Staff

Jieun Kim, Senior Editor-in-Chief
Class of 2014, Economics

Kelley Monzella, Junior Editor-in-Chief
Class of 2015, Sociology & Hispanic Studies

Kristin Gordon, Junior Editor-in-Chief
Class of 2015, Sociology

Malia Allen, Managing Editor
Class of 2015, Sociology and Islamic Civilization & Societies

Margaret R. Ryan, Editor
Class of 2014, Sociology

Daniela Mira, Editor
Class of 2015, Psychology

Liz Doherty, Editor
Class of 2015, Sociology

Tina Tian, Editor
Class of 2015, Biochemistry

Alienna Arnold, Editor
Class of 2016, Secondary Education and English

Linda Kim, Cover & Layout Designer
Class of 2017, Sociology
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 6

Editor's Introduction 7

A Closer Look
Andrea Cárdenas 8

Soutenus, Sugar Plum Fairies, and Scales: The Prevalence of Eating Disorders Among Women in the Dance Industry
Brittany Duncan 16

Hip Hop and the American Dream
Naomi Gallimore 29

Injustices of Felony Disenfranchisement
Bridget Manning 38

New Homosociality and its Implications for Female Representation in Film
Jennifer Crino 49

The Problem of a Non-Standardized Vanity Sizing System
Elizabeth Handler 63
Acknowledgements

The success of the fifth issue of *SocialEyes* is the result of the collective efforts of many passionate and dedicated individuals. We, the Staff of *SocialEyes*, would like to express our utmost gratitude to those who have shown us unyielding support and guidance throughout the year.

We would first like to thank Dr. Michael Malec of the Sociology Department, our faculty advisor, who has been the pillar of this journal’s continuation and legacy. His knowledge and encouragement were integral to the completion of this issue. We would also like to acknowledge our graduate student advisor, Marya Mtshali, for her passion, editing skills, and dedication to the journal’s legacy.

We are truly indebted to Susan Dunn of the Center for Centers whose efforts was the integral part of the printing process. The expertise that Michelle Muccini of the Center for Centers provided proved equally valuable to this issue’s successful printing. The assistance and cooperation from the Institute of Liberal Arts were crucial to the publication of this year’s issue.

Finally, we would like to extend our gratitude to many faculty members of Boston College who raised awareness of the journal. Their advocacy and belief in our mission are most appreciated.

Cover photo: "Eyes" by Gunther Berkus
Editor’s Introduction

I am delighted to present you the fifth issue of SocialEyes. SocialEyes was first published in 2009 under Boston College’s Sociology Department in efforts to showcase scholarly talent within the undergraduate community, as well as to raise awareness of the various sociological issues that we as modern citizens must examine closely.

Sociology is the study of human society. It embraces everything human: culture, behavior, and much more. Sociology urges us to analyze the social structures and individual actions that differentiate humans not only from one another but also from other species. Thus it bridges many academic disciplines, enabling us to develop a better understanding of the society in which we live, as well as inviting us to question traditional conventions and mores. It challenges us to confront the established system of power and privilege, and to express what may be seen but unspoken.

This issue of SocialEyes is a collection of scholarly works on various sociological topics, including gender, race, and pop culture. It truly is a cross-disciplinary conversation—the authors’ unique perspectives on issues will provide a ground for a fruitful dialogue from which a meaningful change can sprout.

So I urge you, dear reader, to join the dialogue! As you page through the articles, you will be angered, moved, and encouraged to provide your own perspective on the issue. A better society comes not from a stale pool of ideas but from a fresh flow of new thoughts.

Onward,

Jieun Kim
Senior Editor-in-Chief
A Closer Look

Andrea Cárdenas

Andrea is a member of the class of 2016 in the College of Arts and Sciences. She is majoring in Political Science and Sociology. She participates in several activities at Boston College including Appalachia Volunteer Corps, 4Boston, and GLC. Her piece was originally written for the course Introductory Sociology with Professor Emily Barko. She is grateful to everyone back home in New Jersey for supporting her in all her endeavors and the community at BC for welcoming her and continuously presenting new outlooks through everyday interactions.
I clutched the phone closer to my ear, struggling to catch the words of my mother as she delivered the unfortunate news that she would not be able to come and visit for parents’ weekend. As she was finishing, I punched the lock code for my dorm in time to hear her say “but it’s okay Andrea. We won’t see each other for a while but all that matters is that we are healthy and have citizenship in this country.” At that same moment, I opened the door to my room and immediately laid eyes upon my roommate who was calmly typing away at her laptop. I stopped and stared for a few seconds at this girl, who was of Irish and Italian descent, born and raised in an affluent neighborhood in upstate New York. I bet her legal status in the United States was something that never crossed her mind. I bet she had never had such a worry. How was it that we were both here, in this same dorm at Boston College? Our lives could not have been more different, yet we ended up in the same place, even the same room. As a Colombian immigrant, I have certainly taken a much different journey than my peers in order to get where I am today, but I managed to arrive at the same place. The path was strewed with unique obstacles that only someone who came to live in an unfamiliar country as a young child can understand. Although my personal experience has largely resulted from the choices I have made, it is also reflective of the structure of our larger contemporary society. My identity as a first generation Hispanic American has imposed certain constraints on me within the institutional and cultural systems of America that have shaped the development of my life.

One of the earliest things I learned was that I was Colombian. As such, the cultural connection I had with those around me through language, customs, cuisine, and religion made me Hispanic (Sternheimer 2010). Although I was aware of this identity, I did not fully realize its significance until I moved to the United States when I was seven. My family and I moved to a predominately Caucasian neighborhood, and it was there that the contrast of Colombian and North American social structures and cultural representations became truly apparent. When young, there was nothing I wanted more than to fit in and I tried my very hardest in order to do so. Employing the dramaturgical language of Erving Goffman’s *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, one can better understand the near theatrical performance I undertook in
presenting myself as one of the “All-American” girls that I perceived my peers to be. Goffman defines two areas of performance that one must navigate when presenting his or her self: the front stage and the back stage. The front stage is where we portray a set of expected characteristics associated with the image that we want others to see us as. The back stage, in contrast, has no audience and consists of our behavior that goes unobserved (Goffman 1959). At school, I saw that no one’s skin color came close to mine. I straightened my hair everyday instead of letting it cascade down in curls like it wanted to. I refused to wear anything that did not bear the name of certain brands. I always threw out my packed lunch of rice and beans in favor of getting pizza like everyone else. I never invited my friends over so they would not have to meet my weird foreign mom. I did all this in order to present a certain image, or presentation, to everyone around me. Any other deviant behavior—behavior that did not align with the “All-American” image—would “contradict, discredit, or otherwise throw doubt upon this projection,” (Goffman 1959:122). This presentation of self as an All-American, rather than Hispanic American female, was a conscious effort that made me into a different person than who I really was. In retrospect, it is clear that during my youth, I was putting on a show for the front stage that was the outside world and it was completely different than how I acted in the back stage that was my home. At home, I spoke Spanish, I ate Colombian food with gusto, and I did not care what my hair looked like. However, I chose to alter these things when I was outside my home in order to symbolize that I, too, was an average American girl because I looked, spoke, and acted like one. Everyone outside my home would come to see me as such through this symbolic interaction. However, I was not being authentic. I was censoring a major part of who I was in order to fit in. This censoring of self was not something that my friends had to deal with. As first generation Americans, my family was still deeply rooted in our Colombian customs and traditions, which were oftentimes incompatible with the dominant culture of the United States. Essentially, I was sacrificing a part of myself while trying to assimilate.

I have come to realize that society in the United States is simply structured in a way that hierarchically subordinates a family like mine: a family from another country, a family unfamiliar with
the established cultural norms and processes. In fact, American society almost favors the exact opposite group of individuals: wealthy and well-established Caucasians. In many parts of society, one can see this divide clearly. In the media, minorities are vastly underrepresented. Motoko Rich (2012), a writer for *The New York Times*, observed how nonwhite Latino children rarely see themselves written in books for young readers. Characters are almost always Caucasian, and it seems that this has an effect on the children. According to Rich (2012), “Education experts and teachers who work with large Latino populations say that the lack of familiar images could be an obstacle as young readers work to build stamina and deepen their understanding of story elements like character motivation.” This means that Caucasian children are already developing a huge advantage at the expense of nonwhite children. Rich explains that “according to 2011 data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a set of exams administered by the Department of Education, 18 percent of Hispanic fourth graders were proficient in reading, compared with 44 percent of white fourth graders” (Rich 2012). Such data demonstrates that the social identity of the children is historically and culturally specific and therefore society can expect children who are Latino to underperform in academics. John Larew is another researcher who wrote of how institutional systems disadvantage certain parts of the population. He observed that legacies of prestigious universities are more likely to be accepted. However, recently released data has shown that “far from being more qualified or even equally qualified, the average admitted legacy at Harvard between 1981 and 1988 was significantly less qualified than the average admitted nonlegacy” (Larew 1991). This is one of the instances where one must question the objectivity, neutrality, and meritocracy that this country is so proud of. How can one say that everyone is given equal opportunities when there are institutional systems such as these that favor some people over others? It would not be unreasonable to say that I had to work much harder than people who are in the same place as me, who sleep in the same dorm room as me, simply because I did not have access to the same resources. This institutionalized yet discriminatory trend is a critical issue with American society. If my race and ethnicity had not been institutionally disadvantaged, I would not have felt the need to
censor parts of my character and identity as a Hispanic woman. I would have felt more confident in my abilities to navigate this country, and I probably would have been even more successful. Millions of others have been similarly disadvantaged, and, for this reason, it is important for society to recognize its current institutional inequalities.

The territory that comes with being an immigrant is replete with financial burdens as well. My mother’s law degree was not valid here and her limited English made our financial prospects dismal, but we were fortunate to never lack things we needed. The importance of school was always stressed in my family, but I understood from early on that the looming cost of higher education would present a great challenge. Due to this burden, before I even set foot in high school, I did extensive research on how to make attending a university a feasible goal. I came across a list of institutions that prided themselves on their commitment to meeting 100% of a student’s demonstrated financial need. This means whatever the student could afford, the school would make up the difference in order for them to attend. I clenched on to this idea and dreamt of a bright future while simultaneously knowing that it would be extremely difficult, as the schools on the list were prestigious private universities. In the hopes of one day attending one of these institutions, I put all my time and energy into producing the best grades possible all throughout high school, not simply for the sake of having a good grade point average, but because it would literally determine whether or not I would get a college degree. My friends were not overly concerned with building a strong academic record nor did they really need to be. They were content with attending any university they got into regardless of cost since their families were financially able to afford such expenses. In the process of applying to college, I proved to have a different experience than my peers once again. I could not afford tutors or special classes to prepare me for the SATs, nor was I able to take this exam more than once thanks to the $50 price tag of each test. College applications—at 40, 50, or 60 dollars each—also placed an additional burden on me and my family. But I learned to work around all these additional barriers. I found old, used SAT prep books at my local library. Upon further research, I found that waivers were available for the many fees. In short, I had to
figure out for myself how to successfully navigate the same process without access to the resources that my peers had, resources that would have made it a much easier proceeding.

Many other parents did not have difficulty communicating with the teacher because they could not speak English. Many other students did not have trouble navigating life because their parents knew how everything worked in America. Unfortunately, my parents did not have such valuable knowledge, but being on my own, at least more so than my peers, helped me develop in other ways, and I learned to become more independent and resourceful to get by. In her article, “The Upside of Ugly,” Jessica Valenti (2013) writes of how she developed characteristics such as a sense of humor to make up for her lack of attractiveness. In the same way, I learned to figure things out on my own. When it came time to apply for college, my parents could offer no help as they were completely unfamiliar with the process of applying to American universities. When she was applying to college in Colombia, my mother took a one-time standardized test administered by the national government in the eleventh and final grade of high school. What university and career one would pursue would depend on that score. It was much more complicated in the US, where you had to worry about sending transcripts, taking the SATs or ACTs, getting letters of recommendations, and filling out applications themselves. Above all else the hardest part of the entire college application process was filling out financial aid forms. This was something normally done by parents, as was the case with all my friends, but I barely understood the forms myself, and I knew my parents would have been even more lost. Instead of conceding, I grabbed a pen and set off to try and understand words that an average high schooler would normally not have to know, such as “tax exempt interest income” or “adjusted gross income.” I pored over the forms for days until they became the cause of much stress, but, eventually, I managed to finish. I overcame an obstacle that my fellow peers did not have to deal with, as they had parents that understood fairly well what was expected throughout the financial aid process and how to go about doing it. Since my family was not equipped with the same knowledge of properly filling out these forms, it came down to me to set out and find what to do and how to do it correctly in order to achieve my end goal of attending a
university. The application process was certainly not easy but this experience, and many others like it, shaped my character and made me the person I am today. They have helped me develop into a more ambitious and determined person, someone who is not easily deterred by a daunting task. This skill has served me well in the academically rigorous environment of Boston College.

Being a first generation American has certainly come with its difficulties. Nevertheless, I would almost consider this aspect of my life a gift. I have an incredibly rich culture behind me of which I am immensely proud. I have a different perspective on life that allows me to understand what some cannot even recognize. But more importantly, it has allowed me to grow in ways that many others have never needed to. I have developed abilities that have allowed me to be in the place I find myself in today in spite of the formidable obstacles I arduously worked to overcome. I have experienced these challenges in many places, from everyday interactions in attempting to project a certain image, to larger institutional levels such as applying for colleges. Although I only have the authority to speak of my unique experiences, one can come to understand the larger societal implications for people with similar stories and how the cultural and institutional systems of society affect them. By telling my history, I wish to give insight into the complex realities of leading such a life full of barriers resulting from my subordinated social status as a Hispanic woman in the hopes that one day, society may realize its normalized discriminatory nature that leaves some to fight much harder for success and livelihood.

A Closer Look
References


SOUTENUS, SUGAR PLUM FAIRIES, AND SCALES: 
THE PREVALENCE OF EATING DISORDERS AMONG WOMEN IN THE DANCE INDUSTRY 

Brittany Duncan 

Brittany is a member of the class of 2016 in the College of Arts & Sciences. She is majoring in Sociology and pursuing a double minor in Women and Gender Studies and Management and Leadership within the Carroll School of Management. She is a member of BC Reads and the president of Boston College’s Historical Society. She also works as an undergraduate assistant researcher in the Women and Gender Studies Department. Her piece was originally written for the course Women and the Body, taught by Professor Sharlene Hesse-Biber. She would like to thank her friends and family back home in Minnesota as well as the BC community for always inspiring her to pursue her passions.
Abstract

Dancers - ballet dancers especially - feel an acute need to be thin, leading many to develop eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. Ballet dancers are usually about 10-12% below the ideal body weight for women, which can lead to dangerous eating habits and psychological issues. Using five popular articles found in magazines and newspapers as well as four peer reviewed, scholarly articles, this paper attempts to discover the cause of disorderly eating in the dance industry as well as to look at possible solutions. Weight in the dance industry is a complex issue that hinges on many different components. Perfectionism, stress, dance attire, prevalent use of mirrors in dance studios, gender roles, and the general ballet aesthetic all contribute to the pressure dancers feel to be dangerously thin. This pressure to be thin can lead to death by anorexia, bulimia, or suicide. By understanding the reasons for dancers’ fixation on weight, one can better look at ways to ease the problem.
The stage is set, the curtain rises, and a lone ballerina stands in the blinding lights that highlight her every move. With every step she takes she draws the audience in, captivating them with her deliberate footwork and graceful movements. She is the Sugar Plum Fairy, a sought after role in the Nutcracker Ballet. It is an honor to be dancing this role and she, Jenifer Ringer, loves every minute of it. It was not an easy road to becoming the Sugar Plum Fairy in The New York City Ballet. In fact, Ringer suffered from anorexia as a teenage dancer. Becoming a professional dancer at just sixteen years old, Ringer was not able to cope with the stress of the dance world and the pressure of being a professional. This led to the development of eating disorders and body image issues, a common trend among many in the dance profession (Schluger 2010). After working through her issues, Ringer is now practicing healthy eating habits and her career has soared. However, being a dancer means constantly putting one’s body in the limelight and opening oneself up for criticism. No one knows that better than Ringer. After her beautiful performance as the Sugar Plum Fairy in 2010, a New York Times critic wrote in his column that Ringer “looked as if she’d eaten one sugar plum too many” (Sulcas 2012). This is evidence of the type of criticisms ballerinas often face in the dance industry. Opening up old wounds of self-doubt and body image issues, Ringer stated that although this statement was hurtful, she knows that she works in an industry in which her body is constantly on display. Professional ballet dancers and those who aspire to become professional dancers experience extreme pressures to be thin - more than the average woman - in order to conform to stringent body image expectations. Perfectionism, stress, dance attire, prevalent use of mirrors in dance studios, gender roles, and the general ballet aesthetic all contribute to these pressures. Furthermore, this paper will argue that these pressures in turn can set conditions for the development of eating issues and disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. This is evidenced by Jenifer Ringer and countless other ballerinas who have suffered these terrible illnesses. This paper examines the drive for thinness and its relationship to eating disorders and suggests a range of solutions to address this issue.

The dance industry puts constant pressure on their dancers to maintain a low body weight. This is in order to maintain the thin aesthetic that has come to characterize ballet. Long, slender arms
and legs with a long neck and a short torso are considered to be
the ideal ballerina proportions. Broad shoulders, small hips, small
breasts, and a small butt are also musts. Ballet’s ideal of thinness
gives the dancer an adolescent and even prepubescent look. These
dancers lack the curves normally associated with womanhood. A
dancer’s body is their instrument, and therefore body concerns
are common among dancers. “Ballet dancers are generally 10-12%
below the ideal body weight and engage in dieting to maintain
this weight” (Schluger 2010). This dieting and preoccupation with
weight can have dangerous effects. In 1997, one of Boston Ballet’s
premier dancers, Heidi Guenther, died of cardiac arrest as a result
of a severe eating disorder. This event rocked the ballet industry
and drew world attention toward the problem of eating disorders
in dance. However, in the fifteen years since Guenther’s death, little
has changed in ballet’s thin aesthetic.

Eating disorders in the dance industry have been in the
media for quite some time and yet are still issues today. Stories,
such as Jenifer Ringer’s, of eating disorders and harsh judgment
from critics and those in the dance industry alike are common.
This problem is not going away. An article in London’s “The Stage”;
written in May of 2012, highlights the problem of widespread eating
disorders in dance. In this article, Royal Ballet director, Monica
Mason, claims that any dance company director who claims to have
never had an anorexic dancer is lying. This is a bold statement but
evidences the epidemic problem of disorderly eating. However,
the article goes on to suggest that the dance industry has become
more open to different body types and that they are willing to
change some of their ways in order to help their young dancers.
This claim is directly challenged in another article written just
five months later, in October of 2012, in Dance Teacher magazine.
Titled “A Touchy Subject”, this article attempts to direct dance
teachers and others in the dance industry on how to approach a
student needing to lose weight. The article claims that, “if you take
your students’ potential seriously, you will likely have to address
the issue at some point”. In effect, the dancer’s ability to become a
professional dancer directly hinges on their weight. This view is in
stark contrast to the one of the ballet officials in “The Stage” article.
Considering the second article is written specifically to aid dance
teachers, with no ulterior motives, whereas “The Stage” article
reads more as a defensive tactic used by the dance industry, the second is much more reliable and believable. "The Stage" article seemed to be written more for the sake of good public relations - a sort of damage control with the public. For example, the article also stated, “What [dance companies] are looking for is a healthy dancer... the sizes and shapes of people vary enormously”. This is in direct opposition to most other academic and popular sources on this topic, which state that the dance industry puts constant pressure on their dancers to maintain a low body weight in order to maintain the same, homogenous, thin aesthetic, and makes the article less convincing, making the reader wonder what the dance industry may be hiding.

However, the stigmas and judgments associated with eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa make this subject matter very difficult to accurately report on. Many dancers do not want to admit that they struggle with an eating disorder for fear of being judged, because they are in denial, or because they are scared of going against the dance community. For example, Mariafrancesca Garritano, a soloist ballerina at La Scala Ballet in Italy, was fired from her job after telling The Observer newspaper in Britain that anorexia and other eating disorders were rampant among the ballet’s dancers. La Scala Ballet emphatically denied her claims and asserted that while dancers may once have been pressured to be thin no matter the cost, times have changed and the dancers are not taught in that manner anymore. Still, Garritano has stood firm, even though the entire dance community has effectively turned their backs on her. According to Garritano, many dancers are scared to admit the prevalence of eating disorders in the industry for fear of the scorn they will face, as experienced by Garritano herself.

One commonly held belief about eating disorders in the dance industry is its relationship with perfectionism. Research has indicated that perfectionism is strongly associated with eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. In Alice Schluger’s journal article, "Disordered Eating Attitudes And Behaviors In Female College Dance Students", Schluger aims to investigate the relationship and differences between classical ballet students and their modern dance counterparts (2010). Schluger points out research done by Ringham et al. (2006) in which it was
found that dancers scored higher levels on a test for perfectionism than non-dancers. Using ninety female undergraduate dance students in the northeast of the United States, half ballet majors, and half modern dance majors, of varying ethnicities Schluger gave the dancers comprehensive surveys to discover their eating and perfectionism tendencies. There are very strict standards and appearance aesthetics for professional ballet dancers that must be followed if the dancers want to be successful in the industry. This may heighten their chances for acquiring an eating disorder (2010). For example, Schluger found that students pursuing a career in classical ballet participated in dieting practices to a greater extent than modern dance students (2010). According to Schluger’s study, ballet dance majors are at a much higher risk for developing eating disorders than their modern dance counterparts (2010). However, there is no difference in perfectionistic tendencies, meaning there is something beyond perfectionism that is causing this disparity between eating habits among dancers.

The stress of working in such a competitive industry may also contribute to the presence of eating disorders among dancers. The dance industry is physically demanding and extremely competitive. This often leads to a high amount of stress for dancers, which can ultimately lead to physical injuries, drug and alcohol abuse, eating disorders, depression, and occupational burnout. Most dance companies do not have programs or personnel to address these issues (Hernandez 2012). Barbara Hernandez attempts to address the issue of stress in the dance industry and ways stress and its effects can be handled in her article "Addressing Occupational Stress in Dancers" (2012). According to Hernandez, “the pressure in the dance profession to stay thin and perform perfectly often lead to compulsive, workaholic tendencies and result in eating disorders and other health problems” (2012). On site stress-management programs that enroll young dancers early on can identify health risk factors early and provide interventions for dancers to change and modify their behaviors such as improper nutrition, rest deficiencies, addictive behaviors such as drug abuse or alcoholism, and workaholism (2012). Hernandez (2012) recommends the simple hiring of a nutritionist or eating disorder specialist, and claims it can make a huge difference. However, Hernandez does not provide any proof to back up her claims. Not
all women with high levels of stress develop eating disorders and, although she provides adequate evidence that dancers are under much stress and this stress can lead to destructive behaviors like eating disorders, she never proves that counseling will help them. The hiring of eating disorder specialists and counselors for every dance company in the world seems a bit unrealistic and expensive. However, creating a safe space for dancers to come together and discuss the pressure they feel with others who understand them - a sort of support group - is a feasible action that may help the girls better cope with their self-confidence and eating disorders. There does not have to be a clinical psychologist present at every meeting or some expensive program to facilitate the discussion. Dance companies and schools can simply organize the girls into groups, give them a space and time to meet, and hope the program helps. However, dancers are often competitive with one another. They compete for parts in shows and spots in prestigious dance companies, fostering a competitive, “it’s me against everyone” attitude. However, through these programs, over time, the girls may be able to break down these boundaries and have open, honest discussions with one another. Instead of fostering competitiveness, they can foster friendship. If anything, the dancers could perform relaxation techniques such as yoga and meditation in order to better cope with the stress of the fast paced world of dance.

Another interesting influence on disorderly eating in the dance industry is dance attire itself. Research by Brena Price and Terry Pettijohn II (2006) suggests that the attire of leotards and tights causes lower self-esteem and body perception compared to more loose fitting clothes. It has already been established that ballet dancers in particular have more severe issues with body image than non-dancers. This may be partly because non-dancers do not have to wear skin-tight clothes every day, not to mention stare at themselves in the mirror while wearing these clothes. Price and Pettijohn (2006) studied female ballet dancers that ranged in body types, ethnicity, and age, but all attended the same college. This group of women was split up into two separate groups, one required to wear the tight fitting, standard leotard and tights, the other allowed to wear loose fitting clothing of their own choosing. In fact, “None of the dancers chose to wear tight-fitting clothing when given the option to choose their dance attire” (2006). The
study found that, when the dancers wore loose fitting clothing, they reported a more positive body image and self-perception. The inability to see every lump and bump and imperfection on one’s body can do wonders for body image. The old saying “Out of sight out of mind” definitely applies here. Price and Pettijohn provide a comprehensive and efficient study of this relatively little studied phenomena. Although the idea that clothes can dramatically affect a dancer’s self-esteem may seem irrational, this study thoroughly convinces otherwise.

Price and Pettijohn also address the idea that the use of mirrors in dancing schools and rehearsal spaces not only allows the students to correct their technical dancing mistakes but also to stare at every inch of their body and critique it. As Price and Pettijohn point out, a study was conducted by Radell, Adame, and Cole (2002) in which beginning ballet dancers were split into two classes. One class was conducted without the use of mirrors and one was conducted using mirrors. In the non-mirror classroom, satisfaction with body image and appearance increased whereas it decreased in the mirrored classroom. Interestingly, the students in the classroom full of mirrors, as a whole, declined in weight. There is also evidence to the fact that mirrors hinder the development of dance skills. By constantly focusing on one’s appearance, the dancers were less focused on getting the steps right and more focused on how they looked performing the steps. Another study was done, with the same mirrored and non-mirrored classes, in which the dancers’ skills were assessed in the middle and at the end of the year. The group of dancers in the mirrored room showed less improvement than those in the room without mirrors (Price and Pettijohn 2006). Therefore, the removal of mirrors from dance studios would not harm the improvement of the dancers; in fact, it may even improve it. This is a reasonable and easy action that would have positive effects on dancers’ self-esteem and overall improvement as a skilled dancer. In addition, changing the dress code to include more loose-fitting clothes would also allow for an increase in self-esteem and less nitpicking at one’s body while staring in the mirror. Even if this dress code were only for classes and rehearsals, it would have a profound impact on the dancers’ self-esteem and thus a decrease in eating disorders.

Gender roles may be another important influence on the
development of eating disorders. Gender roles are based on socially constructed stereotypes of what it means to be typically considered masculine or feminine. In fact, gender role expectations have little, if anything, to do with biology. A study done by Claudia Ravaldi and a team of researchers examined the relationship between gender roles and eating disorders in the dance world. Subjects took the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) to evaluate gender roles. Based in their answers they were divided up in to four categories: male (scoring high on masculinity and low on femininity), female (scoring high on femininity and low on masculinity), androgynous (scoring high on both), and undifferentiated (scoring low on both) (Ravaldi et al. 2006). Those dancers who tested in to the male gender role, in other words females who scored high on masculinity, showed signs of disorderly eating and a negative body image (Rivaldi et al. 2006). However, non-dancers who tested in to the male gender role category did not show any disorderly eating or negative body image. This supports the idea of a link between the male gender role and disorderly eating that is specific to ballet dancers. The prepubescent look that is considered ideal for female ballerinas calls for small, almost nonexistent breasts, hips and butt. The natural curves that women normally associate with womanhood and femininity are forbidden in ballet. This may influence a gender identity crisis within the female dancers, making them feel less feminine. The dancers that are typified as female have better body image than those typified as male because, although they may not have the large breasts and butt that are associated with womanhood, they still view themselves as female in the socially constructed, binary sense. They do not view themselves as abnormal or outside the binary, thus causing them to accept and love themselves and their bodies. However, those typified as male see themselves as outside of the binary, neither male nor female, and thus they have more body dissatisfaction because they do not meet the socially constructed norms for their gender. Therefore, the ideal figure for a ballet dancer may contribute to the prevalence of eating disorders in the dance industry because it may de-feminize the women and can place some outside of the binary, which is an unforgiving, difficult place to be.

Finding solutions to the problem of eating disorders in the dance industry is nearly impossible. This problem is so widespread
and deeply rooted in the dance community that it is difficult to reverse. The aesthetic and requirements of being a ballet dancer set women up to fail from the start. The specific, broad-shouldered, small breasted, thin woman the ballet industry wants can be near impossible for some women to adhere to; their bodies simply may not look like that. Therefore, an obvious solution would be to change the aesthetic of ballet to be representative of a more “real” woman. This way, dancers would not feel the pressure to be abnormally thin, thus increasing their chances for developing an eating disorder. However, this solution is not feasible. The balletic aesthetic has been in effect for decades and is not going to change anytime soon. Ballerinas need to be lightweight in order for their male counterparts to lift them and perform difficult tricks. However, there are definitely plausible ways to decrease the number of dancers suffering from eating disorders.

One effective, albeit harsh, method to decrease the number of eating disorders in dance lies with the parents. Parents of daughters thinking of a career in ballet need to help their daughters be realistic. Women have many different body types; body types they are born with and cannot change. Therefore, those with daughters who have more of an endomorphic body type (larger appearance and little muscle definition), opposite of the ectomorphic body (skinny appearance and fast metabolism) preferred by ballet should look into other career paths for their daughters. Their bodies will never look ectomorphic unless they starve themselves and even then, they will be at a constant disadvantage to the girls with naturally ectomorphic bodies. Girls with non-ectomorphic bodies may be better suited to other styles of dance, such as hip-hop or modern dance. However, some parents may push their daughters into dance careers despite their contrary body type. For these dancers, and the ectomorphic dancers who feel the pressure to keep their bodies lean and thin, other solutions must be presented.

Dance schools and companies should create support groups for dancers, thus allowing them to express their feelings and struggles with others who will understand the pressure they face every day in the dance industry. In addition to open discussions (which may not be possible due to the competitiveness that lies at the heart of dance) the women should participate in stress-
relieving techniques such as yoga or meditation. The decrease in stress, which is proven to greatly influence the development of eating disorders, will not only help to decrease the likelihood of developing eating disorders but also decrease the number of sick days and increase the overall performance of the dancers. Dance studios should also remove mirrors from the classrooms and rehearsal spaces. Also, dance studios should change the uniform to include loose-fitting clothing, at least for classes and rehearsals. These are all possible actions that the dance companies must take in order to help their dancers and decrease the likelihood of eating disorders.

There is also something that everyone can do in order to diminish this problem and prevent it from propagating. In the case of Jenifer Ringer, thousands of strangers jumped to her defense: with blogs, letters, and phone calls the public cried out that insensitive comments about weight and appearance would not be tolerated. They fiercely defended her and stated that people should care about the quality of her dancing, not her appearance. Using these outspoken strangers for inspiration, every person can help dancers end their endless struggle with body image. By employing understanding and compassion, the public can help decrease the number of women plagued by eating disorders. As mentioned earlier, the classical ballet aesthetic is not going away any time soon, but if public opinion of what is beautiful and important in dance begins to change by speaking about cases like Ringer’s, maybe the ballet industry will start to change as well. This may take twenty years, or fifty, but it is definitely possible.

Ballet does not automatically equate with eating disorders. It does however increase women’s desires to lose weight in order to conform to the ballet aesthetic, which can lead to body image issues and disorderly eating. Perfectionism, stress, dance attire, the use of mirrors, gender roles, and the overall balletic aesthetic all contribute to the large number of dancers suffering from disorderly eating. Dance companies should create support groups for their dancers, remove the mirrors that line the walls of their studios, and allow their dancers to wear loose fitting clothing while rehearsing. In addition, every person in the community can help. By standing up for all body types, employing the use of understanding and compassion, and coming together to support dancers, every person
can make a difference to change the way people view body types. Although this may not dramatically change the dance industry or the balletic aesthetic, it may help a ballerina, such as Jenifer Ringer, feel better about herself and stand up for her own body in an industry that thinks of women’s bodies as its own.
References


HIP-HOP AND 
THE AMERICAN DREAM

Naomi Gallimore

Naomi is a member of the class of 2014 in the College of Arts & Sciences. She is majoring in Sociology with a concentration in Pre-law. She is a member of the Bellarmine Law Society and has participated in Generation Citizen as a democracy coach. Her piece was originally written for the course Race, Ethnicity, and Pop Culture, taught by Professor Zine Magubane. She would like to thank her friends, family and her professors at BC for providing her with an array of knowledge and experiences that she continues to employ in her everyday life.
Contemporary Hip-hop and its cultural meanings as well as the function it plays within cultures are often discussed in the context of African American culture. However, less examined is the role Hip-hop and Rap music play in contemporary culture with respect to the American Dream. The American Dream is a collective of notions that promote individuality and self-sufficiency (pulling oneself up by the bootstraps) as attainable across race and class, while disregarding how structural inequalities prevent certain groups from being able to participate in the American Dream. This essay will detail the shift that Hip-hop culture has undergone with respect to the last twenty or more years and relate this to the American Dream. It will argue that although Hip-hop was primarily concerned with essentially critiquing the American Dream when it first began, it has undergone a complex transformation that has ultimately changed the nature of Hip-hop itself. While it may seem easy to categorize Hip-hop as a genre that now encourages the American Dream, this essay will discuss how societal changes and the popularization of Hip-hop has led to the emergence of a very different genre over time. Further, the current state of Hip-hop and Rap cannot simply be labeled as one that critiques the American Dream or encourages it but does both. The changes Hip-hop has undergone can be attributed to larger influences that have in turn produced a genre that responds to the white-American society. While contemporary Hip-hop tries to navigate through America’s majority culture, it becomes a product of its diversity, industry and audience. Further, the images and messages it portrays are a reflection of this. Thus Hip-hop is in a state of contradiction that enables it to both critique the American Dream and encourage it.

At the time of its inception, Hip-hop existed as a movement that responded to a time of crisis for young blacks in urban communities. This tumultuous situation led to a symbolic moment of realization for African Americans regarding the massive inequalities they faced as a marginalized group within the United States and provoked a need to respond artistically. Stapleton describes this revelation as a “deindustrialized meltdown where social alienation, prophetic imagination, and yearning intersect” (Stapleton 1998). Rap provided young urbanites an oasis away from the severe environment of poverty and estrangement that they encountered on a daily basis within the cities. As a result, Rap
existed as a “street” culture for many years prior to being discovered by the larger corporate music industry. In Morgan’s (2009) book *The Real HipHop*, she talks about the significance of Rap in the urban community of Los Angeles in the 1990s. In response to the frustration and anger young black individuals felt in relationship to various established oppressive forces, an underground freestyle workshop called Project Blowed was formed. This workshop helped young blacks express their frustration in a positive way, where creativity and craftsmanship were prized over meaningless, profane content. It evolved as a vehicle for the “critical analysis of society and a tradition where ideas and events are debated and analyzed” (Morgan 2009). Social criticism defined Hip-hop from its inception and well into the ‘90s. For a long time, it was clear that Hip-hop’s purpose was to critique injustices experienced by minorities in the hopes of correcting them, but when the genre became commercialized, it experienced a drastic transformation.

There are three factors one can identify as major changes that have occurred in Hip-hop that can be attributed to its current complex nature. The first is the diversification of rappers in the field of Hip-hop. When Hip-hop as a movement began, it was comprised of African American male artists who were representative of young urban black culture (Kubrin 2005). They typically came from low-income backgrounds and could speak first-hand to the various inequalities they faced as members of an extremely marginalized group within the United States. Contrasting this image with contemporary rap artists we get an entirely different picture: “Today more and more rappers come from diverse backgrounds, including middle-class communities. And female rappers are more common than ever” (Kubrin 2005). Society no longer expects Hip-hop artists to fit within the mold of the black male rapper. Interestingly enough, whatever the race or class with which rappers tend to identify themselves, they are still expected to appropriate stereotypical black culture. Many artists today often exaggerate their “ghettoness” in order to be marketable to the audience to which rap caters (Kubrin 2005). Although it is doubtful that many Hip-hop artists today truly began their careers as low-income individuals, ‘starting from the bottom’ and ‘making it’ has proved the claim to fame for the large majority, further enforcing Kubrin’s observed contradiction.
The second change is the commercialization of Rap music. The music industry plays a markedly significant role in the popularization of Hip-hop. In its beginning stages of production, Rap music was owned and managed by small independent record labels. Currently, however, management has shifted to large record labels owned by white men (Kubrin 2005). According to Andrea Queeley, “80 percent of the music recorded in the United States is controlled by six major corporate entities, and the power to control the rotation of music on radio stations is available to the highest corporate bidder” (2003). The consequences of this shift are significant and call one to consider the implications this has not only for Rap music, but also for African American culture. If Rap music is to be considered a reflection of black culture while white men control the circulation of content and imagery, then we must call into question the authenticity of the messages we consider to be truthful in this genre today. Although we cannot ignore that it is now becoming common for high profile rappers to be on the production end of commercialized music, the large majority of artists not only lose creative control, but also lack power in production, hiring staff, and ownership of recording services (Queeley 2003). Queeley criticizes this practice: “The recurrence of deeply embedded racist stereotypes coupled with the fixation on consumption characterizes corporate control of hip hop and diminishes its position as a revolutionary art form and burgeoning mass social movement” (2003). Consequently, she believes this appropriation of blackness by corporate power “fetters the creative process and indirectly narrows the economic options available to poor urbanites of color: Hip hop now lives in the ghetto of the white imagination” (2003). Queeley’s point is essential to the understanding of the construction of messages we see circulating through Hip-hop lyrics today.

Related to this change is the audience shift from predominantly black to predominantly white. The primary consumers of Rap music today are young white individuals who do not connect to the struggles depicted by early rap artists in the 1980s (Kubrin 2005). This new age audience holds a far more elevated place in society than that of African American rap artists who ‘start from the bottom’ and yet they are the ones who buy into Hip-hop the most. In this article “Decoding Hip-Hop’s Cultural
Impact,” Roach (2004) addresses the significant correlation between negative portrayals of Rap artists’ lyrics and Rap’s biggest consumer since the early 1980s: the white middle class. This prompts one to consider why Rap is so appealing to middle-income Caucasians seeing as their experience is not directly similar to that of a Hip-hop artist from a low-income background. Considering this, he calls us to become more aware “of who gets promoted and the entities that support them” (Roach 2004). Becoming more aware of the primary audience Hip-hop caters to, the corporate forces influencing it, and the artists it produces leads us into thinking further about the contradiction within Rap music.

How, then, does this relate to the concept of the American Dream? It can be said that the factors influencing Hip-hop mentioned previously have allowed for the emergence of a genre that functions within a state of contradiction. While early Rap artists promoted socially conscious lyrics, artists today seem more concerned with materialism and misogyny than in the content they sell. While some contemporary Hip-hop artists still incorporate socially-aware lyrics into their music, this lyrical content is too often sidelined by the demands of the industry to appropriate “blackness”: “Public Enemy made the ghetto visible in order to abolish it. Many of today’s rappers make the ghetto visible in order to sell and be sold” (Kubrin 2005). Artists who have socially conscious agendas are rarely mainstream in the music industry and remain within the realm of Underground. However, one may also argue that many mainstream artists have lyrics with implicit meanings of which many audiences are not aware. In his book Decoded, Jay-Z talks about his song called “99 Problems” and how he anticipated the misinterpretation of his lyrics and their dismissal on the basis of his use of the word “bitch”. He explains that the hook—“99 problems but a bitch ain’t one”—is actually a play on words and has multiple meanings beside the obvious interpretation of “bitch”. Jay-Z claims that he was not actually referencing women

1 The hook “99 problems but a bitch ain’t one” is borrowed from a song titled 99 Problems by rap artist Ice-T, in which he aims to demonstrate he has no trouble sexually with women. In this context, Ice-T is using “bitch” in reference to women. While Jay-Z employs these lyrics in his song, he does not intend to use them in the same way. In Decoded, he explains that although the lyrics are catchy and meant to draw you in, for him the term “bitch” is used to represent a police dog. In the song, Jay-Z depicts a scenario in which he was pulled over by a policeman who attempts to search his car without a warrant. Jay-Z refuses and the policeman proceeds to call for police dogs, but they never show up. Hence, Jay-Z is conveying that although he may have many problems (i.e. getting racially profiled by a police officer), at least he does not have to worry about police dogs finding the drugs he has hidden in his car, which would result in a much bigger problem. In this way he is using “bitch” in the original sense of the word.
when he used the word “bitch” and the fact that people blindly interpreted the entire meaning of the song based on just the hook is both very humorous and disheartening (Jay-Z 2011). The song as a whole tells a story about the struggles African American males face as members of a deeply prejudiced society: “It’s a story about the anxiety of hustling, the way little moments can suddenly turn into life or death situations. It’s about being stopped by cops with a trunk full of coke, but also about the larger presumption of guilt from the cradle that leads you to having the crack in your trunk in the first place” (2011). In this instance we can see clearly how Rap music and its artists are making efforts to critique the American Dream, but we also see how often the meanings of these lyrics are misinterpreted by the primary listeners of the genre. Whether this can be attributed to artists in turn using misogynistic and materialistic messages in their music is unclear, but what can be inferred is that efforts in critiquing the American Dream often come second to messages that are guaranteed to sell.

However, Raphael Travis, Jr. argues that Rap continues to successfully broadcast its messages of social change to those youth who consume the genre as art. These values are instilled in the youth that consume this music as art. He believes that the notion of commercialized Hip-hop music having eliminated its element of social change is a misguided stereotype. In his analysis of Hip-hop, Travis, Jr. has found that it continues to be a mechanism for social consciousness and presents opportunities to enlist in meaningful activism (Travis, Jr. 2013). Further, a study done by Edgar Tyson, Paul DuongTran, and Gregory Acevedo for their article titled “Hip Hop Perceptions and Exposure as Predictors of School Outcomes for Black and Latino Adolescents” found that adolescents who listened to Rap lyrics and consumed images associated with Hip-hop culture were aware of the commercialized and sensationalized messages present in the genre today. However, they also found that Rap music was fundamental to the development of youth’s “critical awareness of oppressive forces” (Tyson, DuongTran, and Acevedo 2012). Additionally, scholars found that students who performed better in school (measured by GPA) had a positive perception of Rap music. These students were also able to be critical of Rap, recognizing the negative aspects of the genre while appreciating its artistic and socially relevant elements (2012). This demonstrates
that although the commercialization of Rap has altered the
genre in such a way that its primary focus has strayed from social
awareness, at least some consumers gain familiarity of social
issues through Hip-hop’s educative ability. Furthermore, Stapleton
identifies examples in which Hip-hop has sparked political action
and movements. Her article “From the Margins to Mainstream: The
Political Power of Hip Hop,” expands on a movement called Stop
the Violence (STV), which was an attempt by Rap artists to come
together to raise awareness of black-on-black crime with the goal
of lowering the number of offenses. She uses this example to show
how Rap can be (and has been) a catalyst of political and social
action (Stapleton 1998). In this way, Hip-hop can be considered to
successfully critique the American Dream despite its commercial
nature.

One can look to the structure of the music industry in order
to identify the possible causes of Hip-hop and Rap’s encouragement
of the flawed notion of the American Dream, also known as the
dream myth. One can also examine the music industry’s cohort
of individuals and record companies that profit from the buying
and selling of music in looking at the implications it has had on
black culture and Hip-hop as a whole. The success of Rap music
has increasingly been seen as evidence that the American Dream
is not just a myth and that “making it” as a rapper is possible for
anyone. In his essay titled “From Black Inventors to One Laptop Per
Child: Exporting a Racial Politics of Technology,” Rayvon Fouché
(2012) discusses how technology is seen as the great equalizer for
impoverished groups both within and outside of the United States.
In his examination of the black inventor, Fouché demonstrates the
pervasiveness of the historical practice of reducing black inventors
into a simple list with common elements that overshadow their
individuality and complexity. Sadly, history has simply viewed
these inventors as a collective group with similar experiences. More
importantly, viewing black inventors in this way is identified as
a myth that “over-emphasizes technology as unequivocally good
and a non-socially or culturally constructed object...imbedded in
these lists and the myth is the idea that technology can liberate
undeserved and impoverished communities” (Fouché 2012). In the
same way, Rap is perceived as the great equalizer for individuals in
the black community and is credited as one of the avenues African
Americans can take as a legitimate way to elevate their status in society. This view of Hip-hop is especially problematic in that it not only reinforces and justifies a racialized social order, but also gives young minorities the impression that Hip-hop is an occupational outlet through which the American Dream can become accessible. However, this unrealistic notion paradoxically acts as a structural device that denies marginalized groups access to the Dream itself. Analyzing the industry in this way allows us to see how Hip-hop as a genre may be encouraging the myth of the American Dream, influencing Rap artists and their lyrics. Many authors, such as Kubrin (2005) and Queeley (2003), suggest shifting a large portion of the criticism Hip-hop endures to the structural forces that impact the genre in the context of the broader American culture.

In summation, there have been observed changes to Hip-hop as a culture and as a genre. Rap is often criticized for being violent, misogynistic, and materialistic in the images and messages it communicates to its audience. What critics fail to consider is how the changes in Hip-hop and the music industry have decisively played a role in its formation. Hip-hop with respect to the American Dream plays a unique role in which it can be both a force of powerful social and political criticism and also function as a way to encourage the dream myth. Because of factors such as the diversification of rappers, the change in Rap's position in the music industry, and the change in the racial composition of its audience, Rap exists within a state of contradiction that is responsible for the way it may sometimes both critique and encourage the Dream myth. One must look to larger structural forces as a way to explain this contradiction and to ultimately reconcile it. Rap's audience and artists should consider the role the music industry plays in the messages Hip-hop purports in order to gain deeper insight into the structural forces that are at play. Hip-hop artists today, regardless of their backgrounds, should aim to produce musical content with elements of social critique instead of being complacent with content that is guaranteed to sell.
References


The Injustice of Felony Disenfranchisement in the United States

Bridget Manning

Bridget, a Dean’s Scholar (2014), is a member of the class of 2015 in the College of Arts & Sciences. Her major is Sociology, and her minor is International Studies with a concentration in Ethics and International Social Justice. She participates in the Global Service and Justice Program and the Appalachia Volunteer Corp. She interned for United Planet, a non-profit international volunteer organization, in both the Romania and the Boston office. Her piece was written originally for the class The Challenge of Justice, taught by Professor Mullane. Bridget aspires to the Jesuit ideal of "men and women for and with others.".
There are citizens in the United States of America, a country built for the people and by the people, who cannot vote. As stated in the Declaration of Independence, “Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed” (National Archives). Felony disenfranchisement is an encroachment on citizens’ right to vote, and thus a significant encroachment on their inclusion both in government and in the country as a whole. Felony disenfranchisement consists of the denial of the right to vote to felons, and often ex-felons, and is a largely unaddressed and unacknowledged injustice. Poverty in America, hunger, or lack of quality education are much more tangible issues for most. The people, as a whole, are not interested in giving felons or ex-felons the right to vote. Attorney General Eric Holder’s recent remarks on felony disenfranchisement have helped grow public awareness of the issue. Holder argues, “it is time to fundamentally rethink laws that permanently disenfranchise people who are no longer under federal or state supervision... At worst, these laws, with their disparate impact on minority communities, echo policies enacted during a deeply troubled period in America’s past – a time of post-Civil War discrimination. And they have their roots in centuries-old conceptions of justice that were too often based on exclusion, animus, and fear” (Gernstein 2014). Although the Attorney General’s comments will hopefully assist in bringing this issue to the forefront, the root causes for both the injustice of felony disenfranchisement and its status as a somewhat hidden issue can be found in and must be addressed in the social and cultural systems at play in the United States.

Felony disenfranchisement “strips certain civil rights, including the right to vote, from people convicted of certain crimes, sometimes for life” (Shay and Zarnow 2012:1). Felony disenfranchisement exists in areas throughout the world. Within the United States, it takes many forms and differs by state. In the U.S., every state except for Maine and Vermont prohibits felons from voting while incarcerated. Thirty-five states prohibit persons on parole from voting, and thirty-one states exclude persons on probation as well (The Sentencing Project 2014). There are eight states that indefinitely deny the vote to ex-felons, although in some of these states ex-felons can go through an application process to restore their voting rights after a waiting period that varies by
state (The Sentencing Project 2014). “An estimated 5.85 million Americans, or one in forty adults, have currently or permanently lost their voting rights as a result of a felony conviction” (The Sentencing Project 2014). That is an immense number, one in forty adults cannot currently vote, some of who will never be able to vote again. They will never again have a legal say in what is going on in their government, in their country.

The persistence of felony disenfranchisement can be attributed to a series of intertwining systems. Historical and social factors intersect to create cultural values and ideologies on which disenfranchisement is built. One critical manifestation of the injustice of felony disenfranchisement is that it affects different racial groups disproportionately. In the United States, 78.1% of the population is White, 13.1% of the population is Black (United States Census Bureau 2012). In contrast, the federal prison population in the United States, 59.5% is White, 37.1% is Black (Federal Bureau of Prisons 2014). While there are more White people in prison then Black people, it is far from proportionate to the United States population as a whole. The basis for this racially disproportionate system can be found in historically racialized policies. In southern states especially, “today, scholars widely acknowledge the historically racist motives underlying criminal disenfranchisement in the South” (Shapiro 1993). There were many restrictions on voting put into place concerning criminal disenfranchisement.

According to Shapiro (1993),

The purpose of these voting restrictions was to disenfranchise as many blacks as possible without violating the recently ratified Fifteenth Amendment, which prohibited denying the right to vote on account of race. The effort was remarkably successful: lacks made up 44% of the electorate in Louisiana after the Civil War, but less than 1% in 1920.

Shapiro goes on to acknowledge that some of the felon disenfranchisement laws existed in the South previous to African Americans acquiring the right to vote, but the laws were eventually altered. But between 1890 and 1910, many Southern states tailored their criminal disenfranchisement laws, along with other preexisting voting qualifications to increase the effect of these laws on black citizens. For example, Mississippi’s 1890 constitutional convention, which
became a model for other states, replaced an 1869 constitutional provision disenfranchising citizens convicted of ‘any crime’ with a narrower section disenfranchising only those convicted of certain crimes, which blacks were supposedly more likely than whites to commit (Shapiro 1993).

In effect, this allowed criminal disenfranchisement to disproportionately affect African Americans.

Historically criminal disenfranchisement was used as a subtle way (or sometimes not so subtle way) to deny Black people the right to vote and similar conditions can be seen today. Legislation does not explicitly target African Americans to be more affected by felony disenfranchisement, but it is evident that they are. In fact, one in every thirteen African Americans is unable to vote due to felony disenfranchisement (The Sentencing Project 2014). Felony disenfranchisement’s disproportionate impact on the African American community is a result of the social, cultural, and political system in the United States. In our culture, the stereotypes of Black people run rampant. One such stereotype is that they are more violent people, and it is therefore no surprise that they are overrepresented in the U.S. prison system. In fact, African Americans are overrepresented not because they are more violent; rather, they are overrepresented because of both the prevalence of stereotypes in law enforcement and the government, and the policies that these institutions put into place. Michelle Alexander lays out these concepts very well in *The New Jim Crow*. The underlying premise of this book is that the prison system is the newest form of the Jim Crow laws of old. Alexander explores the impact of the War on Drugs (beginning in 1982) in the USA on the rise of incarceration rates for African Americans. She warns us of the danger of believing that our culture is colorblind, the danger of not seeing the racial discrimination right in front of us. In the federal prison system in the U.S., 47.3% of offenses are drug offenses (Federal Bureau of Prisons 2014). According to Alexander, “ninety percent of those admitted to prison for drug offenses in many states were Black or Latino, yet the mass incarceration of communities of color was explained in race-neutral terms, an adaptation to the needs and demands of the current political climate” (2012). When viewed in this light, it becomes evident that the War on Drugs
is racially discriminatory. If the federal prison system is racially discriminatory, the policy of felony disenfranchisement may be deemed discriminatory, as it disproportionately affects minorities.

There are two lines of argument when discussing the reasons as to why felony disenfranchisement is an injustice. The moral argument is rooted in the values of our country, outlined in our founding documents, as discussed earlier. Everyone in this country is equal (at least in theory) and according to that founding principle, it is unjust to limit people’s power to vote because it means that they are unequal to their peers who continue to have the ability to vote. Our society tends to dehumanize both felons and ex-felons. What citizens need to realize is that felons are people, too, who are entitled to everything to which we, the non-felon population, are entitled. Not only are felons human beings, they are citizens, a description that is beyond the moral; it is legal.

Voting is more than just pure political participation. Voting, a right and privilege that citizens of this country have, is about being part of a community and having true influence. As Walzer says, “the primary good that we distribute to one another is membership in some human community” (1983). Being part of a community is very important, and he argues, “Statelessness is a condition of infinite danger” (Walzer 1983). Shklar touches upon membership and voting as she quotes Judge Learned Hand saying, “when I go to the polls I have satisfaction in the sense that we are all engaged in a common venture” (Shklar 2001). This is a feeling that felons and ex-felons are robbed of when they have lost the franchise, and this can very well cause a rift between them and society.

This feeling of alienation feeds into the cycle of re-incarceration as well. Attorney General Eric Holder agrees saying, “these restrictions are not only unnecessary and unjust, they are also counterproductive. By perpetuating the stigma and isolation imposed on formerly incarcerated individuals, these laws increase the likelihood they will commit future crimes” (Gernstein 2014). In her book, The New Jim Crow, Shklar makes an important point when she says, “for all of us have interests, and there is no obvious reason to exclude anyone from citizenship, since citizens are not expected to demonstrate virtue to qualify” (2001). The point is that there is no measuring stick in society, every citizen has the right to
Looking to Isbister is valuable in debating felony disenfranchisement even while he does not specifically touch upon the subject. In his book *Capitalism and Justice*, Isbister discusses two different kinds of equality: “equality of opportunity or equality of resources, on the one hand, and equality of outcomes or equality of welfare, on the other” (2001). Equality of opportunity means that all humans would begin at the same starting line in life, with an equal amount resources and choices (Isbister 2001). Equality of outcomes is the idea that everyone would get equivalent benefits from our life efforts (2001). Isbister goes on to conclude that equality of opportunity is fundamental to justice, but he also acknowledges that this is nearly impossible (2001). He goes on to say that equality of outcomes is not integral to justice, although it does pose an obstacle for the equality of opportunity for future generations (2001:9). When speaking of equality of opportunity, Isbister is referring to the interconnecting systems of economic and social equality. One aspect of equality of opportunity is having the equal opportunity to vote and participate in government. In denying someone the right to vote, he or she is robbed of the opportunity to participate in government and of having a voice in the political process. Felony disenfranchisement is infringing on equality of opportunity, and therefore should be eliminated.

Beyond the moral argument, there is the often more concrete legal argument. Before discussing the law, it is important to understand what it means to be a citizen of the United States. A citizen is “a native or naturalized person who owes allegiance to a government and is entitled to protection from it” (Merriam-Webster). Being a citizen of the U.S. comes with both rights and responsibilities. The US Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) spells out these rights and responsibilities. One right, very important when discussing felony disenfranchisement, is the “right to vote in elections for public offices” (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2012). One responsibility that the USCIS articulates is the responsibility to “participate in the democratic process” (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2012). Having the ability to vote is integral in both this right and responsibility. Thus, if a person is deprived of their right to vote, that person is effectively no longer a citizen of the U.S. They might not technically
lose their citizenship, but they might as well have if they cannot participate in government.

Another responsibility every citizen has is to “pay income and other taxes honestly, and on time, to federal, state, and local authorities” (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2012). When prisoners get out of jail, regardless of whether they have the right to vote, they are still mandated to pay taxes. Without the right to vote, these individuals are essentially paying taxes without representation in their government: their concerns remaining unheard and unaddressed. We have seen this problem before in history, in a more clear-cut example. This issue of ‘taxation without representation’ prompted the Boston Tea Party in 1773 and eventually helped spur the American Revolution in 1776. The difference between the Boston Tea Party and today’s disenfranchised criminals is that today, society as a whole, does not empathize with the criminals who lose their vote, and effectively lose their voices as well. The question is: why do members of society not empathize with disenfranchised criminals? The reasons could vary, one such reason being the felon and ex-felon population, without the right to vote, is relatively small compared to the overall population of the country so that felony disenfranchisement is seen as a non-issue. It could be the nature of people’s opinions and assumptions of felons and ex-felons, often dehumanizing opinions. The bottom line is that if citizens are paying taxes and participating in society monetarily, they should also have a say with their vote.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is a federal law enforcing the 15th Amendment (1870), an amendment that gave African American men the right to vote (United States Department of Justice 2014). The Voting Rights Act (VRA) was passed to make sure the individual states were truly following the 15th Amendment because states continued to find ways around the complete compliance with the Amendment (United States Department of Justice 2014). Section 2 and Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act are relevant to felony disenfranchisement. Section 2 essentially established a ‘results test’. This means that it prohibits states from imposing electoral qualifications that result in a minority group having less opportunity than other voters to participate in the electoral process (Shapiro 1993). The intention of any electoral qualification no longer matters, as the test solely focuses on the result of such a
qualification. This eliminates loopholes that the states may have been using. Section 2 is essentially a prohibition against racial discrimination. Section 5 establishes a federal pre-clearance before any states can change their voting laws, to ensure that they are not discriminatory (Shay and Zarnow 2012). Looking at the VRA, it becomes clear that felony disenfranchisement is violating the Act.

“According to the Supreme Court, the right to vote is fundamental because it preserves other rights. The Constitution prohibits denial of the right to vote on the basis of race, sex, failure to pay a poll tax, and age” (Shapiro 1993). Due to the fact that the overwhelming number of men and women who cannot vote due to felony disenfranchisement are African American, it is discriminatory and falls under the umbrella of the Voting Rights Act.

What is the solution to the negative effects of felony disenfranchisement? Abolish it altogether. Felony disenfranchisement, in every sense of the phrase, is wrong. It is the product of our society, and therefore our society and the laws of our country must change. Both our federal and state constitutions in the United States are living documents that are meant to protect its citizens and have the ability to change to ensure such protection. We as a people must recognize the injustice that is felony disenfranchisement and fight for its abolishment. We have fought for equality in many other realms; this is no different. Felony disenfranchisement creates a subclass of citizens who cannot vote. The creation of a subclass is very damaging, for its members and for society as a whole. The bottom line is that felons need to be treated as equals to everyone else. If they are treated as equals, if they are treated as humans, with all the rights of citizens, they will feel a connection with the society to which they will eventually return. If there is no sense of belonging or responsibility to society, why should criminals care about following the laws set in front of them? If you did not have a say in the creation of the laws, through the act of voting, why abide by the laws once they are passed? If, as a society, we want to decrease crime, particularly crime committed by repeat offenders, we need to change the rules. We need to provide an environment for criminals to see the error of their ways and then take that knowledge and run with it. The prison system should focus on rehabilitation of the criminals to prevent repeat offenders. We need to eliminate felony disenfranchisement. We
need to allow felons and ex-felons to participate in their society, to feel like a member of a greater community, a community that is bigger than the sum of its parts. Most importantly, we need to erase the preconceived ideas that we have about what it means to be a criminal, what criminals are like as people, and what ex-prisoners have to offer to the greater society. Felons and ex-felons are citizens too, with the same universal rights guaranteed to all citizens of the United States. Would you ever allow someone to take away your right to vote?
References


NEW HOMOSOCIALITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN FILM

Jen Crino

Jen is a graduating senior of the class of 2014 in the College of Arts & Sciences. She is studying International Studies with a concentration in Ethics and Social Justice, and will also be completing a minor in Environmental Studies. Jen studied abroad in Madrid the spring of her junior year. She has volunteered as a mentor for the Big Sister Association of Boston and has tutored for the Neighborhood Center. Her paper was written for the sociology class Gender and Popular Culture, taught by Johanna Pabst.
Introduction

This paper aims to study interpersonal relationships among males, particularly close male-male friend relationships, and how female representations in film have evolved as male relationships have changed. Male relationships with one another in film are important in that they reflect the cultural norms of the time, as well as affect representations of women in popular culture. Male-male friendships have long been differentiated from male-female friendships or romantic connections, and these differences are commonly displayed through popular film culture. In the past, relationships among men typically were seen through the lens of Old Homosociality and traditional “old man” masculinity, but popular culture has since shifted to portray men through a New Homosociality, and even more specifically through the popular slang term “bromance.” The evolution of these various lenses affects how society views male-male relationships and bonding, and also entails further implications for female representation in film.

This paper will describe the concepts of Old and New Homosociality, as well as chronicle the evolution from Old Homosociality to New Homosociality and the “bromance” in popular culture. My research question is: “How are the representations of women in New Homosocial, ‘bromance’ movies affected by the male-male relationships presented in these films?” I intend to answer this question by providing a background on Old Homosociality and traditional “old man” masculinity, as well as giving a greater context for New Homosociality through the available research and examples of New Homosocial relationships in popular culture. I hypothesize that this cultural shift between homosocialities is important in that it has serious implications in the representations of women in New Homosocial “bromance” movies. My hypothesis is that the women characters in male-dominated, New Homosocial movies will be subjugated to secondary, sexualized characters who predominantly serve as heterosexual love interests, and that female representation will be lackluster overall. Additionally, I believe that movies with New Homosocial male-male relationships will also perpetuate the concept of the male gaze in cinema, and that this will continue to keep female representations in film less popular and less important. I will analyze two movies in particular, *I Love You, Man*, and
Superbad, as both present new homosocial male-male relationships in popular “bromance” movies of the past decade.

Old Homosociality

Understanding Old Homosociality is a key component in the analysis of New Homosociality, so it is important to begin there. Old Homosociality was the norm in the 1800s, in which male-male relationships were focused on mutual affection and emotional connection, without the connotation of sexual undertones present (Romesburg 2006). In the article “Holy Fratrimony: Male Bonding and the New Homosociality,” author Don Romesburg writes that, “In the nineteenth century, it wasn’t uncommon for American men – especially white, middle-class ones – to enjoy mutually tender, desiring, emotionally expressive relationships” (Romesburg 2006). Men commonly referred to each other in far more tender terms than present day male relationships typically deem appropriate. Sex was not assumed to be at the core of male relationships, and men commonly expressed deep emotional thoughts, commented on one another’s physical beauty, and even were physically intimate – all of which was expected behavior under the concept of Old Homosociality (Romesburg 2006). Mail correspondence from the 1800s clearly depicts the old homosocial way of being, an example of which can be seen through an 1834 letter between two 23-year-old male friends:

Well Brig:
I suppose you have got to be a school master, since you was in Boston, you need not be so stuck up (as jock Downing says) because you are tucked down in the least post of Nelson, I have been there myself; I guess you have forgot all about your being at Boston last Sept. when you was so sick, and I took care of you, doctored you up, even took you in the bed with myself; you will not do as much, as, to write me (Nardi 1992).

The following picture is another perfect example of an Old Homosocial display of affection between two men. A man sits on the lap of his male friend, while the friend has his one arm around the friend’s waist and another resting on the friend’s inner thigh. The picture depicts two platonic male friends who are clearly very close, but if the same picture were taken today there would most likely be some chuckles or some suggestions that their relationship
was homosexual. However, Old Homosociality allowed for and encouraged this type of male-male physical affection and emotional closeness (Sharp 2012).

Others echo this idea in their analysis of the Old Homosocial man who reveled in his relationships with other men. In the time of Old Homosociality, women and men were typically far more segregated than they are today, which allowed for men to grow and become socialized in distinct male-only communities (Nardi 1992). This segregation allowed and “encouraged manly intimacy and affection, a love between equals, which was often lacking in sentiments towards the other sex” (Nardi 1992). Old Homosociality saw women as unimportant and separate from this male bonding experience (Romesburg 2006). Men of the time realized some of the good opportunities that heterosexual relationships and marriage provided, but commonly marriage “marked the end of a special period of men’s lives in which they shared their greatest love with one another” (Romesburg 2006).

This emphasis on male bonding and segregation of the sexes is still present in some forms in today’s society. In the TED Talk “The demise of guys?”, psychologist Philip Zimbardo discusses his study that shows that present day boys and men struggle with intimacy towards women in their lives (2011). He talks about his developing research on what he calls Social Intensity Syndrome in which boys and men “prefer male bonding over female mating”. He says that
this is due in part to a cortical arousal that occurs in the brain when men are a part of all-male groups, and that men become addicted to this arousal (Zimbardo 2011). While his reasoning for this syndrome stems mostly from internet use and other modern day technologies, the themes of preferential male bonding over female interaction still are clearly very much at play, even as Old Homosociality died down.

Transition from Old Homosociality to New Homosociality

As time progressed, and American culture moved into the 19th and 20th centuries, which were filled with far more sexual liberties, sexual intentions and overall desire became a far greater part of mainstream relationships (Romesburg 2006). The core of relationships, while still focused on emotional connection, gained an added hint of sexual intimacy behind the motivations for personal interactions. Love was redefined by its connection to sex drive and libido, and “our culture has come to view practically all same-sex emotional expression as something that can be perceived to have some sexual basis” (Romesburg 2006). Platonic male relationships were then forced to prove their lack of sexual intentions through a reduction of blatant male affection, both physical and emotional.

The hegemonic masculinity of the time then grew to accommodate this need to declare one’s relationship as nonsexual. In the book Gender and Popular Culture, the authors Milestone and Meyer describe “old man” traditional masculinity as one that is “staunchly and unambiguously heterosexual”, in which women are seen as sexual objects rather than partners (2012). “Old man” traditional masculinity is one in which homosexuality is to be avoided at all costs, as it is feminine and unnatural (Milestone and Meyer 2012). It also discourages men from expressing emotions, because emotions were deemed to be part of a woman’s sphere and would make men seem far too vulnerable to be appropriately masculine (Milestone and Meyer 2012).

Traditional masculinity these days is commonly associated with a type of homophobia or wariness towards overt emotional connections with other men. In “Masculinity as Homophobia,” Michael Kimmel writes that boys are constantly trying to prove their manliness, and in doing so are effectively afraid of other men
(1997). Men are homophobic not in that they truly hate gay men or homosexual activity; instead, their homophobia stems from the fear that they might be emasculated and have others discover that they are not as manly as they portray themselves to be (Kimmel 1997). This concept is also seen in the book Revisioning Men’s Lives by Terry Kupers, in which the author describes the “unwritten rules of male friendship” (1993). These unwritten rules enforce traditional masculinity in which emotional expression is greatly diminished and the fear of appearing unmanly reigns. One of his rules states that “one does not cross the line of male propriety”, which goes on to explain the idea that men must avoid close male-male contact so as to not appear gay or unmanly (Kupers 1993). Another one of his rules states that men do not expose raw emotional experiences for fear of not getting an equivalent response emotionally (Kupers 1993). These traditional expectations of masculinity are so deeply rooted in today’s society that they do not have to be enforced – they are “unwritten rules” that men automatically are socialized to understand.

In popular culture, traditional “old man” hegemonic masculinity is depicted clearly in the show Entourage, which is an HBO show that chronicles the life of fictional movie star Vince Chase, as well as his interactions with his close male friend group, aptly called his “entourage.” The creator and head writer of the show, Doug Ellin, says, “Entourage works because it’s about male friendship” (Hughes 2006). He states that “the show’s theme is friendship and family,” noting that the show is popular not because of the Hollywood lifestyle it depicts but due to the fact that the characters are “grounded guys who look out for each other” (Hughes 2006). While the close male relationships are definitely the focus of the show, Entourage shows male friendships that do not necessarily have emotional depth, and that constantly have to assert their non-gayness whenever they start to become vulnerable. The show’s catchphrase, “Hug it out, bitch!”, is a classic example of this idea – in order to be physically close with one another and hug, they have to distance themselves through the term “bitch”. In Nancy Lee’s research on the male relationships in Entourage, she notes that, “While the homosocial bonds between the men in Entourage are strong, the occasional homophobic taunt serves to maintain distance and clarify their heterosexuality” (2010).
While traditional “old man” masculinity is still alive and well in society today, other researchers argue that there has been a cultural shift to include male friendships that are not based on this traditional masculinity but are far more emotionally open. Men commonly express a desire to move away from the emotional isolation of traditional masculinity and move back towards a relationship of male-male platonic affection. Many researchers see the shift of men’s relationships as being defined through what traditionally defined female relationships or Old Homosociality – relations of emotional support and companionship (Nardi 1992). Some go as far to say that men experience a type of “vagina envy” in which they long for empathy and acceptance among men, something that they feel women naturally find amongst their female companions (Nardi 1992). While many social psychologists still report that “Women express, men repress”, there seems to be a significant movement towards emotionally connected male friendships (Nardi 1992).

The movement towards a more emotional man, who is clearly bonded to his male friends, has since been growing in popular culture. In the article “Holy Fratrimony” mentioned earlier, the author Don Romesburg discusses what he calls the New Homosociality – or the movement within mainstream pop culture that “shines light on male emotional relationships that place neither sexuality nor – more crucially – its disavowal at their center” (2006). There is a growing trend of depicting male-male relationships that clearly do not have sexual passion at their core, but are still romantic and emotionally open (Romesburg 2006). While in the past Old Homosociality did not acknowledge the possibility of homosexual undertones in male relationships, New Homosociality differs from this. New Homosociality is contextualized by a society that puts all of the gay subtext out into the open. As gay subculture has become far more mainstream and accepted, men have less pressure to prove their manliness (Romesburg 2006). As Romesburg writes, “the rapid mainstreaming of gay culture has, paradoxically, made male bonding less directly tied to sex” (2006).

While this movement towards more emotional, accepting male friendships is undoubtedly a healthy improvement for men, New Homosociality still carries negative implications for women. Romesburg goes on to say that New Homosociality reduces female
representations in popular culture to only sideline characters with stereotypical identities such as mothers, sexual objects, or nags (2006). Male friendships take the forefront of these movies, some of which go as far to be labeled “bromances” due to the significant emphasis on their close friendship. Romesburg argues that women are commonly “pushed to the margins of these apparently progressive male relationships”, which begs the question of whether or not New Homosociality is really all that beneficial to overall equal representation in film (2006).

**Analysis of New Homosociality in Film and Television: A Lack of Progressive Female Representation**

I wanted to examine New Homosocial “bromance” relationships in film, as well as Romesburg’s assertion that women were underrepresented or type-casted as archetypal female roles in New Homosocial movies. For my research, I decided to look at the male-male relationships as well as the female representations in two examples of popular “bromance” movies, *Superbad* and *I Love You, Man*, in which New Homosocial relationships were present and emphasized as the overall theme of the film.

The movie *Superbad* is a great example of New Homosocial male friendships in which emotional connection is apparent, yet there is no awkwardness when they express their emotions to one another. The two main characters Evan and Seth, played by Michael Cera and Jonah Hill respectively, spend the entire movie together, surviving scene after scene of their ridiculous antics, yet never feel the need to justify their closeness through anti-gay rhetoric. There is a definite lack of the type of homophobia discussed previously that tended to accompany traditional “old man” masculinity. This pair of guy friends clearly loves each other and revel in their “bromance,” and there are no homosexual innuendos attached to their friendship. One scene in particular shows their New Homosocial bond and emotional closeness. After Seth saves Evan from a party gone awry, the two drunkenly chat as they sleep side by side in sleeping bags (Apatow, Goldberg, Robertson, Rogen & Mottola, 2007):

Seth: *I love you. I’m not even embarrassed to say it. I just...I love you.*

Evan: *I’m not embarrassed. I love you! Why don’t we say*
that everyday? Why can’t we say it more often?
Seth: I just love you. I just wanna go to the rooftops and scream, “I love my best friend Evan!”
Evan: We should go up on my roof.

This dialogue is intended to be humorous of course, but it clearly depicts a new homosocial relationship in which emotional connection, affection and companionship are at the core of the relationship as opposed to sexual desire.

While *Superbad* definitely gives a new, positive spin to the depiction of male relationships in film, the movie still delegates female characters to secondary, archetypal positions in the film. A common test used to measure female representation in film is the Bechdel Test, which examines three simple things: if the movie has at least two named female characters, if the female characters talk to each other, and if they talk about something other than a man (“Bechdel Test Movie List” 2010). While the film does pass the Bechdel Test, it does so only marginally due to an end scene in which two female characters make conversation for a brief moment (“Bechdel Test Movie List” 2010). For the most part though, there are few female characters in *Superbad*, and the few that are present rarely speak to other women about something other than a man. The two main female characters, Becca and Jules, are solely defined as the heterosexual love interests for Evan and Seth. They do not possess defining characteristics other than the fact that Evan and Seth are pursuing them sexually. The entire crux of the movie is, in fact, Evan and Seth trying to lose their virginity to these girls at a party, which by default makes the female characters important solely for their significance to the two male characters’ sexual conquests. While New Homosociality may present a better male-male relationship, the example of *Superbad* shows that women are still underrepresented in these “bromance” films, and that their only representation stems from their stereotypical identities as the main characters’ love interests.

The other popular “bromance” movie *I Love You, Man* chronicles the friendship of Peter Klaven and Sydney Fife, played, respectively, by Paul Rudd and Jason Segel. Peter is getting married and lacks a best man, so at the prompting of his family and fiancée, decides to find a male best friend. He quickly bonds with Sydney,
and the two become inseparable. The men swap “I love you’s”, joke around, bond over the band Rush, and share a number of emotional conversations with one another, all without justifying their relationship as non-homosexual. Just like in Superbad, the male friendship presented in I Love You, Man is free from the type of homophobia and emotional distancing that is present in traditional “old man” masculinity. Peter even readily accepts advice from his gay younger brother on how to deal with and make friends with men. The tagline for the movie is “Are you man enough to say it?” which is another interesting example of New Homosociality (De Line, Hamburg & Hamburg, 2009). “Are you man enough to say it?”, with “it” being “I love you”, shows a shift in thought that saying “I love you” and being emotionally connected with another man is, in fact, an appropriate and encouraged act for men.

Unfortunately I Love You, Man is also similar to Superbad in that it lacks equal representation of women. This movie also passes the Bechdel Test, but still only slightly. There are a few named female characters, but for the great majority of the time they discuss the male characters as opposed to other topics (“Bechdel Test Movie List” 2009). The main female character Zooey, played by Rashida Jones, is far less important to the overall plot of the movie. The focus is clearly placed on the relationship between Peter and Sydney, with Zooey being only an auxiliary character. Zooey is primarily defined as being the heterosexual love interest of Peter, and as the movie progresses, she embodies other archetypal female descriptions such as constantly being surrounded by female friends, being greatly concerned with their wedding, and being demanding and bossy towards Peter. As the two men grow closer in their New Homosocial bond, Zooey becomes increasingly suspicious of Sydney and laments how she feels more left out and isolated since the two became friends. As noted earlier in the Romesburg article, New Homosociality tends to put women in secondary roles that fit into typical female characterizations – in this case Zooey is defined by her position as a love interest and also embodies the trope as a nagging female.

As you take a step back and look at this analysis, it seems that New Homosociality perpetuates not only aspects of traditional “old man” masculinity but also the concept of the male gaze. “Old man” masculinity differs from New Homosociality in its
descriptions of male friendships, but both seem to enforce the concept that females are secondary to males, which is seen in the lack of female representation in “bromance” movies. New Homosociality is not homophobic like traditional “old man” masculinity, but it still maintains women as auxiliary characters much like in “old man” masculinity. The concept of the male gaze also comes into play in New Homosociality. Laura Mulvey writes that the male gaze is the way in which viewers are socialized to view women in film. Since men in films typically take the active role as the protagonist, and are the ones who make the action happen and worthwhile, viewers identify with the male character (Mulvey 1999). The female, on the other hand, is passive, and so “the determining male gaze projects its fantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly,” which leads to women having the quality of “to-be-looked-at-ness” (Mulvey 1999). What’s frightening about “to-be-looked-at-ness” is the fact that women lose their agency through this – they are passive, secondary characters whose personalities are shaped by the male fantasy. New Homosociality unfortunately continues the prevalence of the male gaze by reducing female characters to secondary positions, and thus enhancing their “to-be-looked-at-ness” and their reliance on characterizations as stereotypically female roles.

Findings and Conclusion

After analyzing the cultural shift from Old Homosociality and traditional “old man” masculinity to New Homosociality, it is evident that male relationships have evolved to include far more emotional, connected relationships than have been depicted in the past in film. While traditional “old man” masculinity is still a part of today’s culture, the rise of New Homosociality has brought a far greater acceptance of intimate male relationships without traces of homophobia or emotional distancing. New Homosociality definitely portrays a more positive, healthy view of male-male relationships in film.

Unfortunately New Homosociality is not perfect. Like I hypothesized earlier on in my research, it appears that female representation in New Homosocial “bromance” movies is lacking. In the two case examples I looked at, Superbad and I Love You, Man, the female characters are overtly secondary in comparison with
the male relationships of the films. The films do pass the Bechdel Test, but certainly not by much, and the women are reduced to being defined by stereotypically female characterizations. The female characters in both of these movies are primarily defined by their existence as the main male characters’ love interests, and often embody other stereotypical characterizations such as sexual partners or the “nagging wife” bit part.

While this analysis on New Homosociality is limited due to the small number of movies examined, as well as the lack of diversity racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically of the main characters of these “bromance” movies, it appears that New Homosociality is good for men but bad for female representation in film. New Homosociality sidelines women to lesser, passive roles in movies while shifting the focus to the male interactions present in the film. New Homosociality may be beneficial for men, but there still needs to be significant changes in order for there to be any progress for female representation in film.
References

Apatow, Judd, Goldberg, Evan, Robertson, Shauna and Seth Rogen (Producers), and Mottola, Greg (Director). (2007). Superbad [Motion picture]. United States: Columbia Pictures.


I AM A 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, OR 10?
THE PROBLEM OF A
NON-STANDARDIZED VANITY
SIZING SYSTEM

Liz Handler

Liz is a member of the class of 2015 in the College of Arts & Sciences. She is pursuing a major in Sociology and a minor in History. She is a staff writer for BC Reads and an accountant for BC Dining Services. Her piece was originally written for the course Women and the Body, taught by Professor Sharlene Hesse-Biber. "I am a 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, or 10?" was her chosen current issue regarding women's bodies that needs to be addressed. She would like to thank her mom and Bobby for their constant encouragement and her friends at BC for always being there for her.
Abstract

Vanity sizing is the clothing manufacturers’ practice of labeling clothing smaller than its actual size. By allowing women to believe that they fit into a smaller size, my research shows that vanity sizing can increase self-esteem and body image. Furthermore from a business standpoint, companies have found that vanity sizing helps sell clothing. However, vanity sizing also contributes to negative self-esteem and body image by, first, increasing a woman’s desire to approach a size zero and, second, distorting a woman’s perception of what she believes to be her true size. If a woman can wear a size smaller than her true size based on vanity sizing standards, a size zero suddenly seems more attainable. When a woman fails to fit into what she believes is her true size based on vanity sizing, it is found that she is more likely to experience negative self-esteem and body image compared to women who successfully fit into their supposed true size. Vanity sizing is further complicated by the fact that there is no standard vanity sizing system. This paper aims to explore the true impact vanity sizing has on women’s self-esteem and body image through researching previous studies on clothing size and its impact on the mental health of the female participants. I also address why vanity sizing is so increasingly popular. This popularity then impacts women’s desire for size zero. Finally, I offer social policy recommendations to address the vanity sizing problem. If clothing was not labeled and sorted by size, would women be as obsessed with size? Without numbers to force women to compare themselves, consumers could be more focused on the fit of clothing rather than the size.

Keywords: vanity sizing, body image, self-esteem, size zero, clothing
Women’s clothing sizes began in the United States during the 1920s when catalogues became common household items (Anderson 2013). “Ready-to-wear clothing replaced tailor made or self-sewn items,” creating a need for standardized sizes (Anderson 2013). However in 1983, the U.S. Department of Commerce and the National Institute of Standards and Technology terminated their program that detailed “specifics for the sizing of apparel with body measurements” (Marsh 2011). This was due to the measurements falling short of the “typical American body,” improved medicine and nutrition, and increased diversity of ethnic groups in the country (Marsh 2011). It had become too difficult to make a clothing system to address the changing American population. Clothing manufacturers no longer had suggested guidelines to follow and could design at their own discretion. This free reign on standards led to the practice called vanity sizing.

Vanity sizing is defined as “altering measurement specifications for garments to enable consumers to fit into smaller sizes” or “whereby smaller labels are used on clothes than what the clothes actually are” (Hoegg, Scott, Morales, and Dahl, 2013: 1; Aydinoğlu and Krishna 2010). Therefore, clothing manufacturers do not make the same size clothing for the same label. Clothing stores do not admit to using this practice but there is a large range of sizes depending on if you go to Ann Taylor, American Eagle, Old Navy, Eddie Bauer, Talbot, Banana Republic, Coldwater Creek, H&M, and many others (Clifford 2011, Marsh 2011, Anderson 2013). As a result, women struggle to find their correct size (Dooley 2013). For example, a woman will try on a size 6 pair of pants based on a size 6 fitting her in other stores. If that size does not fit her, she could experience negative feelings about her body because “many women tie their self-esteem to the size on the tag” (Clifford 2011). While vanity causes women to believe they fit into smaller sizes, approaching the ideal 'size zero,' sometimes women find out that “their usual size is too small and they require a larger size” (Hoegg et al. 2013). Self-esteem is defined as “one’s overall feeling of self-worth,” and body image is defined as “our mental representation of ourselves” (Kinley 2010). In this paper, I will provide evidence from five research studies that support the theory that vanity sizing does exist and the non-standardized vanity sizing system can lead to negative self-esteem and body image in American women aged
from 18 to approximately 35 years old.

Kate Kennedy’s article, “What Size Am I? Decoding Women’s Clothing Standards” (2009) critiques the women’s clothing system in Australia. While this research does not focus on the United States, it addresses the problems of a non-standardized sizing system, which can be loosely applied to the (lack of a standardized) sizing system that is used in the United States. As was explained earlier, clothing standards were introduced when women began purchasing clothes rather than making them (Cassutt 2008). This increased further in 1958 when the “first commercial voluntary size standard” was issued “based on the 1939 and 1940 National Bureau of Home Economics and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s survey of 15,000 American women” (Kennedy 2009). Because the respondents were models during the Great Depression, the data skewed towards underweight bodies. Their reimbursement was known as “food money” (Kennedy 2009). Kennedy illustrates how even the standard sizing does not cover the wide range of body types in only one country by highlighting Australia’s struggle to create their own standard sizing system, which used American and European standards (Kennedy 2009). A new edition of this hodgepodge system was released in 1997, but it was revealed that the system used old data from the 1975 edition (Kennedy 2009). By using old data from other countries, the system does not represent Australian women in 1997 but rather American and European women in 1975. Part of the reason vanity sizing exists in the United States results from the fact that there is not any new data that covers the large diversity of body types and ethnicities. Even with these problems, Australians still use this standard as a “reference point for female size identification” (Kennedy 2009).

Kennedy found the origins of the Australian sizing system from a 1926 survey conducted by Professor Henry Chapman. He studied women 15 years and older to create five figure types based on an anthropometry, the measurement of the individual (Kennedy 2009). By having only five fixed body types, not all women will fit into one of these types. Five types cannot classify the whole female population of Australia. Similarly, the clothing system in the United States—ranging from 00 to 22 (on average)—cannot represent the 159 million females living in the United States (United States Census Bureau). Overall, Kennedy argued that the “designation
of size” is “arbitrary” because there is no clear methodology for standardizing it (Kennedy 2009). Her argument is related to the United States because it does not have a standardized system either. American women use an arbitrary system with over one hundred-year-old beginnings to judge their bodies today. While the United States cannot create a system that will address every individual, the country has given up on any sort of standardization. By using vanity sizing, women have even less of an idea of their true size.

Beyond Australia, Phoebe R. Apeagyei found vanity sizing problems in the United Kingdom. Her study, “Significance of body image among UK female fashion consumers: The cult of size zero, the skinny trend” (2008) discusses body image’s effects on body size and shape from the UK fashion consumers’ perspective. As this study focuses on a population within the UK, it is not completely generalizable to young American women. However, the study used twelve 19-28 year old females for the semi-structured interviews (Apeagyei 2008). The age range is the same as this paper explores. Therefore, the information can be loosely applied to young American women. The data from the interviews is also from a very small sample of women. Twelve women cannot generalize the feelings of all the women from the UK, but it does give some idea about what English women think about sizing of clothing and its impact on body image. The study interviewed women ranging over a variety of ethnicities and who have an “average figure,” which is considered to be sizes 10 to 14 (Apeagyei 2008). The majority of women who are interviewed said that they wore clothing based on its ability to “enhance their body shape” (Apeagyei 2008). This suggests that women want their clothing to make them look and feel better. Vanity sizing aims to make women feel better about their clothing size and therefore their self-esteem and body image.

Apeagyei’s study also included 132 self-administered questionnaires to females “interested in fashion and shopped for fashionable clothing” (Apeagyei 2008). The respondents were between 19 and 28 years old with a higher variation in body shape so they can be somewhat generalizable to young American women as well (Apeagyei 2008). This age range fits our age range; the sample size is also much larger and therefore gives a better representation of women from the United Kingdom. Ninety-one percent of those surveyed said they “experienced variability in clothes sizing by
different retailers,” and “77% had problems associated with garment size” (Apeagyei 2008). These questions address vanity sizing. This practice is used as “marketing ploy” to “target specific populations” rather than target the whole population, or at least a majority of it (Apeagyei 2008). As in Kennedy’s article, 95% of respondents said specific clothes “can emphasize body shapes” (Apeagyei 2008: 6). Eighty-six percent were “conscious of their bodies and how a garment fitted them” resulting in “53% saying] they stuck with retailers who provide them with good fit” (Apeagyei 2008). This supports the idea that the way clothing fits impacts a woman’s body image and self-esteem. By only choosing companies that provide a “good fit,” they acknowledge that size of clothes impacts self-image. Eighty-seven percent agreed that the “skinny trend” is the “current ideal” (Apeagyei 2008). This was further emphasized when 90% of the respondents said the biggest body size choice was the “least ideal” (Apeagyei 2008). Vanity sizing appeals to this “skinny trend” by causing women to believe they are wearing a smaller size than they actually are. They believe they are approaching the “skinny trend” or the ultimate goal: size zero.

Tammy R. Kinley’s study, “The effect of clothing size on self-esteem and body image” (2010) explores the effect of clothing size on women’s self-esteem and body image. Her research emphasizes the idea that “[w]omen want to feel thin and buying a smaller size than expected facilitates this feeling” (2010). This is how vanity sizing “flatter[s] the ego of the buyer” (2010). While the clothing is labeled a smaller size than it actually is, women feel better because they can fit into this (supposed) smaller size. She also explains: “[When the] self-esteem construct is negative, the evaluation of personal appearance is compared to the aesthetic ideal” (2010). Women base their view of themselves by comparison to the ideal, in this case as close to a size zero. The test subjects were predominantly white (83.9%) female undergraduates and young women from a local social group (2010). While her subjects fit into the age range that this papers focuses on, her sample is too homogenous because they come from the same area and therefore do not provide a whole picture of young American women. Her study consisted of two parts. In the first part, the 149 subjects filled out a questionnaire to measure self-esteem (using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory) and body image (using the
Multidimensional Body Self Relations Questionnaire) (2010). In the second part, only 124 subjects returned; the data was eliminated for the 25 subjects who did not return (2010). For this part, the subjects were randomly divided into two groups. One group tried on a brand of pants that should fit them in a smaller than expected size, and the other group tried on a brand that should fit them in a larger than expected size (2010). After trying on the pants, they filled out a second questionnaire that used the same measures for self-esteem and body image as in the first part. This is an example of a pretest-posttest study and thus allows for us to study only the independent variable’s (pant size) effect on the dependent variables (self-esteem and body image). Her results showed that when the women fit into a smaller than expected size, their self-esteem increased; this was especially true for the subjects under 30 years of age (2010). It was also found that the women who fit into a smaller size and the women who fit in the expected size had a “more positive body image” (2010). However, those who needed a larger size did not experience decreased feelings towards their bodies (2010). In general, the subjects’ self-esteem and body image were positively affected when they fit into a smaller or expected size versus those who fitted into a larger than expected size. Therefore, this study supports vanity sizing; when women wore a smaller size label than they expected to, they had higher self-esteem and body image. Kinley herself concludes, “vanity sizing does have some merit in that a smaller size number does make a woman feel better” (2010). This shows that the size label does matter to young American women, at least in this predominantly white and southwestern geographic area.

Nilüfer Z. Aydınoglu and Krishna Aradhna’s study “Imagining thin: Why vanity sizing works” (2012) focuses on the business side of vanity sizing the most of these studies. Their study hypothesizes vanity sizing is a method to “generate ‘positive’ self-related mental imagery, which in turn improves attitudes toward the product” (Aydınoğlu and Aradhna 2012). They focus on mental imagery and appearance self-esteem and define mental imagery as: sensory information being put into the working memory. They define appearance self-esteem as: self-esteem based on perceived physical attractiveness (Aydınoğlu and Aradhna 2012). The respondents were 79 undergraduate females; this sample is a good
size to coincide effectively with our research. There was a positive relationship between product size as the independent variable (smaller, larger, or same as) and mental imagery as the dependent variable, thus “indicating that vanity sizing affects imagery” (Aydınoğlu and Aradhna 2012). Also, imagery was higher for smaller sizes compared to larger and same as sizes (Aydınoğlu and Aradhna 2012). In a second study, 94 female undergraduates were tested for the effect between smaller than sizing (vanity sizing) versus same as sizing. They found that both low and high self-esteem subjects “have greater imagery with smaller sizes” (Aydınoğlu and Aradhna 2012). Overall since respondents expressed higher mental imagery, “regardless of self-esteem level,” after fitting into a pair of jeans that were labeled a smaller than their true size, this study gives “credence to the common belief that vanity sizing works” at least for this sample of undergraduates (Aydınoğlu and Aradhna 2012).

Hoegg, Scott, Morales, and Dahl’s study, “The flip side of vanity sizing: How consumers respond to and compensate for larger than expected clothing sizes” (2013) researches what a woman does after she learns that she needs a larger clothing size than expected (Hoegg et al. 2013). In one part of their study, 42 adult (29-64) females from a weight loss program were selected (Hoegg et al. 2013). The age and the subjects’ association to one another limit the generalizability of this part of the study. The sample was older than what I am referring to as young (18 to mid-30s), and they were all in a weight loss program making them more conscious of clothing size. The authors chose this group because they believed “clothing size would be particularly salient to these individuals” (Hoegg et al. 2013). The subjects tried on jeans and a sleeveless dress. It was found that the subjects who fitted into their usual size had a “more positive attitude” toward the clothes compared to those who needed a larger size (Hoegg et al. 2013). These results support vanity sizing because the supposed smaller size negatively affected the respondents. The subjects were also less likely to buy the clothes when they needed a larger than expected size (Hoegg et al. 2013). These women felt “threatened by large sizes” and thus “avoid[ed] products that [could] pose additional threat” (Hoegg et al. 2013). In another part of the study, it was found that the subjects who were told that the pants that fit were larger than their expected size reported lower appearance self-esteem compared to those
who fit into their expected size (Hoegg et al. 2013). These results corroborate my thesis; when women fail to fit into their expected size caused by the variability in the non-standardized vanity sizing system, they report lower self-esteem. Hoegg et al. (2013) also address vanity sizing on another level. To combat the size threat from not fitting into their expected size, these respondents were “more likely to purchase intellectual items than those who fit into their usual size” or what they refer to as “compensatory consumption” (Hoegg et al. 2013). These objects instead affirm non-appearance aspects of their self-esteem (Hoegg et al. 2013). A woman may attempt to affirm her intelligence by purchasing “sophisticated reading material” (Hoegg et al. 2013). Or, a woman may attempt to affirm her music taste by purchasing popular CDs. Hoegg et al. (2013) concluded that the “lack of sizing standards and the industry trend toward smaller sizes makes it likely that consumers will encounter larger-than-expected sizes...[and] show that larger-than-expected sizes have negative implications for clothing evaluation and can lead to compensatory consumption” (Hoegg et al. 2013). When women fit into a larger-than-expected size, they are less likely to purchase the sized items and instead purchase other items that would enhance other parts of their self-estees. The unreliable vanity sizing system negatively impacts the women it targets, leading to lower self-esteem and body image and possibly fewer clothing purchases.

These five research articles provide evidence to support the theory that non-standardized vanity sizing system negatively impacts young American women’s self-esteem and body image. To combat this issue, we need to create and implement an action plan. On the individual level, young American women need to adjust their viewpoint. Melissa Cassutt’s article, “Vanity sizing: We’ll pay more to take a ‘size 4,”’ (2008) tells about a woman, Brook Mark, who “doesn’t care about numbers.” She no longer “care[s] about the number, [she] care[s] how it fits” (Cassutt 2008). If each woman could adopt this different way of thinking, women could feel happier when they shop and how they feel about their bodies. This would take a long time to change a whole population’s way of thinking about shopping, but we can start now. Cassutt (2008) acknowledges that most women do not have the time to slow down and try clothing garments on. Instead of providing a viable solution
to the problem, she suggests that women should try to shop mostly at stores with “friendly return policies” (Cassutt 2008). I suggest that women take their time when they shop for clothes to allow for ample time to try on different fits to ensure they purchase the right fit for them. I understand that these solutions are not completely realistic because clothing purchasing occurs at such a micro-level.

To fully address the problem, vanity sizing needs to be addressed at a more structural and macro-level. Stephanie Clifford’s “One Size Fits Nobody: Seeking a Steady 4 or a 10” (2011) and Lisa Marsh’s “What Size Are You, Really? The Truth Behind Vanity Sizing” (2011) both discuss a new machine called MyBestFit. Created by Tanya Shaw, it is a 20-second full-body scan in which a wand circles around the customer’s body to record about 200,000 measurements, such as “thigh circumference” (Clifford 2011). After the scan is complete the customer receives a printout of the sizes at about 50 stores that should best fit him or her (Clifford 2011). Shaw says she created the system so that customers would “find clothes that fit [their] bodies, not sizes [they] like to hear” (Marsh 2011). According to MyBestFit studies, “[w]hen you cut the confusion out, consumers buy more” (Marsh 2011). This also saves time because customers will be choosing a more accurate size after using the system (Clifford 2011). However, according to these 2011 articles, there is only one scanner in the King of Prussia Mall outside Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with 45 more set to open in the near future. MyBestFit needs to extend its geographic reach to better help the customers avoid negative self-esteem and body image caused by vanity sizing. However, MyBestFit still emphasizes clothing sizes, and some women do not want to know their exact size. Women are not just a clothing size number.

To further address the vanity sizing problem, clothing manufacturers could eliminate size labels on clothing. If the number is “meaningless,” why put it on the clothes? Vanity sizing often negatively impacts women’s self-esteem and body image. By removing the size labels, it forces young American women (and all other customers) to focus on the fit of the clothes rather than the size of the clothes. Removing sizes might not be as feasible as changing the way customers think or adding more MyBestFit kiosks because of western society’s obsession with size zero. Also, western economies are based on capitalism and “laissez-faire”
economics. This system would dictate business practices for all clothing companies wishing to sell in the United States. Also, online clothing stores could not operate without size labels. This idea seems too idealistic, but the society can change. Maybe size will not matter in years to come.

Vanity sizing is a “strategy” used by clothing manufacturers in which they “label a garment smaller than its true size” (Aydınoğlu and Aradhna 2012). I argue that vanity sizing does exist and the non-standardization of vanity sizing can lead to negative self-esteem and body image in young (18 to mid-30s) American women. Without vanity sizing women would not focus on the size number that vanity sizing thrives on. In conclusion, I find evidence that supports the negative impacts vanity sizing has on young American women's self-esteem and body image. Kennedy’s “What Size Am I? Decoding Women’s Clothing Standards” (2009) discusses the problems with even having a standardized clothing system. One system cannot accurately represent all young American women. Thus, the non-standardized vanity sizing in American clothing brands cannot provide accurate clothing sizes for a whole population. Apeagyei’s “Significance of body image among UK female fashion consumers: The cult of size zero, the skinny trend” (2008) shows that women choose clothing that enhances their bodies and how they feel about their bodies. A lower size makes a woman feel better about her body and thus enforces vanity sizing. Kinley’s “The Effect of Clothing Size on Self-Esteem and Body Image” (2010) illustrates that when women fitted into a smaller than expected size, they report more positive self-esteem and body image. Aydınoğlu and Aradhna’s “Imagining thin: Why vanity sizing works” (2012) is similar to Kinley’s study because they report that women who fit into a smaller than expected size reported a higher mental imagery. These positive feelings are the result of vanity sizing; when a woman fits into a smaller than expected size, she feels better about her body. Hoegg et al.’s “The flip side of vanity sizing: How consumers respond to and compensate for larger than expected clothing sizes” (2013) reports that women who fit into a larger than expected size often do not buy the garment and instead purchase a non-sized item to affirm other aspects of their self-esteem. The removal of vanity sizing could promote healthy body image in women. To solve the problem on a non-standardized
vanity sizing system, individuals need to view and choose clothing by its fit rather than its size label. Larger groups, such as MyBestFit, pose a solution by scanning customers to show which stores provide the best fit based on their individual body and then which sizes to try on at those stores. Clothing manufacturers can remove size labels to redirect customers to focus on fit rather than size. However, by forcing all clothing companies to remove labels, no single brand makes women feel better or worse than others, thus limiting free market capitalism. These restrictions would encroach on businesses’ freedom to operate. Overall though this ideological change directs women’s attention toward the main reason of buying clothing: making sure it fits their body, not their minds’ obsession with an arbitrary number zero.
References


Call for Submissions

We are now accepting submissions to SocialEyes for Issue 6. All submissions and inquiries should be sent to socialeyesbc@gmail.com.

Submissions should include the following:
• Your name and contact information on the cover sheet
• A title of the work
• The date of submission
• All text should be sent in .doc Word format, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font.
• Academic papers should be in American Sociological Association (ASA) format. See the Purdue Style Guide.
• Submissions should not exceed 6,000 words.

All submissions are anonymously reviewed by our editorial board. Our Submissions Coordinator will contact you once your submission has been reviewed.

For more information, go to bc.edu/sociology and follow the link to SocialEyes
“My eyes are my favorite part of me; not for how they look, but for how they see.”
~ Frau Feuerameise

SOCIOLOYES