deeds in good faith to help a friend in need, unfortunately these intentions often have the opposite effect. In the moment of well-meaning help, such a person does not realize that this help may come at a very inappropriate time. Dolly is a typical woman who is interested in other people's live and does not even realize that she is disrupting their lives, even though she does so in good faith.

In 1946 David Lean directed *Great Expectations* based on the famous novel of Charles Dickens. The main character Pip has the right to be called a role model. He is a poor boy of good manners, kind-hearted, amiable and loyal. His parents died and he lives with his sister and her husband who is a blacksmith. One day, Pip helps the fugitive convict (Magwitch), even though he is afraid of him, he treats him very kindly. This act is later rewarded, and erstwhile poor boy becomes a gentleman with a fortune. Pip's actions are always noble, regardless of the good or bad character of the person he meets. He is nice to everyone which is also reflected in the way he speaks. He addresses men as sir and women as madam, whether they are poor or rich. Initially, his speech reflects his low background, but after transforming into a gentleman, it adapts to a new lifestyle. He tries to please others with a kind word and often thanks everyone. He does not harm anyone and helps those who need his help. He loves Estella who seems to be a complete opposite of him. She embodies many of the negative qualities associated with women. She is very proud, offensive and wicked. She was brought up by Miss Havisham who planned to avenge the men through Estella. Her fiancé left her and in Estella she sees an opportunity to take revenge. She hates men because one broke her heart. She is a lovelorn woman whose only purpose of life is to raise a girl not with love, but to destroy all love in her thereby harm all men around her. Pip seems to be the only man with whom she is sincere. No matter how much she insulted him as a young girl, he still loves her from the first moment they met. Estella is beautiful and she benefits from her beauty which allows her to drive men crazy. She says of herself and admits it to Pip that she is incapable of any emotion or sympathy because she has no heart. She has no mercy.

Besides Pip, there are few other characters with noble qualities. Joe Gargery, the blacksmith who took care of Pip is poor but also kind-hearted. He has never become a gentleman, and his speech corresponds to the social class he comes from, yet he acts as kind and polite as Pip. The embodiment of kindness is also Joe's housekeeper and later his wife Biddy. Herbert Pocket, who has been raised as a gentleman since his childhood, also has similar good qualities.

A black comedy *The Ladykillers* from 1955 follows the story of five unlucky criminals who created a very sophisticated plan of robbery at London King's Cross Railway station. Unfortunately, they did not expect complications caused by an old widow Mrs Louisa Wilberforce. She is depicted as a kind old lady with a very vivid imagination, because she often visits the police station to report strange and unimportant incidents which she has seen or heard from neighbours. The police officers perceive her in rather stereotypical view as an old lady with a mental disorder because she suffers from hallucinations. Her stories seem so unbelievable to be true. They do not give them any weight, because according to them, the old woman has nothing else to do at home. They usually listen to her and let her go home pretending that they will check it out later. She seems to be an innocuous old lady even for five criminals who uses her house to commit a crime. Professor Marcus, the head of the whole plan, do not expected her to intervene so often into their fake band music rehearsals. Underestimating her and thinking about her as stereotypically as the police officers cost them their own lives. "Stereotypes of aging include assumptions and generalizations about how people at or over a certain age *should* behave, and what they are likely to experience, without regard for individual differences or unique circumstances." (Dionigi, 2015)

Another film created by David Lean is an epic masterpiece called *Lawrence of Arabia* from 1962 awarded by seven Oscars. It was inspired by true life of colonel Thomas Edward Lawrence who united and led Arab tribes in the First World War in order to fight the Turks.[2] He could be considered a role model because as a single person he managed to persuade and unite diverse tribes and showed unflagging persistence when others told him his plans are unfeasible. His firm belief in surmounting of impossible and indomitable faith have secured him many admirers who willingly followed him. He crossed desert, survived in difficult conditions and proved that he is a skilful strategist which makes a real hero of him. Nevertheless, heroes or role models do not have

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[2] Lawrence of Arabia 1962. IMDb [online]. [cit. 2020-03-06]. Dostupné z: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0056172/

to abound only with virtuous qualities. Lawrence is not a flat character and he develops throughout the film. The personality of man is very complex. Lawrence may be worshiped for his heroic actions during the war, but after undergoing specific experiences in extraordinary conditions he changes. First, he tries to become an Arab because they proved him that they are not just cruel tyrants with no mercy, and he begins to understand them more and sympathize with them. He enjoys their strong devotion to his person because it gives him a sense of uniqueness. He feels invincible and at one point he gets the feeling that he can approach God or even identify with him. His hitherto virtuous personality changes as soon as he realizes that he enjoys killing other people. He places too high demands on what he should achieve, and then he experiences a rapid downfall. In his character, the viewer sees how perseverance and indomitable will can help a person achieve great goals, but also it shows how quickly a man can fail if he becomes too eager and proud. Lawrence gradually starts to hate himself and leaves Arabs. In the beginning he came to desert as passionate almost overzealous man and managed to achieve something exceptional, however, he comes back as devastated and disillusioned man who wants to spend the rest of his life by doing ordinary job. Many people worshiped him without knowing his genuine personality. First, Lawrence despises Sherif Ali, one of the leading men of the Harits tribe for killing Lawrence's first Bedouin companion in Arabia and at the end Ali is the one who tries to restrain Lawrence.

Kind Hearts and Coronets is a film based on a novel by Roy Horniman. It was directed in 1949 by Robert Hamer and depicts the remarkableness of human character and soul. Louis D'Ascoyne Mazzini is a tenth Duke of Chalfont and he is sentenced to death by hanging. Through flashback scenes film gradually reveals the reason why Louis is accused and now sits in a cell and writes his memoirs. He is not a typical convict even though he murdered his relatives from Ascoyne line. He is not a criminal who others would despise. On the contrary, some people admire him, and even prison officials treat him with respect. People around him has no idea he killed eight people because he was convicted of a murder he did not commit. In addition, viewers might tend to admire him too, not because he committed several murders, but because of the way he did it – thoughtfully and gracefully. Until the very last moment no one knows he killed the Ascoyns, except Sibella who takes advantage of it. Like Magwitch from *Great Expectations* (1946) he evokes some sympathy. He had a reason for the crime and thanks to his gentleman's behaviour, he poses as an innocent man who only longed for justice. His mother had a right to inheritance, but the family renounced her after her inappropriate

marriage. Louis only wanted to regain his right to the noble title of Duke of Chalfont, so he removed the relatives who stood in his way. The Ascoyne family is stereotypically depicted as a family of rich snobs who are not interested in the fate of other people, not even their own poor family relatives. That is one of the reasons why Louis continues killing them with no mercy. For him, it is revenge for his mother, and he trivializes his actions when he sees some Ascoyns behaving ruthlessly. Louis Mazzini has been in love with Sibella Hallward since he was a little boy, but in her eyes, he is just a poor man she likes but who is not worth marrying. Sibella obviously yearns for life in wealth and Louis is not good enough for her even though she loves him. She marries Lionel Holland but when Louis gets promoted and he is getting closer to the title of duke, she regrets her decision more and more. When she blackmails Louis in prison impression of her as a "gold digger" intensifies. Opposite of Sibella is Edith Ascoyne a wife of Henry D'Ascoyne a second victim of Louis Mazzini. Edith is a kind person who regrets Louis's fate and later she marries him in prison because she believes he is innocent. However, she has no idea she was only too naïve, and Louis deceived her in order to give the impression of credibility. The film is full of stereotypes connected with either wealthy people or women, nevertheless, some characters can captivate the viewers.

Bridge on the River Kwai (1957) shows the story of mostly British soldiers in a Japanese prison camp during the Second World War. Some characters could represent role models. The most significant one is an American commander/ Major Shears who manages to escape from the camp but must come back again. As one of the few, he understood that orders of command are not sacred in all circumstances, and in a matter of life and death it is necessary to overcome the pride of one's own and break orders. In contrary Colonel Nicholson is willing to sacrifice innocent soldiers of his troop to prove that he is right. His behaviour gives the impression of a heroic act, but it is based on personal benefit. He is slightly stereotypical in the point of the conviction that man does not give up; nevertheless, his act lacks the honourable foundation. Nicholson collaborates with Japanese Colonel Saito who has the chief authority in the camp, at least before Nicholson takes command. Saito gives the impression of a merciless tyrant, but his personality is much more complicated. Construction of the railway bridge causes him inconveniences and he is hopeless. In public, he remains straight-faced, but in private, he even cries. During the war, any manifestation of weakness is inadmissible. Major Warden takes a similar view of military rules as Colonel Nicholson, but at the crucial moment, he is able to think

reasonably. The youngest Lieutenant Joyce joins the mission voluntarily, he follows the orders, but he is not capable of killing enemies with the knife. The inability to take someone else's life proves his good-natured personality and compassion. Major Clipton resembles Joyce. He is a doctor, and he does not endorse all the events in the prison camp. He watches the bridge opening ceremony from a distance, and he considers war as pointless, and regrets lost lives of his colleagues. Even women have a meritorious role in this film. They are employed as carriers and help men with their task to destroy the bridge on the River Kwai.

James Bond stands out among these heroes of British filmography. Series of the Agent 007 display one of the most significant male and female stereotypes in the British films of the twentieth and the twenty-first century. An attractive and smart secret agent with "a licence to kill" manages to overcome any obstacles. He escapes whenever his enemies imprison him. Women adore him because he behaves like a gentleman and looks very attractive. They easily succumb the charm of his personality. James Bond does not earn money for being a British secret agent. It seems that women symbolize some kind of reward for him. They are frequently pictured as sexual objects. Many of them fall in love with 007, and some are killed for that. Several of them try to murder him. Besides the sexual aspect of presenting females, women who serve for villains or are villains themselves, many times have features of insanity. These films show their audience that ladies who are not get rescued by James Bond mostly die a violent death. Some women are smart, brave and try to stop the villains but always they need a help from James Bond.

Bathsheba Everdene is an example of a heroine who can take care of herself. Being independent women in the 19th century was not an easy task. The main character from John Schlesinger's film *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1967) must overcome derision from men and run the farm by herself. She is friendly and fair to her employees, and after a short period of time, she earns their respect. As a woman, she is looking for great love. There are three men in her life. Sergeant Frank Troy, whom she fell in love with, becomes her husband. He is a charming but proud man who does not know how to lose. Troy is not able to take care of the farm properly and spends much money. He acts very confidently, and he boasts about how he can handle a sword. He loved only one woman, but he could not take care of her. A shepherd Gabriel Oak and Bathsheba's neighbour William Boldwood are both kind-hearted and well-mannered men. Boldwood wants Bathsheba to marry him and puts her under pressure. Her refusal and marriage change him from a responsible man into a sad personage who stops taking care of his mansion.

He loves Bathsheba so much that he kills her husband. Gabriel is the only man who, regardless of his love for Bathsheba, remains reasonable. He hides his feelings of sadness when he cannot be with her, which is again a stereotypical feature, but he does not leave her and patiently looks after her from a distance.

In 1981 director Hugh Hudson created a film about extraordinary athletes. *Chariots of Fire* is based on true story and won four Oscars. The film focuses on two significant runners who succeeded at Olympic games in 1924 in Paris. Eric Liddell and Harold Abrahams, rivals and representatives of Great Britain at Olympics, both aim to prove their running skills and win. Harold is a Jew who desires to demonstrate others that even Jews can achieve something extraordinary. For him running is compulsion, he puts a lot of effort into it. Harold believes in the pursuit of excellence and when he loses race with Eric he is devastated, but he does not give up. Professional trainer Sam Mussabini helps him to surpass himself. Eric Liddell runs in the name of God and he feels that it is his mission. Eric is naturally very fast Christian runner and considers his incredible speed to be a gift from God that must not be wasted. He is an excellent public speaker who inspires people all over the country by his preaching. They both run for higher goals and prove that with perseverance and determination one can do anything regardless of various obstacles. They represent sports role models who usually enormously influence great masses of people.

In the film *Full Monty* from 1997, Peter Cattaneo focuses on men, more specifically on the stereotypical vision of masculinity. The main characters have to deal with a distorted opinion of man attractivity. A group of six unemployed men is preparing a strip show in order to earn some money. What started as a plan to save father-son relationship ends as a clash with the question of one's own manhood. Gaz Schofield does not have enough money to pay maintenance for his son Nathan who lives with his mother Mandy and her boyfriend Barry. He would love to have a normal relationship with his son, but after closing the steel mill where he worked, he is unable to find a new job. Mandy thinks that he is not responsible and competent enough to take care of Nathan and he is not trying hard enough to get a good job. Gaz tries to hide it behind his pretended confidence and virile attitude, but he realizes how big disappointment he is for Mandy and soon will be for Nathan too. Men and women stereotypically perceive unemployed man as a failure. Man is the one who works and takes care of the finances of the family and once he is not able to do it, they yield to despair, and he feels he is failing. In this situation men are so disappointed by themselves that they see it as a final point of their

life instead of temporary situation. Lomper is so desperate that he is attempting suicide. Dave and Gaz save him and let him join their striptease group. Lomper together with Guy and Horse are the characters who do not get such space in the film to develop. Horse seems to have a stable family background. Guy seems to be pleased with his appearance and has no inhibitions to undress and he even begins a gay relationship. Gerald Cooper is another character who feels that losing a job is a big failure in man's life. For six months he lies to his wife Linda that he is going to work because he is afraid of her reaction if she finds out that he has no income. Linda is used to a certain standard of living and Gerald does not know how to tell her the truth. Another stereotypical feature in this film is associated with appearance. Dave is one of the characters who struggles the most with the way he looks. Even though his wife Jean loves him he has doubts about himself. He is overly influenced by the muscular idea of a man that He begins to diet and exercise because he finds himself so ugly. He refuses to show his figure in front of women and his low self-confidence affects his love life with his wife. He feels that Jean cannot love him, and she must necessarily have a secret lover, because no woman would want Dave. This film shows that not only women struggle with their appearance every day, but also men succumb to the pressure of distorted ideals of body image created by a society longing for perfection. After overcoming many obstacles, all six men realize that they are not such a disappointment to others and lose their inhibitions in the final public striptease. They build a healthy self-confidence and they are able to overcome all the stereotypes that have bound them so far.

Billy Elliot is an eleven years old boy from the film of the same name directed in 2000 by Stephen Daldry. Billy is raised by a strict father whose image of a real man includes the ability to defend himself with fists. A young boy attends classes of box, but gradually he discovers his passion for dance. At first, he is just curious because in the class of Mrs Wilkinson there are only girls but love for dance is more potent than any doubts about manliness. Billy falls in love with dancing and his attitude towards the thought that ballet is exclusively female issue changes. His father undergoes transformation too. He also gives up stereotypical thinking about what the right boy should do and goes back to work to provide his son with a better future, even if it means being a ballet dancer. His brother Tony is a rebel who behaves aggressively, and he is very radical in thinking. He is willing to fight, and he runs away from the police. Together with father, they protest

in coal miners' strike[3], but Mr Elliot goes to work again in order to earn money for Billy. Mrs Wilkinson is a ballet teacher and self-confident woman. She discovers Billy's talent and supports him. She might seem to be strict, but she is kind-hearted. Mrs Wilkinson is an example of woman who refuses to be just a typical housewife and she focuses on working with children, giving them the courage to fulfil their dreams. Except Billy Elliot, the film depicts another character who is trying to find his identity. Billy's friend Michael is acting like "sissy" because he dresses as a girl. In his case, this behaviour is not just an innocent game because Michael is a real homosexual. Through his character, the viewer gets acquainted with the way how young boy deals with his true self at a time when homosexuality was taboo in society. He acts naturally only in front of Billy because, in public, he does not dare to reveal how he truly feels. He is seen from the point of view of Billy, who is initially surprised by the acting of the friend, but eventually he accepts Michael as he is. Billy is the most significant role model in the film. Despite the possibility of being mocked and disapproval of the family, he follows his dreams and becomes a successful ballet dancer.

BRITISH FILMS OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

  Stereotypes appear in movies regardless of time. Human beings develop, society changes, but certain beliefs remain present and do not change. It is possible to claim that stereotypes persist in society for a very long time. They may slightly change form, but the essence remains the same. Same situation is in film industry because films are created by humans who are usually also influenced by a stereotype themselves. Role models may change in some way, because with the growth of new fields of human activity, new role models are also emerging in these fields. Youtubers and various influencers can be an example from the present.

7. Male and female stereotypes and role models in the films of the twenty-first century

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[3] In the 1980, many coal maines in the United Kingdom were closed by the government and a lot of people became unemployed. Many miners went on strike and the largest ome took place in 1984. The miners were also trying to earn fair wages and get benefits, but most importantly to get their jobs back. When the strike finished, it was also the end of the coal industry in the United kingdom. Billy's father and brother represent these miners in the film and show how much the event has affected families in the United Kingdom. KOLLER-ALONSO, Sara. What Billy Elliot Taught Us About British History. *Culture Trip* [online]. 23. 1. 2019 [cit. 2020-07-08]. Dostupné z: https://theculturetrip.com/europe/united-kingdom/england/london/articles/what-billy-elliot-taught-us-about-british-history/

Bend It Like Beckham from 2002 shows the world of an Indian girl from orthodox Sikh family who lives in London. Jesminder Bhamra is presented as a *tomboy* because she loves football. Indian families adhere to their traditions of which they are very proud and Jess's passion for football is not approved by her family. They live in a stereotype that football is a purely male sport. Jess supports the impression of *tomboy* by wearing sportswear and playing football with boys at the park. However, she retains her feminine side, which manifests itself when she falls in love with her coach Joe. She is bound by the traditions and beliefs of her family, but she resists them and fights for what she loves, although it means disappointing her parents. Another character Jules has a similar but slightly different problem with her mother. She would love to have a daughter who dresses as a girl instead of the boyish version of the female football player. Like Jess's family, she has no understanding of what her daughter is doing in the free time, but she allows Jules to play football. Jules is another example of *tomboy* but in her case this impression makes her mother suspect that Jules might be a lesbian. Based on erroneous signals which her mother considers as a clear evidence, she succumbed to a stereotypical idea of what it means to be a homosexual. Despite several clichés associated with love and troubles with the love triangle, this film is an example of how it is possible to break down certain stereotypical ideas about what a girl should look like and what she should do. Jules and especially Jess serve as role models and show the audience the power of not giving up and standing for themselves despite the disapproval of the people around them. This film also deals with an important issue of homophobia based on the stereotypes connected with homosexuality. Lately, the society may seem more relaxed and tolerant, but homosexuality still retains certain features of taboo, and the film industry continues to portray gays and lesbians with stereotypical attributes. Although, this is not the case with this film, homosexual traits of characters are often exaggerated and portrayed in a very unflattering way. In *Bend it Like Beckham*, there is a gay boy, but he is portrayed as any other boy and even his close friends and parents do not know about his sexual orientation. This film thus rather depicts role models instead of promoting stereotypes which even emphasize the exemplary features of the characters.

Films about Bridget Jones showed the world that woman does not have to be a supermodel to be pretty, rather the opposite. Bridget is a single woman who is searching for love, and in order to achieve it, she decides to change towards social expectations. Even though she does not realize it, she is already a confident and pretty

woman because she is too obsessed with approaching the ideal of female beauty. Effort to conform stereotypical demands of the society for human beauty often leads to serious health and mental problems for both children and adults. Bridget Jones tries to change her appearance, but she eventually realizes that beauty is not the main foundation of a functioning relationship. Despite her clumsiness and talent for creating embarrassing moments, more than one man loves her. One of them, Daniel Cleaver, is a very confident, good looking man who seeks the company of women. In romantic films, men are often portrayed in two ways – either as womanizers or as the perfect prince. Daniel is shallow and he treats women mostly as sexual objects, but even he seems to realize that a woman's beauty is not everything and he falls in love with Bridget precisely because she is different from other women. Mark Darcy is not a typical perfect prince, but he seems to be more aware of Bridget's qualities than Daniel. Bridget attracts him by her charisma rather than by appearance. In *Bridget Jones's Baby* from 2016 Daniel Cleaver is replaced by Jack Qwant who is able to properly appreciate Bridget and longs for having children with her. Two successful men are fighting over her and this time she is also a very successful television producer. The last film shows Bridget in a little bit different position than in the previous two. She became a woman who might approached her ideal appearance of herself, but she devoted her life to work when others expect babies or already have them. Again, the beauty and success are less important in comparison with the real values in life.

Real-life hero can be found in the film from 2006 called *Amazing Grace*. Director Michael Apted made a film about William Wilberforce who lived from 1759 to 1833[4]. He was an important figure in the campaign for abolishing slave trade and slavery itself. In the film he is depicted as a talented and a very religious person, he is a member of the House of Parliament who fights for the rights of slaves. Despite his health problems, he does not give up and continues in order to grant slaves some rights. As a great speaker he proved that there is no need of violence in order to change something important in public life. He is a role model thanks to his unwavering will and perseverance. A modest and humble man from Yorkshire who managed to change the world just by the power of his own words. His friend Olaudah Equiano is also one of the characters with positive traits. Slave himself, he wrote a book about his

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[4] William Wilberforce (1759 - 1833). *BBC* [online]. [cit. 2020-04-08]. Dostupné z: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/wilberforce_william.shtml

experience and helps Wilberforce to spread awareness of the atrocities and injustices committed against slaves.

After Joanne Kathleen Rowling's books, Harry Potter films made popular one of the most significant characters of all times. Even though Harry Potter became a role model for many children all over the world, the series of eight films also contain some stereotypical features about men and women characters. An ordinary orphaned boy manages to become a famous hero, regardless of his difficult childhood and it is the male element which prevails in the film. Wizards were given more space to manifest their abilities than witches and to lead the final battle between good and evil. Among males Hermione is a significant character – an intelligent girl who comes from Muggles (people who cannot do magic) family, but who masters various spells and has a brave heart. She deserves to be called a role model. Although, she represents the idea of woman in society who must struggle to succeed in her life. Hermione had to study hard to be such a talented witch. She reads a lot of books and she constantly studies even in her free time. Undoubtedly, Harry had hard life since his childhood but later he got many opportunities to prove he is a hero without him having to work hard in advance. He seems to be a natural talent. He undergoes certain difficulties but always he is able to overcome them. He is the chosen one since his childhood and it seems that he does not have to put as much effort into his actions. He accepts the role of a hero without considerable difficulties.

Mrs Dursley and Mrs Weasley both represent the female stereotype of housewives who take care of children and the household. Mrs Dursley never gets the chance to leave this role unlike Molly Weasley, who shows that she is a capable witch, but also, she does not have much room to express herself except in the final battle with the Lord Voldemort and the Death Eaters. Petunia Dursley is an overly caring mother who very often wears an apron and gives the impression of a flawless wife. There are a few more prominent women besides Hermione, such as Minerva McGonagall, Ginny Weasley or Luna Lovegood, but women still seem to lag slightly behind men. Also, women are the ones who are more often portrayed as quirky or weird. Lot of students in Hogwarts think that Luna Lovegood is lunatic because of her belief in the existence of strange creatures and her unusual behaviour. Sybil Trelawney seems to be quite quirky professor of Divination with glasses with thick lenses. Dolores Umbridge and especially Bellatrix Lestrange are booth insane. Dolores deceives with her innocent appearance, but she is cruel and enjoys the suffering of others. Bellatrix Lestrange not only looks like an evil witch, but she is also very cruel and acts arrogantly.

The Harry Potter series were followed by other films depicting the different era of magicians from the same universe. *Fantastic Beast and Where to Find Them* (2016) and *Fantastic Beast: Crimes of Grindelwald* (2018) managed to balance more the inequality between males and females. Although they did not reach the same success as Harry Potter, Newt Scamander and few other characters can serve as role models. Newt is not a typical strong hero whose only desire is to save the world. Instead, he is a timid but generous and very kind-hearted personage. He proves his exceptional qualities by intellect and high degree of empathy. These qualities are rarely shown in male characters in films. Even though Scamander would prefer to spend his life by taking care of his magical creatures, he is not indifferent to the fate of the world. Anyone can notice his great passion for magical beings, but expressing his own feelings is very challenging for him. He could be entitled *geek* because he is keen on magical creatures. He knows how to treat every one of them; he studies them and tries to rescue them. Geeks are not very popular companions, but Newt Scamander shows how knowledge can help where it is needed. There are also some significant women roles. American Ministry of Magic is led by a woman - Seraphina Picquery. Another woman from Ministry of Magic is Tina Goldstein who is committed to her work. Even though she does not like it very much, she is careful. As well as Scamander, she does not show much emotion. She is not the type who would break the rules, she is rather tight. She resembles a rationally thinking man rather than a fragile and emotional woman. Unlike her sister, Queenie Goldstein is open-minded and more feminine. She is governed by emotions rather than reason which is manifested in the second film when she hastily joins Grindelwald without considering the circumstances. Her relationship with Jacob Kowalski shows how two people can complement each other. Both are entirely different, a witch and an ordinary man, but despite various obstacles, they can stay together and support each other. Another strong female character is in the second film *Fantastic Beast: Crimes of Grindelwald*. Leta Lestrange is a strong and confident woman who sacrificed herself in order to save her loved ones and aurors from Grindelwald's prepared trap at Père-Lachaise Cemetery. Unlike in Harry Potter, a woman got the chance to excel and perform a heroic deed, which is usually done by men.

Shaun of the Dead from 2004 and *Hot Fuzz* from 2007 both directed by Edgar Wright show how an outcast can became a hero. Shaun from the first film failed in relationship with Lisa. It seems that everything he does goes wrong. He gets the opportunity to fix everything when the world is hit by a strange disease that turns people into zombies.

The incompetent Shaun suddenly turns into a warrior capable of protecting others. Same actor plays the leading role in *Hot Fuzz*. A police officer Nicholas Angel is transferred to the countryside because he is too prominent for his current position at the London. Unfortunately, he does not fit in London or Sandford. In both places, they mock him for his excessive zeal. However, he does not give up and after discovering the secret Sandford Society and neutralizing it, he gains recognition from others.

An example of a role model is Einar Wegener from the film *Danish Girl* which is based on a real life of one of the first transgender person who has undergone sex reassignment surgery. In the film he is a successful painter who hides his real personality. In 1926, his wife Gerda Wegener unintentionally wakes up the woman hidden in him for long years. An innocent game will cause a big change in the lives of both characters. At a time when homosexuality is still a taboo, Einar starts to appear publicly as Lili Elbe. Nobody knows it is Einar and he gets the chance to live a life he always wanted. Despite being forced to sacrifice her own marriage, Gerda supports Einar and allows him to fully awaken Lili by sex reassignment surgery. Both Gerda and Einar/ Lili are very strong characters. Apart for supporting Lili to live the life which she wants, Gerda is also portrayed as an independent woman. Taking into consideration the time when the film is set (1920s), this was not very common. Like her husband, she is a painter and she is trying to be successful and to make a breakthrough. At first, she experiences mostly rejection, but after she starts drawing Lili, Gerda becomes popular. Like many other women, Gerda must try hard to become as successful as men and to receive adequate recognition. The film proves that everyone has the right to live according to themselves, even though others try to convince them about the opposite. Lili finds a way how to be herself and, regardless of the consequences, she goes for it. She is not even discouraged by a huge risk of failure of the surgery. Gerda eventually come to terms with what her husband desires and lets him live the way he really deserves – as Lili Elbe.

Another film from Tom Hooper inspired by a real-life character is the *King's speech* from 2010. Prince Albert, the future king George VI, struggles with stammering and his wife Elizabeth hires him a speech therapist Lionel Logue. He uses special and very unorthodox methods that initially discourage Albert from continuing the treatment. Despite several misunderstandings, Lionel and Albert become very close friends despite being so disparate. Lionel is an ordinary man who gives the future king a courage to do great things. It shows that wealthy people do not always have to be conceited and even them have their vulnerabilities. People from high-society classes pay attention

to public opinion and accommodate their behaviour and public appearance to it. They try to hide possible mistakes, problems, anything which could discredit them publicly. Albert's stammering is undesirable for a high-class person like him. Royal family cares about proper appearance. They represent the country and it is also associated with high demands on individual family members. Being a part of royalty means enduring the pressure placed on individuals regarding physical appearance, behaviour and overall demeanour. In addition to building a public image, the film also depicts a distinctive female character - Albert's wife. Elizabeth stands out next to her husband. She is very charismatic, and she seems to exceed her husband in self-confidence. Albert is rather shy due to his stammering until Lionel helps him. Elizabeth is the one who takes the initiative and arranges therapy for him. She leads him to the right direction and proves that behind every successful man is a woman.

Richard Curtis in his films *Love Actually* (2003) and *About Time* (2013) portrayed role models from everyday life. His characters are ordinary people who struggle to find love or to keep their families. *Love Actually* consists of smaller episodes form the lives of different people that intertwine with each other. David is a new Prime Minister who proves that he cares about his country when he stands against American president, Daniel lost his beloved wife and must take care of his stepson Sam. Although he misses his wife, he focuses on Sam's love problems and encourages his to reveal Joanna his feelings. Jamie falls in love with his Portuguese housekeeper Aurélia. They do not understand each other but they both feel the same way. Jamie starts to learn Portuguese in order to be able to make a proposal to her. All characters in the film are somehow role models. They do make mistakes, but they do not give up, they learn from their mistakes and move on. Every person tries to live as best as they can. However, stereotypes also appear in this film. Nathalie works as a secretary of the new Prime Minister. Her surroundings comment on her appearance. Nathalie herself also admits that her ex-boyfriend had a problem with her appearance and insulted her. Stereotypical social standards associated with beauty create distorted ideas about what a man or woman should look like and what is acceptable or not. They make people feel like they are not good enough and lead them to fight with themselves just to satisfy someone else's ideas, convinced that they will gain more recognition and they will be successful. Unlike Bridget Jones, Nathalie is aware of her "imperfections", but she does not try to pursue some absurd ideals of beauty. Appearance also often affects marriage. Karen has to cope with her husband's infidelity. Although Harry's infidelity is based only on flirting with his employee Mia, it disrupts his

relationship with Karen. Marital infidelity is often committed by men in films, even though it is not an exclusively male affair. They are shown looking for a younger mistress than their current wife. They often treat mistresses more attentively than their own wives and buy them gifts or flowers. *Love Actually* shows that not everything always goes according to a plan and people can experience disappointment and lose a lot, but it is important to gather courage and continue living. Those who do not give up and overcome problems are everyday role models.

Tim Lake and his father James from the film *About Time* have an extraordinary ability to travel in time, but they are still ordinary people who have the same problems as others. Travelling in time enables them to do many things but they both think wisely about what they are going to do and how they will use their gift. James Lake is a wise man with many experiences who tries to lead his son in the right direction and raise him to be a good man. Tim is a kind-hearted man with a sense of humour who often helps others to find a way out of trouble. They both serve as role models, because, as in Love Actually, they overcome all their problems with dignity and do not try to change and fix all the mistakes they have made in life, even though time travel could help them in it. In contrast, they show how to deal with mistakes and learn to live with them. Tim tries to fix several events which happened in his family. Tim initially tries to rectify a few events that have happened in his family, but he finds out that everything comes with consequences and even well-meaning help in the past can have a major impact on the future. He understands that life is to be lived with everything what happens in it, and later he stops travelling in time and tries to live life to the fullest. However, even in this film which shows to the viewers a few wisdoms of life it is possible to find some stereotypes. Mary, Tim's wife, demonstrates how women are perceived when it comes to dressing and preparing for a meeting. She asks Tim for help to decide which dress will be the most suitable. She tries on several dresses which Tim likes, but Mary is still not sure about the choice and she decides for herself and eventually takes the first dress she tried on. Tim was supposed to help her choose some dress and tell her which one she looks best in, but in the end his help was not needed, and Tim's presence was useless. Women are often perceived as too stubborn and refusing to accept anyone else's opinion. In the end they always decide for themselves. One stereotype could also be seen in the fact that only male members of the family have the ability to travel through time. Women did not get this opportunity.

As a screenwriter, Richard Curtis also participated in the film *Yesterday* from 2019. The film follows the story of the unsuccessful singer and song writer Jack Malik. He is trying to break through and game fame, but despite the help of his faithful manager and friend Ellie Appleton he is unsuccessful in it. He gets a life opportunity after and accident on his bike. People all over the world suddenly do not recognize the songs of the famous Beatles, and jack takes advantage of that and builds his fame on their songs. He quickly becomes very popular and he has to deal with harsh conditions in the music industry. Debra Hammer, Ed Sheeran's inconsiderate manager, is trying to completely change Jack's image and adapt it to what she deems appropriate. Even Debra's surname suggests her personality of tough and heartless woman. This film shows how the music industry can destroy the natural side of the singers and turn them into people who meet demands of the fans. Being famous is associated with tremendous pressure on appearance. It is not expressed in the film explicitly, but celebrities are often depressed as a result of this great pressure connected with their public image. Jack is suddenly overwhelmed not only with compunction but also with Debra's demands. In the end, he does the right thing and leaves the illusory world of the music industry, which destroys the singer's individuality and returns home to live with his love Ellie. The film features the character of John Lennon who also plays a role in Jack's decision. Lennon survived and reached old age. He spent a happy life with his wife, he fought for what he believed in. He gave Jack an advice about what he should do with his life. He told him to be sincere and tell the truth to everyone whenever he can, and he should not let the woman he loves go away. Lennon here has a function of mentor who guides the main character on the right path when he got lost. Jack would probably make the same decision, but he needed some motivation to do what was right. John Lennon thus serves as a role model. Except John Lennon and Jack, there is Ellie Appleton. At first glance, she is a gentle girl who teaches children at school. However, she is significant in the fact that, as Jack's manager, she is the one who arranges the performance for him and makes sure that he breaks through as singer.

The strong female heroine is portrayed in *Brooklyn* from 2015. Eilis Lacey is forced to leave her native home in a small town Enniscorthy in Ireland, and travel to America in order to have a better future which Ireland cannot offer her. She is rather shy, quiet girl who first struggles with homesickness and do not know what to do in America. However, she changes over time. She meets a young Italian man who falls in love with her and at the same time he gives her the feeling that she can feel like at home even

elsewhere than only in Ireland. She changes from a shy girl into a strong and confident woman. Her transformation resembles the woman she first met on a ship to America. She is able to stand up for herself and defend herself if it is necessary. However, it is not only her confidence that makes her a role model. She is a very kind person who helps others when they need it. She does not oppose others and usually she does what is right and necessary.

In *Brooklyn* there are mostly female characters who are noticeable. Eilis live with Mrs Kehoe who provides accommodation only to women. Girls who live in the house are portrayed as typical females who are giggling, gossiping about relationships and who are looking for man company. Eilis is rather different from them. When she meets Tony, she starts to be more confident and her feminine side shows. Although she is not so shallow as other girls may seem to be, she commences to behave like a real lady.

Saoirse Ronan played a role of fragile girl in other film called *On Chesil Beach* from 2017. It depicts the time from 1962 to 2007 and it follows the story of a young couple Edward Mayhew and Florence Ponting. They both have excellent academic results, but both also carry certain secrets that affect their lives so much that they are unable to understand each other so that their marriage works properly. Florence is a very shy and talented violinist. She loves Edward but when it comes to their honeymoon, she is not able of sexual intercourse with her husband. Everything connected with sex seems very disgusting to her. Although this is Edward's first experience too, they are not able to fully explain to each other why the whole act failed. They are both stuck in the stereotypical idea of what a marriage should look like and what to do on a honeymoon. Florence tries to save it by proposing an unconventional solution – they love each other so much that they can live together, but because sex is too repulsive for her, Edward can look for satisfaction with other women. Unfortunately, this solution is unacceptable to Edward and it infuriates him even more. The couple eventually breaks up, even though they love each other deeply and thus they never know if their relationship would work out or not.

The character of Edward also depicts the stereotype of an aggressive boy. As a young boy he fought a lot. People around him perceived his as a violent person. Even his friend Harold starts to avoid him when Edwards beats up a man on the street who insulted Harold. For some time, Edward is not able to leave this label of rapist, but over time he succeeds. However, all these events remain hidden in him forever. The same situation is

with Florence, she also carries all her fears and doubts. All of this will subsequently destroy their shot marriage.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this thesis was to identify and analyse male and female role models and stereotypes in British films of the twentieth and the twenty-first century with regard to their effect on the viewer. The films were selected randomly, some choices were influenced by popularity of certain films.

Theoretical part provides definitions of the term role model and stereotype, and other additional terms and phenomenon associated with this issue such as gender roles, social labels or sissy and tomboy.

Analytical part focuses on the main part of the thesis - concrete depiction of role models and stereotypes in individual films and their possible interpretation.

It is certain that film characters often reflect the character of the time when they were made and the place where they live or work. People set in the environment of world wars behave differently from people today. However, it is not only setting which forms the personality of main characters. The directors, screenwriters, producers, actors and all those who participated in the film in some way create the overall impression that the viewer will get from the film. They include in the film their own beliefs and attitudes towards certain social questions and it is therefore essential to watch films with certain amount of criticism and not to accept everything we see on the screen as valid and true. People tend to do that without realizing the consequences. Through what a single person perceives Through what each individual perceives around him, he forms his personality. If we do not circumspectly distinguish between what is good and bad, we begin to perceive stereotypes as a real and correct reflection of the world around us. Films tend to depict a lot of stereotypical features connected with social relationships and gender roles. Misinterpretation of these features and their excessive effect on the human psyche can result in problems with socialization and an inability to distinguish what is exaggerated and what is real. Through films people are passed on certain values that have a great influence on them. Especially for young viewers, it is important to teach the how to perceive it correctly.

Role models in analysed films were mostly associated with good manners, or people who managed to achieve great goals with persistence and strong determination and will. Some of them were the characters who had to resist people around them in order to make their dreams come true. To be different and refusing to conform stereotypical social norms is always difficult. Unequal gender roles, beauty standards, and strict distinctions

between male and female were the most common stereotypes that appeared in the analysed films.

In conclusion, regardless of the time when the films were made, the main tendency in films is to show stereotypes more often than role models. When there were significant role models in the film, they often stood out alongside the stereotypes that certain characters fought against.

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ANOTACE

Jméno a příjmení:	Jana Vrtělková
Katedra:	Ústav cizích jazyků
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Josef Nevařil, Ph.D.
Rok obhajoby:	2020

Název práce:	Mužské a ženské vzory a stereotypy v britských filmech dvacátého a dvacátého prvního století
Název v angličtině:	Male and Female Role Models and Stereotypes in British Films of the Twentieth and the Twenty-first Century
Anotace práce:	Cílem bakalářské práce je analyzovat mužské a ženské vzory a stereotypy ve vybraných britských filmech dvacátého a dvacátého prvního století. Práce se soustřeďuje především na postavy s přihlédnutím k jejich genderových rolích v kontextu stereotypních znaků jednotlivých postav nebo jejich vlastností, které mohou sloužit jako vzorové.
Klíčová slova:	Vzor, stereotyp, genderová role, diskriminace, nálepkování
Anotace v angličtině:	This thesis aims to analyse male and female role models and stereotypes in selected British films of the twentieth and the twenty-first century. The work focuses mainly on the characters in selected films with regard to their gender roles in context of stereotypical features or characteristics which could serve as role models.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Role model, stereotype, gender role, discrimination, social labels
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