

# **Stereotypes in medical education: How open-minded doctors are?**



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*Who is the terrorist ??*







*Who is the doctor and who is the nurse ??*

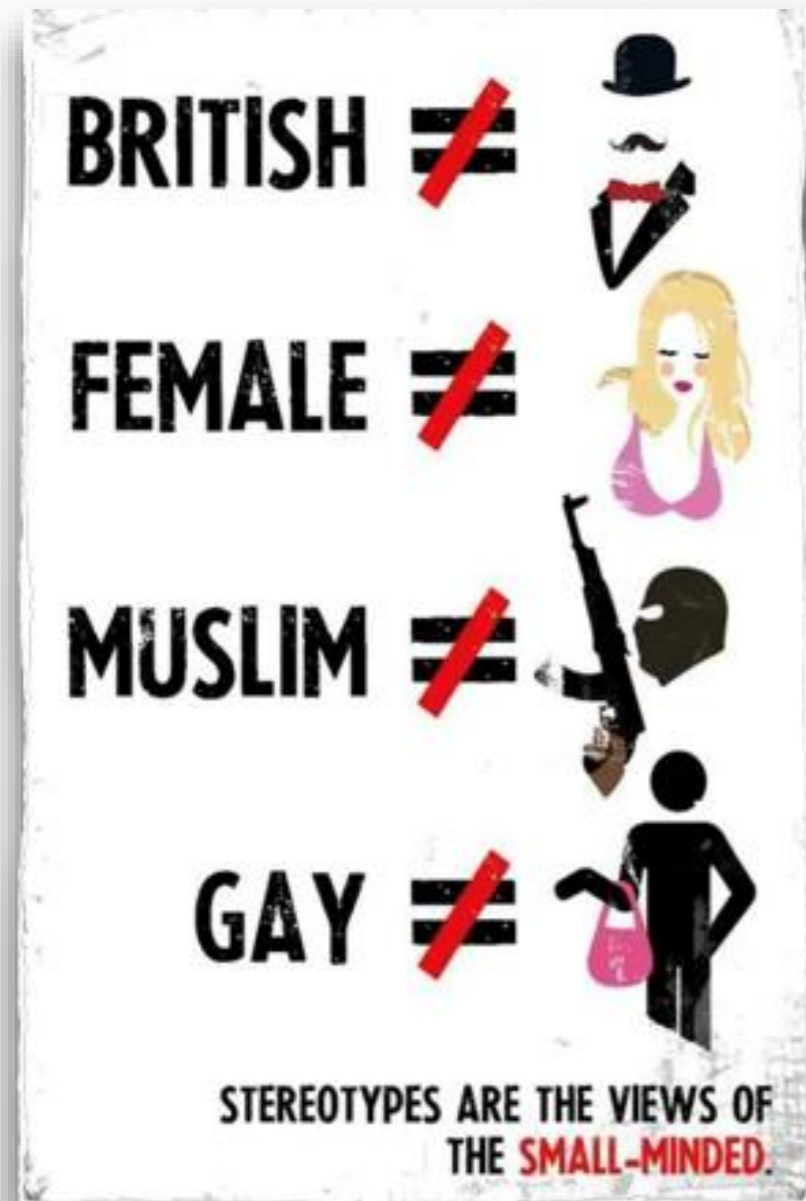


*Who is the patient with AIDS ??*





# Stereotypes in Healthcare



- There is convincing evidence that racial and ethnic disparities exist in the provision of health care.
- Stereotyping, biases and uncertainty on the part of health care providers all contribute to **unequal treatment.**

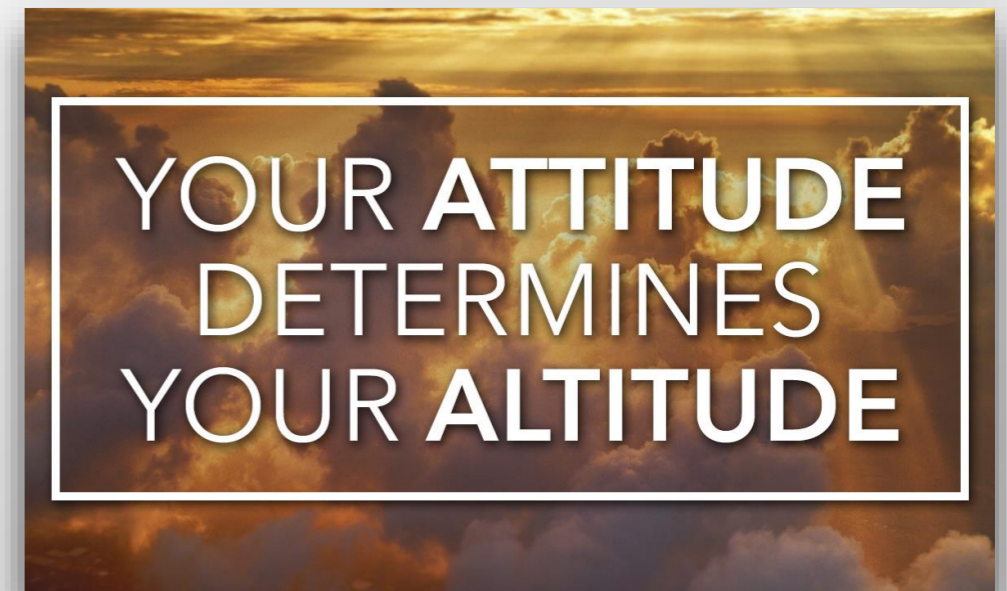
# Attitude changes during medical education

- Some studies reported **maintenance** of positive attitudes, whereas others observed **deterioration** of attitudes throughout the duration of medical school.

*(Grandal SJS et al 1997, Wolf TM et al 1989, Dornbush RL et al 1985)*

- Recent studies found that students become **more cynical** and **less idealistic** toward patient and the profession.

*(Woloschuk W et al 2004, Griffith CH et al 2001)*



# Do stereotypes change during medical education ?

## ➤ Cross-sectional matched design

- **Sample:** 785 medical students from Medical School of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.
- 322 1<sup>st</sup> year medical students
- 277 3<sup>rd</sup> year medical students
- 163 6<sup>th</sup> year medical students





# Instrument

## Stereotypes about gender.

- Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI) translated. (*Glick and Fiske 1996*)

## Stereotypes about age.

- Fraboni scale of ageism (FSA) translated. (*Fraboni et al 1990*)

## Stereotypes about sexual preference.

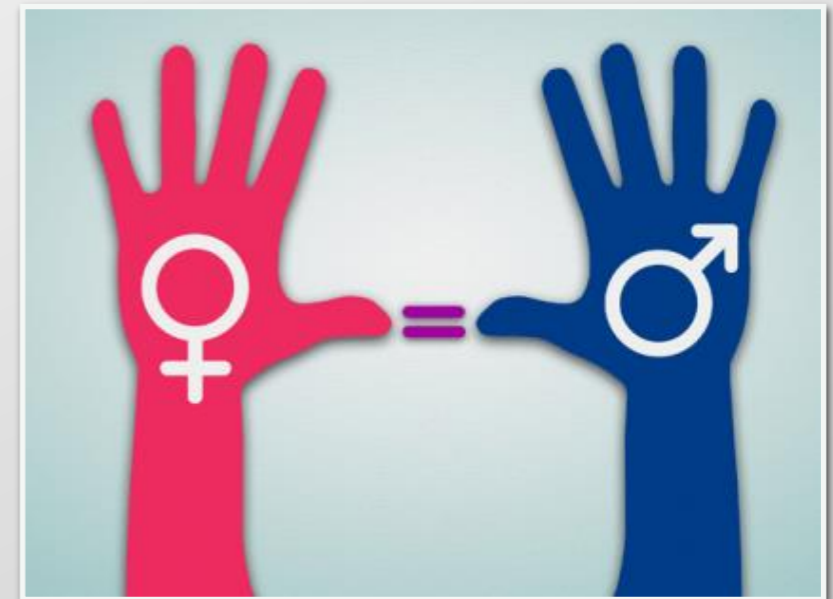
- Homophobia Scale (HS) translated. (*Aguero et al 1984*)





- *Women exaggerate problems at work.*
- *Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.*
- *Women should be cherished and protected by men.*

*(agree - disagree)*



*Ambivalent Sexism Inventory*

- *Teenage suicide is more tragic than suicide among the old.*
- *Complex and interesting conversation cannot be expected from most old people.*
- *Most old people should not be trusted to take care of infants.*
- *I personally would not want to spend much time with an old person.*

*(agree - disagree)*



*Fraboni scale of ageism*

- *Homosexuals should not be allowed to work with children.*
- *People who support homosexual rights are probably homosexual themselves.*
- *If I discovered a friend was gay I would end the friendship.*
- *When I see a gay person I think : "What a waste".*

*(agree - disagree)*



*Homophobia Scale*



# RESULTS

Overall results indicate **a significant effect**:

- Students show more sexist stereotypes in the sixth year ( $M=3.0662$ ) than the third year ( $M=2.8466$ ) off their studies ( $Sd_3=.74217$ ,  $Sd_2=.58322$ ).
- Students show more ageist stereotypes in the sixth year ( $M=3.5465$ ) than the third year ( $M=3.4221$ ) and the first year ( $M=3.3654$ ) off their studies ( $Sd_3=.53037$ ,  $Sd_2=.44003$ ,  $Sd_1=.47141$ ).
- Students show higher homophobic scores in the last year ( $M=4.0355$ ) than the first year ( $M=3.7409$ ) off their studies ( $Sd_3=.73224$ ,  $Sd_1=.86086$ ).

# CONCLUSION

- During their studies medical students became more **sexist, ageist** and **homophobic**.
- Reasons for the shift in attitude scores may relate to incoming students possessing positive attitudes that cannot be further elevated, to loss of idealism coupled with the adoption of a more realistic view of medicine, and to the impact of the unintended curriculum.
- The academic debate has been rich on the **role of education** in managing issues of diversity in society and policy responses have been varied.
- **Academic medicine** can increase awareness and education regarding health disparities through several venues.



Be a free thinker and don't accept  
everything you hear as **truth**.  
**Be critical** and evaluate  
what you believe in.

– *Aristotle*

*Thank you!*