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**Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men’s Experiences**

**Article Review**

The author of this article, Adia Wingfield, credits Christine Williams for coining the ‘glass escalator’. The term is used to describe men who experience better pay and faster promotions in occupations predominantly filled by women (Wingfield 2009). Studying this model has been influential for researcher because of its implications about occupational sex segregation and male dominance in the workplace. But, most studies avoid using race as a factor in their analysis of the glass escalator. Wingfield finds this problematic because males of a minority race are often overrepresented in predominantly female occupations, and white men tend to overlook the “ways intersection of race and gender create different experiences for different men” (Wingfield 2009). This article seeks to “examine the implications of race-gender intersections for minority men employed in a female-dominated” occupation with a focus on black men in nursing (Wingfield 2009).

People of minority status whether that gender or racial, are often looked at as being tokens. These minorities are socially isolated and highly visible in the workplace (Wingfield 2009). Unsurprising, according to research men fare better in tokened situations than women. For women being highly visible makes it difficult to form positive work relationships, but for men it can lead to greater opportunities. Wingfield questions this generalizability that previous research has seemed to apply to all men. Wingfield concludes for minority men the relationship between the token and the majority largely depends on “the underlying power relationship” (Wingfield 2009).

Wingfield makes an interesting argument that upward mobility in the workplace depends on the informal relationship with their supervisors. Men in ‘female’ occupations often have male supervisors, it’s easier for them to have “gendered bond with their supervisor” which leads to higher salary and promotions (Wingfield 2009). However, for black men this is not the case. Black men are more likely to experience “gendered racism” limiting black men’s “attempts to enter and advance in various occupational fields” (Wingfield 2009). Wingfield notes, that black men and women have to compete for belonging in the workplace because for some people “Blackness equates to lower qualifications, standards and competence (Wingfield 2009).

Wingfield created the term, the glass barriers, to describe situations that prevent men from riding the glass escalator (Wingfield 2009). She found that for black men in nursing “intersections of race and gender create different experience with the mechanisms that facilitate white men’s advancement in women’s profession” (Wingfield 2009).

**Citation**

Wingfield, Adia. 2009. “Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men’s Experience with Women’s Work” *Gender Through the Prism of Difference:*373-385.