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What is it like to find a job in America in the 1970's?

What is it like to find a job in the year of 1975? In the year of 1975 there were a major problem of unemployment. One's race, gender, age and sexuality were one of the major determining factors in finding a job in the 1970's. It was hard for people to find jobs in the year of 1975 and this really shows how America was in the past, and how they choose their employees. In my musical *A Chorus Line*, dancers have been desired to get their job and to become a future star. It was very hard for people to find a job even if they weren't pretty, young, talented, and lots more. He wanted to know who will be suitable for this musical and asking for their background would really help Zach determine whether they should be hired. It really shows something unique about the dancers. This musical show aspects of how lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and age do not matter when it comes to hiring someone. Finding a job in 1975 was hard but *A Chorus Line* has proven that anyone can be suitable for a job if they work hard and achieve for what they want. People who are willing to work hard no matter who they are can be a part. *A Chorus Line* had showed us that race, gender, age, and LGBTQ did matter due to their unique looking, and different appearances. This helped Zach choose who he really wants to help him work in the line.

In 1975 there were many people who can not find jobs due to their race, gender, sexuality, and even age. One of the main problems in 1975 were race. Race was one of the main problems during the year of 1975 because people still consider race as something important due to hiring decisions made in the 1970's. For example, if you were a person of color and wanted to find a job, most likely white businessman or person would hire a white man. People like to call themselves white rather than Jewish or Italian. Preferring to identify as white, because they might have a better chance of getting a job than a person of color. In *A Chorus Line* there was only one black character, and the others are identified as white, Jewish, Italian, Hispanic, and Asian. It's very special that in *A Chorus Line* there's a black character, this is because during the 1970's musicals don't like hiring someone who is people of color because they think they would not perfectly blend in with the others. According to *The Great White Way* by Hoffman said, "America might have come a long way since the segregationist politics of the 1930's, but race, unconsciously perhaps, still affected job and hiring decisions." (151) . Hoffman discusses race, and how it affects hiring. This really shows how hard it was for people other than white to find a job in the 1970's. It really shows that during that time people wanted to work with people that can easily blend in with each other, and not someone who would look different. Richie the character had tried so hard to make it to the day where he is finally a star and that he can achieve his goals, others can also achieve their jobs. According to the article *The Great White Way* by Hoffman Warren said, "The finale gives them what they wanted, the dream of being in a dazzling Broadway show, but at the expense of their own individuality; now costumed alike, they all blend together, virtually indistinguishable."

(page 161). This is shown in the finale where, everyone is dressed the same. If you were not on stage, you wouldn't know who they were.

People today can now argue that race can't be the main reason for hiring someone differ from your race, gender, age and sexuality. Nowadays we can say it's false that race can't be blend in because in A Chorus Line a male character Richie had changed everyone's point of view on hiring a minority character for a musical. In A Chorus Line they had their own costumes which is in a gold tuxedo, golden hat, and tie. Everyone wears the same costume, and they are dressed the same looking like each other. Zach wants a group of people who can fit in and work altogether and as a team. During their performance they had achieve Zach's purpose, and have proven that race can't be the major problem of hiring. People might still argue that race is something important to think about before hiring. But race shouldn't really be a problem anymore since we have used a male character and it has come out to be very well done.

According to *Literature Resource center: without missing a step: 'A Chorus Line' returns to Broadway* by Celina Wren said, "And the sometimes, it lands on Broadway, dressed in a gold vest and leggings and a gold top hat -- as in the current brash, diverting revival of the legendary musical A Chorus Line". In this quote it has stated that A Chorus Line is still remembered as of today because of their unique costumes. In this quote it also shows how people don't talk about the characters, but mainly the musical and the costume they were wearing on stage. This shows us that race would not matter even if they hired a minority.

Race weren't the only problem during the 1970's. During the 1970's gender was also a problem that lead to the problem of unemployment. There was something special about hiring a female worker for any kind of job. During the 1970's people look more at your looks than your talents. One of the examples from *A Chorus Line* would be Val. Val is one of the characters in *A Chorus Line* who very wants to get this job. When Zach asked about her background, she sang a song called 'Dance ten looks: three'. In this song she explained about her problems being not perfect as a woman. She basically said she has talents to dance but she does not have the look to suit for her dance. Her looks had always been a problem to her and that's mainly the reason why she had been rejected so many times before she finally thought of plastic surgery. It has been proven that plastic surgery can really change someone's life. If Val didn't undergo plastic surgery before she auditioned for *A Chorus Line*, she might not have been chosen by Zach in the first place, but eliminated, and not get the job. So, looks were very important when it comes to gender in the 1970's. Females need to have a good body shape and males can technically be whoever they want because male's are identified to work and females are not. Females have always been identified as a housewife and not someone who goes out and make money for the family. According to *About face* by Patrice Marx, it said, "'When you're nineteen, all the girls get plastic surgery, so if you don't do it, after a few years, your friends will all look better, but you will look like your improved you'" (page 2). In this quote it has stated that plastic surgeries had been popular, and every girl would be doing it at a very young age. This girl who had been interviewed said people like your friends will all look better than you and you will have a face

that's not at its prettiest if you don't do plastic surgery. Just like Val, every girl is the same. They want to be pretty and they want to be perfect.

Some people might argue that plastic surgeries might not always be one of the best choices. Undergoing plastic surgery just means you want to be someone else. You want to be like others, pretty and perfect. But not everyone's perfect. Val didn't have to undergo surgery because she thinks she's ugly. If race didn't matter for *A Chorus Line*, I wouldn't think looks would be that important. Your talent is something what Zach wants, and a good team working is something that's very needed to *A Chorus Line*. According to *General OneFile; 'A Chorus Line', Broadway* by Backstage East. 48.36 (September 6, 2007): p22 said, "Val: female, 25, cute, adorable, pert, dreamed of becoming a Rockette, but when she came to NYC her looks prevented her from getting work despite considerable dance skills." In this quote it stated how she was herself before coming to NY and what had changed her to become who she is today. If she made the right decision and not apply to the Rockettes first she wouldn't have done plastic surgery. Plastic surgery might have been a bad choice for her body and health, but if doing something like plastic surgery is something that makes you very confident about your looks and makes you happy you should always try. People think plastic surgeries might be bad but if you have no hope and plastic surgery was your only hope, you would choose to try your only hope and not give up. Val had proven to us that being pretty was something very hard for her, but she had achieved it, and now she's working with *A Chorus Line*. This shows that never giving up will always give you an

ending that you wanted and females working would always help them achieve what they want to achieve.

Wu 6

When thinking about pretty you might think about age too. Age is something that's very important when it comes to hiring especially for women in the 1970's. Sheila Bryant is one of the oldest characters on the line and that's what makes her worry the most. Everyone is young and pretty and she's the only one that is no longer their age. She has good dancing skills, but the main problem was her age. When you think about 1970's you and your body feature is something that's the most important out of all. Most people cared about looks and age. This makes females think that they are too old to do something they've always wanted to do, and makes the females think that they are not pretty enough. Men determines if a female is pretty or not by their body features and if she has a pretty face. If you were young you would be looked as perfect but if you were old, you would be looked as the opposite. If you and a younger lady audition for a play or for anything, they would more likely choose the younger one over you. There wouldn't be high hopes when it comes to an older woman compared to a young and pretty, looking woman. During the 1970's and even nowadays, looks were very important and it helps your success in life. People today even over done plastic surgeries to look better, to make themselves happy. If you have watched the movie you can probably tell that Sheila were glared by the other dancers because she was looking much older than the others. But her skills and personality made her achievable to stay in A Chorus Line. Finding a job at Sheila's age was very incredible because most people want to hire someone who looks perfect and has some skills to work for their project and not someone in the middle age just starting their career. According to a

New York Times article *A debate on values in hiring* by Sally Bedell Smith said, “unattractive, too old and not deferential to men”. In this quote it shows us that age is something people really

Wu 7

cares about, and the men’s perspectives of older women. This shows us that it's harder for women older than 30 to find a job they want. This is also telling us that if a woman wants to work, they should start working at a young age. But if you look at A Chorus Line Sheila and her teamwork all together to fit in, and this shows the success of all age dancers like Sheila should be hired for a job in the 1975

People might argue that ageism is something that should be affected when determining whether they should hire female employers or not. They might think that age is something that can really affect someone's ability to work and who they work with. For example, if you work with someone who's much older than you, you wouldn't have things in common to talk about, and it would be harder for you to work when you don't have things in common. People will always choose the pretty one when it comes to hiring women. According to *TV Newswoman's Suit Stirs A Debate on Values in Hiring: A Lawsuit Filed by a TV Newswoman Stirs a Debate on Values in Hiring* it said, ““when I go to a local stations and say do you want to hire this or that women, the bottom line is she doesn’t look good on the air.”” In this quote its shows us the reality of how it was in the 1970’s. If they see you old and not pretty, they would not even consider you but just reject you and not even know about you. But it has been proven wrong to determine looking at age and physical features for hiring. We now need people with talents and not people with looks and has no talents. A Chorus Line has proven that middle age women can do thing a young woman can do. Sheila was able to stand up for herself and not look down at

herself for being the oldest one on the line. She was able to do the things she wanted to do and prove to the men that women don't need to be young and pretty to be hired. A lady like her can do things young ladies can do and much better.

When it comes to *A Chorus Line* you might already know that there are two gay characters who are on the Line. Gay people were looked as different in the 1970's and because we look at them differently it was hard for them to find a job. According to *Gay Liberation Front Manifesto*, by Deen said, "There are words like 'sick', 'bent' and 'neurotic' for destroying the credence of gay people." Deen discussed about how people looked at gay people during that time. Gays weren't looked as normal people they were called by people with harsh names, and these names can hurt their feelings like any normal human being. This relates to my musical because Paul is one of the gay characters and he auditioned for *A Chorus Line*. He talked about his life and him being gay, and how being a gay male made him unique for *A Chorus Line*. This shows that *A Chorus Line* is made up of diverse, and Paul is the type of people *A Chorus Line* wants. This shows that after the gay movement in the 1970's had really changed people's perspectives on gay people, and how to accept them. The gay movement helped women achieve the women's rights because it gave women courage on doing something, they are not confident about. Nowadays gay people are not looked as outsiders in America. People might still look at gay people weird in different countries, but in America we give them equal opportunities.

People might argue that gay people are weird and different. They are only weird and different because we can't accept them. Even today if you see two same gender people kissing you would still stare at them and think "omg, that girl and another girl kissed!" But today we are

Wu 9

starting to accept gay people and in a good way. Even if you were gay you can still find a job like others and live a life that you wanted. But in the 1970's you wouldn't want to tell people that you're gay or bi because in that society people are still not familiar with gay people. Today wise we are more open, and this relates to my musical. My musical wants to accept everyone, and that's what makes my musical unique and fun to watch and listen to. *A Chorus Line* really changed people and their life's because *A Chorus Line* gave them opportunities on achieving and fighting for their dream.

One of my favorite song in *A Chorus Line* is called '*Finale*'. This musical helps identifies who you are on the line, and how you can be a part of a team. In this performance it helps the performers to be a team and be a part of the musical, and that's the main purpose of *A Chorus Line*. Zach wanted a group of people that can work together to make something work out so that the audience knows that they are a team. If you look at the video on YouTube you can see that they are wearing the same costume, and they don't look like they are a different person. They looked like they were a mirror image. Everyone looked the same and had the same posture. From the stage you can't tell the dancers race, gender, age, or sexuality. This is the job of the costume, everyone wore a golden tuxedo, golden tie, and a hat which made them covered their identity, and it's one of the most interesting fact about *A Chorus Line* because it made them looked all the same on stage.

In conclusion, In the 1970's there were many unemployed people due to race, gender, age, and sexuality. A Chorus Line had changed people's perspectives so many ways. Now that A Chorus Line did something so unique and different, and that no one had tried, they had led to

Wu 10

success. Up to today, there are still many problems when it comes to hiring but it has been much better than the 1970's. It wasn't just a history of problems, but how the society had improved on choosing someone they want to work with, and not by one's race, gender, age and sexuality. Our society had changed a lot, and since A Chorus Line did something so different than others, *A Chorus Line* is still a hot topic today and on Broadway which shows their success of the 1970's. When we talk about hiring today, we don't talk about race, gender, sexuality, nor age. We care more about our people's talent than looks. People can look young and pretty, but they can't do something a normal person can. A Chorus Line is trying to tell us the reality, and how the reality had changed from the 1970's to today 2018. If it wasn't for A Chorus Line, there wouldn't be people of hope.

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