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VOLUNTARY SURVEILLANCE: PRIVACY, IDENTITY AND THE RISE OF SOCIAL PANOPTICISM IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY



JAKE NEVRLA

In modern times, with the rise of broadband internet connections, social networking and digital databases containing information of virtually every individual in the world, the lines between public and private have become blurred almost to the point of nonexistence. Many people complain that their lives are being invaded by new technologies and their most personal moments are now revealed to the prowling eyes of strangers. We often reminisce of simpler days when we were not constantly tethered to the rest of the world by our cell phones and email accounts. At the same time, however, life without this level of connectivity would seem like a return to the dark ages. We have become so intertwined with social networking technologies that we have lost perspective regarding the impact that technology has on our lives. This has led to an unassuming perspective of privacy, where the level of openness we maintain regarding our identities only becomes fully clear to us when there are negative consequences resulting from that openness. As a result of our voluntary engagement in social networking activities, we are simultaneously submitting ourselves to a specific form of surveillance. We are, as I will argue in this paper, becoming voluntary subjects of social panopticonism.

The types of socially revealing actions that are facilitated by new digital communication technology must be understood within the context of the role that social media now plays in everyday life. While in the not-so-distant past our means of communication were limited to face-to-face interactions, phone conversations, or even correspondence by mail, the rapid spread of digital technology has allowed us to communicate instantly with people worldwide. Social media, in particular, allows us to present information to a wide range of observers without having to interact with them individually, resulting in the exponential growth of available personal information within the public sphere. The numbers of active users on social networking sites such as Facebook are now reaching into the hundreds of millions, with the average user spending almost an hour a day on the site and maintaining connections with 130 online “friends”.¹ Societal norms have inevitably adapted to this new medium of communication and the level of surveillance that has come

with it. In many ways, this trend has resulted in “a displacement of the figure of ‘Big Brother’ by proliferating ‘little brothers’ who engage in distributed, decentralized forms of monitoring and information gathering.”² Driven both by the media and by a propensity to desire a constant expansion of knowledge, society has become increasingly immersed in the culture of perpetual sharing.

In his book *Crime and Punish*, Michel Foucault presents his theory of constant and all-encompassing surveillance through a reframing of English philosopher Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon – an architectural design for what Bentham believed to be the ideal prison. The original plans for the structure were based on a central observation tower surrounded by a circular building made up of individual cells. From the tower, guards would be able to observe any inmate at their discretion, while at the same time being hidden from the view. The metaphor of the Panopticon, and the accompanying idea of panopticism, represents the ultimate example of unilateral surveillance, potentially providing unmitigated access to every moment of a subject’s life. One of the most important features of this arrangement is that the very design of the structure makes it so that the subject himself is never sure of whether or not he is actually under surveillance at any given time. One of the results of establishing an appearance of omnipresent observation, argued Foucault, would be that those under surveillance would adjust their behavior as though they were constantly being observed. It did not matter whether or not constant surveillance was actually taking place, because the subject’s belief that they were in fact always being watched would be enough for them to self-police their behavior. The Panopticon becomes a “generalized model of functioning: a way of defining power relations in the every day lives of men,” with every subject under the same level of scrutiny.³ The design of the structure allows for the observation of a large number of subjects simultaneously without any interaction between those subjects, influencing each individual to the highest possible degree without the interference of any other.

While the basic ideas of omnipresent surveillance represented in the Panopticon remain relevant to contemporary society, the many technological advancements that have taken place since Foucault’s original writings on the subject demand that panoptic theory be updated and revised to reflect the prevalence of digital surveillance in the modern world. These advances have brought about a multitude “of new purposes for surveillance, many of which transcend the functions initially envisioned for the Panopticon.”⁴ One of the most important changes that have taken place is represented in the elimination of the need for

a physical manifestation of the Panopticon. Technology eliminated the need for the observers to appear to occupy the same physical space as those whom they are watching. Through the use of electronic monitoring, the central tower of the Panopticon has been replaced by a computer screen that is most likely housed at a distant location, far removed from those being observed.⁵ With each new weapon in the surveillance arsenal, the now metaphorical gaze of the Panopticon's tower grows ever more piercing. The proliferation of new forms of surveillance has expanded the reach of the Panopticon to the point that it has in turn created a venue for the classification of new "opticons" reflecting different aspects of observation that expand upon Foucault's original model.

One of these new functions is a type of surveillance that I will refer to *social panopticism*. Specifically, the term signifies surveillance in the form of individuals adhering to voluntary surveillance as a means of social interaction and identity building through the use of online social media. Unlike *synopticism*, which involves a reversal of panopticism by focusing the gaze of the many onto the few, social panopticism is concerned with the willing participation of the masses in the act of watching each other simultaneously.⁶ Voluntary surveillance, or the willing exposure of personal information by an individual to an often-unknown audience, has been the primary factor in the rise of social panopticism. This type of surveillance can be thought of as a more specialized subset of Reginald Whitaker's *participatory panopticism*, (a situation where surveillance is being enacted in the same manner between all parties) since social panopticism is referring specifically to surveillance involving social media.⁷ Because the primary purpose of social media is to connect individuals and share information, it is no surprise that it had become a prime facilitator of voluntary surveillance, since the sharing of information is one of the basic mandates of one's participation in social media networks.

The beginnings of social panopticism were innocent enough, and for the most part, went hand-in-hand with the rapid advancements in communications technologies that have taken place over the last decade. People are naturally curious about the lives of others. At the same time, humans like to feel that they are important, both as individuals and as members of a larger group comprised of those who possess similar social characteristics. Because of the desire for interconnection, we are putting more of our private lives into the public sphere than ever. We have become "habituated to a culture in which we are all expected to monitor one another – to deploy surveillance tactics facilitated at least in part by interactive media technologies – in order to protect ourselves

and our loved ones and to maximize our chances of social and economic success.”⁸ As a result, the blame for what some are calling an invasion of our personal privacy by social networking can be placed on no one but ourselves. We have, in effect, become the primary initiators of our own surveillance.

The most important pieces of any social network, whether it exists in physical or digital space, are the personal identities of the network’s participants. Humans have been creating identities through tokens and symbols since the beginning of recorded history. From the crude identification badges first used in the 1400’s for couriers carrying important battle orders to modern driver’s licenses, the steady increase in long-distance travel and interaction between different groups of people has demanded that we create ever more extensive ways of constructing our identities.⁹ As Jill Walker Retteberg articulated, “we find our place in our culture and among our friends and families by creating and consuming stories and images.”¹⁰ In every day social situations, the identity of the individual is directly linked to his or her reputation with those with which they come into contact. As a result, the management of identity is integral in almost every interaction a person has, from mundane, daily activities to life-changing encounters. Although the mediums and devices being used have evolved over time, the establishment of accountability for one’s personal identity has remained a primary aspect of social interaction. In the twenty-first century, online social media has allowed the transportation of identity into the digital sphere. With each new intermediary (e.g. telephones, the internet) taking us further from direct, face-to-face interaction, we are externalizing a perpetually increasing amount of our personal identity in order to maintain accountability to those with whom we are interacting via the newest media. Regardless of the reasoning, we are engaging in an act of voluntary surveillance by revealing ourselves.

Nowhere has the phenomenon of voluntary surveillance been more prevalent than in the spread of online social media. Every day, millions of people log into their accounts on Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, or any number of other online services designed to connect people with friends, coworkers, family members, and often, complete strangers. These profiles are a snapshot of the user’s life, containing anything from age and gender to the most intimate details about their beliefs, feelings, and daily activities. While the early incarnations of these pages were simplistic by today’s standards, the capabilities of these networks quickly expanded to have the ability to almost instantaneously disseminate a huge range of data about its users. New applications, such

as the now ubiquitous Twitter, are continuing to create new modes of connectivity. The so-called “news feed” has become a constant ticker of information on everyone within a person’s network. Through this centralized stream of data, updated in real time, users interact with one another and post information that is quickly incorporated into the running feed of updates. What would normally be communicated through a personal conversation is now easily available to anyone with the ability to gain the proper level of access. Social Media has taken the role of a digital intermediary of our social interactions.

Before the advent of social media, in order to communicate information about our personal lives, we had to take part in direct interactions with the individuals to whom we were giving the information. Now, we not only engage in many of these interactions via a digital medium, but the medium itself has become the primary recipient of that information. First, users choose what information to input into their personal profile. Then, rather than the user individually sending their information to other specific users, the online profile is maintained in a database where the user’s information is centralized and stored for access by those parties that hold the proper permissions. Once entered into the database, the data is then redistributed through the medium to any outside individuals who have been granted sufficient access. This results in social media becoming not only a means of connecting with others, but also a way for us to manage our identities and reputations with others without ever having to directly interact with them.

One example of this type of identity management is the ability to upload personal photos to networks like Facebook and MySpace that other users may then view, often without ever having direct contact with the owner of those photos. For instance, if pictures were posted of individuals at a party, anyone who saw those pictures would not only know who had attended the party, but also could ascertain numerous other important pieces of information about their identities. Each detail has the potential to convey information about the individuals, contributing to the construction of an online identity. The end result of the dissemination of this kind of information is the creation of social capital that places the particular individual at a specific level within the social geography of both their online and offline communities.¹¹

It is indeed true that a single photo can speak a thousand words. However, the old adage has taken on a new, expanded meaning. Rather than speaking to a single viewer, it now has the ability to address an entire audience of both known and unknown observers simultaneously. These controlled exposures of information can be used to shape one’s

identity and reputation with their peers and the world as a whole. Posting three albums of a drunken spring break trip is going to have different social ramifications than photos showing the performance of community service.

In contemporary culture, especially among young people, maintaining digital identities has become an extremely powerful tool. One example that has become an increasingly common, especially among college students, is of being at a party, meeting someone, and (assuming it was a positive interaction) rather than an immediate exchange of contact information, individuals instead make a pledge to “find each other on Facebook.” In fact, it is not uncommon to forgo the normal types of preliminary talk that used to take place upon introduction because it is assumed that most of that information will be available when we officialize our encounter with a follow-up friend request. This adds a new dynamic to social interactions that was not present before the invention of social media networks. While it can make the logistical task of finding a new acquaintance considerably easier, there is also a new level of fragmentation that takes place as a result – turning the technology into a kind of administrative crutch for one’s social life.

Unlike when you interact with someone in person, the information you share about yourself through social media is almost entirely up to your discretion. One of the most common contexts where the practice of manipulating online identities receives widespread attention is through the reports of online stalking and pedophilia. However, these cases represent only one dimension of the capabilities of the individual to shape who they appear to be in the digital world. Now people not only have the ability to convey their identities through traditional means such as physical appearance and material possessions, but also to combine all those aspects into a digital package, created to give exactly the impression that we find most appealing. The result of this display is the creation of a situation that is panoptic in design, but does not embody the traditional, hierarchical sense of the theory. Although our digital identities are open to constant surveillance, the individual who is under surveillance can easily manipulate a great deal of the information being presented. In effect, social panopticism becomes more of a means for deception, whether deliberate or accidental, than one of straight panoptic surveillance.

Social media is but one part of the increasingly panoptic world in which we live. Every step forward in the development of high-speed computers and more expansive digital communication technology also increases the potential for surveillance in our every day lives. The uses

of these new forms of surveillance are numerous and ever growing. From monitoring for terrorist activity under the auspices of the PATRIOT Act, to creating online identities through social media, it has become almost an inherent fact of living in contemporary society that individuals will be under some form observation from the moment they are born until the day they die. By becoming culturally accepting of this high level of surveillance we can often lose perspective on how much of ourselves is readily available to any who choose to look. The definition of privacy is constantly changing in accordance with how we perceive the various spheres in which our identities exist. It is without a doubt that social media in particular will continue to have an effect on this perception as more and more of our interactions begin taking place outside of the physical environment. As a result, the act of shaping online identities will likely become just as important as how we present ourselves in person, if not more so.

While our physical selves are limited by space and time, the digital representation of the self can be anywhere at any time. As discussed by David Lyon, the disappearance of the physical body is one of the biggest problems with the rise of electronic communication.¹² Up until the last century, human society had been predominantly based around co-present interaction. Now, we are seeing a shift away from co-presence towards electronically mediated identities. From the telegraph, to the telephone, to the Internet, with every step forward in our abilities we are also taking a step apart from each other and the personal interactions that have connected mankind for so many thousands of years. At the same time, this growing distance forces us more into the open, as we struggle to maintain our identities. The future of personal identity in the digital world demands that we submit ourselves to social panopticism, and thus far we have been more than willing to oblige.

NOTES

- 1 Facebook: Statistics. *Facebook*. <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics> (accessed December 9, 2009).
- 2 Mark Andrejevic, *iSpy*, (Kansas University Press, 2007), 239.
- 3 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (1977), 205.
- 4 Kevin D. Haggerty, "Tear down the walls: on demolishing the panopticon," in *Theorizing Surveillance*, ed. David Lyon (Willan Publishing, 2006), 27.
- 5 Shoshana Zuboff, *In the Age of the Smart Machine*, (New York: Basic, 1998), 322.
- 6 Thomas Mathiesen, "The Viewer Society: Michel Foucault's 'Panopticon' Revisited," *Theoretical Criminology* 1, no. 2 (1997): 215-234.
- 7 Reginald Whitaker, *The End of Privacy: How Total Surveillance In Becoming a Reality* (New York: New Press, 1999).
- 8 Andrejevic, *iSpy*, 239.
- 9 Valentin Groebner, "Describing the Person, Reading the Signs in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe: Identity Papers, Vested Figures, and the Limits of Identification, 1400-1600," in *Documenting Individual Identity*, ed. J. Caplan and J. Torpey (Princeton University Press, 2001).
- 10 Jill Walker Rettberg, "Freshly Generated for You, and Barack Obama." *European Journal of Communication* 24, no. 4 (2009): 453.
- 11 Lee Farguhar, "Social Capital and Control in Online Networks," *Conference Papers – International Communication Association* (2008).
- 12 David Lyon, *Surveillance Society: Monitoring Everyday Life* (Open University P Press, 2001).

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DIALOGIC ADVANCEMENTS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY



MICHELLE LAFFOON

Psychotherapy can be defined as the treatment of a mental disorder, an emotional disorder, or bodily ills by psychological means. The general public tends to view therapy as an awkward meeting between a psychiatrist and patient, in which the patient talks about his or her problems and anxieties while the therapist asks how the person feels and why this might be. In the past, this view would not have been far off. Though this may be the traditional view of therapy, today there are new approaches. Advancements have been made in psychotherapy methods, focusing on dialogic discourse and social and professional networking rather than problem talk, analysis, and treatment. This has led to beneficial outcomes for all that are involved in the process.

Before analysis of psychotherapy can take place, we must first understand the ways in which conversations can occur and the possible implications on the construction of meaning. We must take into account that meaning is socially constructed. As humans, we come to understand the world around us through histories, stories, and experiences. Anderson and Goolishian explain that “human systems are language-generating and, simultaneously, meaning-generating systems” and therefore “meaning and understanding are socially and intersubjectively constructed” (372). Essentially, as humans we come to understand the world around us based on our coordinated actions with others. Consequently, we take cultural conventions for granted, not realizing that our realities are socially constructed. Thus, it is important to acknowledge our understandings of reality are multifaceted. It is essential to take into account the polyphony, or many voices, that have contributed to the construction of our views and understanding of reality.

In Western culture, more value is placed on the individual rather than the social collective. Individual thoughts, views, opinions, characteristics, and understandings of reality are emphasized. Sampson explains that we have come to view “the self as self as a kind of bounded container, separate from other similarly bounded containers and in possession or ownership of its own capacities and abilities” (Sampson, 31). This individualistic view of life ignores the importance of others and the relationships we have in the construction of ourselves and our

views of reality. If we ignore the multiplicity of influences on ourselves and our perspectives, we take part in monologic orientation. Monologic orientation focuses on a singular aspect, that is believed to be “right” or true,” without taking other perspectives or understandings into account. In conversation, this can be seen as one sided, where one or both members do not listen to what the other is saying. Instead they simply “reload” their counterpoints. This monologic orientation is unproductive, just like debates use only points and counterpoints, while neither party takes an interest in truly understanding the other’s point of view. They do not see that they are in relation to one another.

Dialogue is a different type of communication and should not be equated with conversation in this context. Rather, dialogue takes conversation to a new level. It opens the door to multiple voices, opinions, and understandings of a topic. It takes into account the importance of others in constructing meaning and gives every utterance equal importance. Dialogue creates a safe environment in which the dialogists feel respected and are curious about the other’s point of view. Participants speak from their own unique experiences rather than using the dominant public discourse to prove a point. They listen, reflect, and respond to each other’s utterances in order to gain a better understanding of different positions and views of a topic. Dialogue does not try to come to an agreement or conclusion, but its emphasis is to make the topic at hand more complex by opening a space for multiple narrations and understandings. Dialogue is truly a transformative tool that has proven to help participants find common ground and a more comprehensive understanding of the views, beliefs, and values behind topics. As such, it holds great importance as a transformative method in psychotherapy.

An aspect of traditional therapy methods that is worth analyzing is the monologic natured sessions between the therapist and the patient. Patients are isolated from their social lives and analyzed based on their symptoms and explanations of their problems. Sampson’s “Life as a Container Metaphor” illustrates how individuals are viewed as singular entities that hold their own opinions, ideas and characteristics. He points out this view’s flaw, as people should not be viewed singularly, or individually, because we are nothing without our social context (Sampson, 1993). As previously mentioned, relationships and dialogue are essential for the construction of meaning. Thus, one cannot hope to understand individuals without taking into account the relationships and environment that developed the individual’s understandings.

Complications and limitations can arise when a monologic description of the problem situation is the therapist’s only basis

for understanding. By isolating patients from their social contexts, therapists can only view situations from their own perspectives or their interpretations of the patient's perspective. This means that understanding is limited. Anderson and Goolishian explain that problems exist only when we use problematic language (Anderson and Goolishian, 1988). A situation is only a problem if a person labels it as such or others confirm it as problematic. To be able to fully understand a problem, one must take into account the various perspectives of those that view or involve themselves in the situation. In a therapy session, when a monologic description of a problem is the basis for interpretation, the patient and therapist's understandings of the situation are limited. Since the therapist is only hearing a monologue, or one side of the problem, he or she is not taking into account the entire social context in which the problem was developed. The therapist does not see the complexity of the topic and other voices and views cannot be explored. Since sessions are based on the patient's description and understanding of the problem, treatment methods are also limited and problem centered. Thus, the therapist can only address the symptoms and perceived problems that are elicited from the patient's monologic perception. We cannot hope to understand a problem without trying to understand how the problem is described by, not only the patient, but also the people in the patient's life. Life is complex and involves many views of reality. By opening the conversation to many interpretations, we can take into account the different views of a subject, which can open the doors to a better understanding.

In some cases, opposing viewpoints of the situation such as the problem, the diagnosis, and treatment methods can complicate the matter when they are not addressed properly. This situation seems to arise most often when multiple professionals work on a single case without properly collaborating. In traditional psychotherapy practices, once an individual knowingly experiences a psychotic episode, the patient is given a team of professionals to assess the situation and is then referred to a specialized therapist or therapists (Seikkula, 2003). In this way, experts try to compartmentalize a patient's described problems, meaning that they separate various symptoms into preconceived categories in order to make sense of the situation and administer the "appropriate" treatment. In the past, it was unlikely for professionals to collaborate on a single case. Without deliberation among professionals, as well as patients and their social networks, there is no opportunity to stray from polarized structure and monologic analysis of the issue. This leaves the therapist virtually unlimited authority over treatment methods, which limits the possibility

for creating alternative approaches.

Compartmentalization and professionals' specialization without collaboration can bring limitations and problems to the treatment process. In cases of multi-problem clients, in which one professional cannot resolve the issue, the patient is passed on to another specialized professional in a similar field. In some situations, a patient can be passed through a multitude of experts that are unable to produce a diagnosis or resolution. By compartmentalizing the problem and referring the patient to only one specialized professional, there is no opportunity to construct an alternative way to view the situation. For example, one therapist may see a patient's problem as depression, while another may feel that the patient is repressing emotions from a past traumatic event. Without a collaboration of professionals in a single case, experts may fail to see the complexity of the issue and can dismiss important aspects of the perceived problem. Unfortunately, the patient is continuously perceived as being the problem.

Psychotherapy has taken a new, more complex form as its focus changes from compartmentalization, specialization of top-down expertise, and monologic understandings to a more dialogic and network-centered approach. In this new approach, therapists invite participants, their social networks, such as family and friends, and relevant professionals to engage in dialogue. The group meets roughly once a week until the problem is dissolved, turning the issue into an ongoing conversation about how the problem started, how it is understood by each member, and how the group may change the language in order to view the situation differently. This opens the door for relevant voices to be heard and different perspectives or understandings of the situation to be addressed and reflected upon. The goal is to find common ground, a better understanding of the problem and how it can be addressed differently.

The emphasis of dialogue is on finding and creating meaning while learning, collaborating, and synthesizing various perspectives. Rather than breaking down a problem into specific reasons for its existence, dialogue creates a more complex and socially constructed view of the situation. To build a dialogical discourse is to create a safe environment in which participants feel that they are respected.. It allows participants to take into account others' perspectives and understandings by putting a higher level of emphasis on listening and reflecting on one another's comments and actions. It is in this way that dialogue can be transformative. By taking into perspective a different context than one's own, participants can acknowledge the complexity of the interaction and

topic, thus creating a more in-depth understanding.

A main point that must be addressed is Anderson and Goolishian's assumption that we create meaning together through language (Anderson and Goolishian, 1998). There is no single way to interpret a statement, let alone an entire situation, or sequence of events, because how people understand reality is different. When in a dialogic discourse, participants discuss and reflect upon each other's points of view as well as the values, ideas, and various interpretations behind the construction of these views. In dialogue, participants are able to construct meaning together by accepting others' perspectives, which ultimately creates a new socially constructed understanding.

In the article "Postmodern Society and Social Networks: Open and Anticipation Dialogues in Network Meetings," authors Seikkula, Arnkil, and Eriksson explain how psychotherapy has been evolving since the 1960's to encompass a dialogic approach, focused on social and professional networks. They use the term "network therapy" to describe the current emphasis, that involves professional networks and patients' social networks in therapy sessions, throughout the duration of the treatment (Seikkula, et al., 2003). In these sessions the experts work to create an open dialogue, which opens up the door to polyphony and the ability to understand the situation and issues from all perspectives, not just that of the patient.

Network therapy is beneficial for the patient, the family, and the psychiatrist or professional. Creating a social network within therapy sessions can build a safe and comfortable environment for the patient where he or she can be understood and respected. This environment allows each participant the opportunity to speak, listen, reflect, and respond. By slowing the discourse to allow for in-depth listening and reflection, the family and professionals are given the opportunity to, as Capra explains, construct new meaning, develop new themes, and share new stories (Anderson and Goolishian, 1988). Seikkula describes this opportunity as reframing the picture, where one takes into account the polyphony on the matter to create a more complex socially constructed understanding of the situation (Seikkula, et al., 2003). As Capra describes, this allows participants to make the change from viewing a situation as having linear causality to recognizing a circular causality of the entire family or social system (Capra, 1998). This shows aspects of the problem, within the social situation of the patient, that may need to be addressed and would have otherwise been overlooked.

Seikkula and many others have deemed importance on having the patient, social network, and various professionals present for the

entire duration of treatment; from the initial meeting, to treatment planning sessions, to follow up sessions. Having everyone present allows the facilitator to create a deliberating type of atmosphere, where conflicting opinions, concerns, and alternatives can be addressed. This is especially important in determining treatment methods, as we cannot isolate an individual from his or her social network and expect that the problem will dissipate. Instead, the interaction between the participant and the social network must be altered, or reassessed for any significant change to come about. By allowing the family to participate in treatment discussions with the experts and the patient, they can come up with new alternatives for treatment and can leave behind the prescriptive expertise and top-down authority once present in psychotherapy (Seikkula, et al., 2003).

Another way that dialogue has proven to be transformative in the mental health realm is through the development of professional networking. Rather than having one diagnostic doctor refer a patient to a single specialized psychotherapist, professionals are networking and working together on cases. One form of professional networking in psychotherapy is that of crisis intervention teams. When a patient experiences a psychotic episode, a team of two or three staff members, usually a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a nurse, respond immediately to assess the situation (Seikkula, et al., 2003). Then multiple professionals play an active role in the treatment sessions. In the sessions, experts share their reflections with the patient and social network rather than in private as was traditionally preferred. Having multiple professional opinions, thoughts, and ideas on the situation allows for rich polyphonic analysis and dialogic discourse over the situation and treatment options and alternatives.

The goal of dialogue is not to solve a problem, as it actually makes it more complex. Instead, the focus is on changing the language that surrounds the perceived problem. Finding a new way to discuss a topic changes the way in which it is understood, ultimately allowing participants to find common ground and better understanding. By reframing the picture, participants can work together to find alternative ways to approach the situation. Facilitators focus discussions on issues associated with the actual problem rather than engaging in what Anderson and Goolishian refer to as problem talk (Anderson and Goolishian, 1998). McNamee points out that the questions we pose can change the direction of what is being created through conversation (McNamee and Shotter, 2004). Emphasis is placed on each participant's perspective on the topic, instead of having one individual try to sum up

the entire scenario or search for the origin of the problem. Reflecting on each other's utterances allows for a dialogue to take place where participants show genuine interest in each other's views.

The use of dialogic discourse in therapy, based on Seikkula, Arnkil, and Eriksson's article, is beneficial for patients, their families, and professionals. Allowing the patient, the patient's social network, and professionals to come together to engage in a dialogue undoubtedly gives participants a well-rounded, complex view of the situation. Gaining a better understanding and creating a socially constructed meaning seems vital in resolving or dissolving perceived problems. It is in our best interest to promote dialogism and social and professional networking as a means for psychotherapy.

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COREY JOHNSON: A FOOTBALL CAPTAIN AND A GAY MALE



NINA DICENSO

During his senior year at Masconomet Regional High School in Topsfield, MA, seventeen year old Corey Johnson came out to his family and friends that he was gay. At a school where diversity was strongly encouraged and a Gay Straight Alliance had been active, coming out may have sparked some interest and hallway gossip, but nothing like the attention that Corey Johnson received. Corey was not in the glee club, had no interest in a capella, and did not associate with the alternative crowd. He was the captain of his football team, wrestled, and played lacrosse and baseball while earning three varsity letters.

ABC's *20/20*, *Sports Illustrated*, ESPN, and other national newspapers such as the *New York Times* were immediately interested in the life of Corey Johnson. Corey's involvement in athletics became the primary focus of his sexuality. As in many cases, hetero-normativity was continually reiterated throughout the discourse surrounding the stories. In a culture where sports are hyper-masculinized, and having great athletic ability is highly regarded, Corey's coming out was praised. This was because of his prior accomplishments on the field and his ability to perform gender coupled well with the notion of self-identification. This paper will highlight the ways in which various texts reinforce the binary gender system and place a strong emphasis on self-identification, as well as examine the significance of gender performance in our culture.

As a former student of Masconomet Regional High School, this story caught my attention for a number of reasons. Masconomet, or "Masco" as it is more often referred to, has always been known as a place where diversity is strongly encouraged, and there are various clubs and groups devoted to providing a safe environment for students to express themselves. With an active Gay Straight Alliance, and classes dedicated to providing students with a better understanding of queer lifestyles, Masco does an exceptional job in promoting diversity. This being said, it is hard to understand why Corey Johnson was given so much attention after his public "coming out." After reading through articles that were written about Corey, the various discourses all had one thing in common; Corey Johnson was praised for being a gay male and all around athlete. Finally, a homosexual male could live up to the lifestyle of the

masculine heterosexual football captain.

When looking at the discourse about Corey Johnson it is important to explore the homophobic realm in the world of institutionalized sports. In an article written by Eric Anderson, titled, *Openly Gay Athletes: Contesting Hegemonic Masculinity in a Homophobic Environment*, Anderson examines how masculinity is reproduced and defined in the world of sports. Anderson looks at the ways in which gay male athletes could be seen as threatening to the cultural codes of masculinity:

Gay male athletes—who are seen as a paradox because they comply with the gendered script of being a man through the physicality involved in sports but violate another masculine script through the existence of same-sex desires may threaten sports as a prime site of hegemonic masculinity and masculine privilege. (Anderson 861)

Anderson goes on to say that because of the paradox the gay male athlete presents in a hyper-masculinized institution, the environment becomes more homophobic and hyper-heterosexualized. One of the reasons why the openly gay athlete adds to the already prevalent hyper-masculinity, is because of his ability to gain access to masculine privilege before ever coming out. The gay athlete is seen as undermining the rules of male dominance. The heterosexual male is threatened by the gay male's ability to achieve equal or often more success in an environment rooted in masculinity. The gay male has turned a world of rigid differences, the gay male and the heterosexual male, into a concept of obscurity. In turn, the homophobia which exists becomes a form of resistance against the intrusion of queer culture, and only promotes more of a rigid masculinity and patriarchy in sports. This also holds a higher standard for the openly gay athlete because he is expected to achieve athletic ability at a greater level to maintain a career, more so than the heterosexual male. He is expected to maintain culturally coded characteristics of the heterosexual male. This concept of overachieving one's athletic ability can be compared to Corey Johnson's performance of gender. He perfected his performance of masculinity through achieving greatness in some of the most heterosexualized contact sports.

With a higher standard of masculinity in the sports world, an assumption would be made that gay athletes would reflect on their coming out in a negative manner. However, in Anderson's research he found that the opposite occurred. Most of the gay male athletes he interviewed reported positive coming out experiences and wished they had done so sooner, which was also the case for Corey Johnson. This is not necessar-

ily surprising when one considers, at that point, it was almost impossible for team members to separate the gay athletes' performance of gender from their sexuality. An athlete who comes out as gay is someone who was already assumed to be heterosexual, given the fact that they have attained success in the very heterosexual institution of sports. In many cases, it is easy for other team members to overlook an openly gay athlete's sexuality because of their heterosexual performance of gender. In our culture we often think of gender and sexuality as the same concepts, but in reality they are very distinct and different terms.

It was not until he proposed questions about overnight trips, the way teammates treated their lovers, or even the ways in which the team discussed the athletes' sexuality that Anderson gained a different perspective. Anderson explains, "I heard stories of extreme heterosexism, silencing, and the frequent use of homophobic discourse" (Anderson 867). However, as the homosexual athletes were explaining these incidents, which Anderson understood as extremely discriminatory, they seemed to be unaware of the discrimination that their stories revealed. Even as Anderson began to point out the inequality to the athletes, they still had no feelings of being discriminated against. The athletes were comparing themselves to those who had it worse. As Anderson explains, "It is often the fear of what might happen when gay athletes come out that enhances their sense of well-being, even if all was not well" (Anderson 868). The athletes compared their situations to that of what might have been, ultimately making the decision that their coming out was well accepted. For example, Anderson talks about an interview he had with a gay football player, "Charlie defined having only 'two or three' players stop talking to him because of his sexual orientation as a good result because Charlie had expected to lose all his teammates' friendships" (Anderson 868). It is important to understand that when the word "accepted" is used it is almost always used in terms of a standard. Depending on whom the person is their standard for acceptance may be higher or lower than the standard of another. This is important to keep in mind when further exploring discourses that refer to a "coming out" in terms of its acceptance.

Based on various discourses written about Johnson's coming out, it was evident that the articles not only gave praise to him, but also praised his teammates. The Boston Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network handed its Visionary Award not just to Corey, but to his teammates as well. Does tolerating someone for who they are warrant a medal of honor? If Corey happened to be a member of the Theatre Department would the other members have received the Visionary Award as well? The extent of homophobia in the realm of football is so great that the

other players must be honored for not exiling their gay captain, as if this were an enormous struggle for the team to endure. The reason an award must be given is because the general expected outcome is one of violence in the sports world. In his article, Anderson references the work of a scholar by the name of H. Bissinger who says, “The fear of violence or any negative response by athletes to one’s homosexuality may partially come from the fact that athletes are often unofficial rule enforcers of hegemonic masculinity in school settings” (Anderson). Anderson goes on to say that even those who are not homosexual and do not partake in athletics have a sense of fear of homophobia from athletes. Many argue that heterosexual and namely homophobic dialogue is created in such masculine institutions. Hekma argues, “Victimized by a hegemony that resists discourse on homosexuality, gay athletes often view their silencing as acceptable and fall into a negotiated, segmented identity that contributes to their own culture of silence” (Hekma 1998). If the sports world creates a culture of silence then this would infer that gay athletes contribute to the advancement of heterosexual norms.

An article published in *Sports Illustrated* in May of 2000 titled, *The Biggest Play of his Life*, written by Rick Reilly featured Corey Johnson and the relationships he maintained with teammates, friends and the school system after his coming out in the midst of his athletic career. After introducing Johnson as a high school football captain and linebacker, Reilly goes on to talk about the moment that Johnson came out to his teammates:

He took a hard gulp. “I want to let all of you guys know something about me.” He tried not to let his voice quake. “I’m coming out as an openly gay student here.” His teammates’ eyes and mouths went wide as soup plates. “I hope this won’t change anything,” Corey quickly went on. “I didn’t come on to you last year in the locker room, and I won’t this year.” Awkward Silence. “Besides, who says you guys are good enough anyway?” (Reilly)

It is interesting to note that the author could have chosen a variety of ways to frame the opening of his article; however in choosing this scene, the moment in which Johnson “comes out” to his teammates, Reilly sets up the article with a hetero-normative approach. Johnson is quoted as coming out to his team members and then quickly jumps to the defense saying “I didn’t come on to you last year in the locker room, and I won’t this year.” This quote alone upholds various predetermined cultural beliefs as it displays Johnson’s hesitation as to how his teammates will re-

act. He has already made the assumption that there will be teammates of his that will not be accepting of his sexuality or that their reactions may be harsh. Before his teammates even have time to react, Johnson quickly feels the need to defend himself. By doing this, he has already presented his sexuality as a problem.. By informing the players that he has not come on to them in the past and he doesn't plan on doing so, he himself is recognizing the shame attached to the queer lifestyle. The author of the article, Rick Reilly, is displaying this same knowledge of fear society has and the shame that Johnson feels when he refers to this quotation shortly after he introduces Johnson to the reader.

In Michael Warner's book, "The Trouble with Normal," Warner talks about the various ways people shame and feel shame. In his first chapter, Warner talks about the dignified homosexual, a term coined by Erving Goffman. He describes this concept stating, "On top of having ordinary sexual shame, and on top of having shame for being gay, the dignified homosexual also feels ashamed of every queer who flaunts his sex and his faggotry, making the dignified homosexual's stigma all the more justifiable in the eyes of straights" (Warner 32). Warner talks about the irony in what Erving Goffman calls "in-group purification" as people of a socially stigmatized group try to "normify" their own behavior. To an extent, Johnson is showing his stance as a dignified homosexual by reassuring teammates that his behavior as a gay male and athlete will adhere to and has adhered to what is perceived as "normal" male conduct. As the dignified homosexual Johnson presents himself as a gay male who can refrain from sexual needs. The articles repeatedly reinforce this concept at the very beginning and by showing the ways in which Johnson's behavior is reflective of heterosexual norms.

In reflecting upon his coming out and the effects that it had on his relationships with family, friends, and the school, the article states that everyone was in acceptance of Corey's sexuality. Reilly acknowledges that, "Corey's teammates had no problem with his sexual orientation. His coach had no problem with it. His mom and dad and his sister had no problem with it. His teachers, his counselor-nobody-had a problem with it" (Reilly 2000). Would his head coach have had a problem with Corey's sexual orientation had he not been captain of his team, or had he not possessed great athletic ability? The article focuses on Corey's coming out as a step forward for the gay community and a positive move towards a more accepting society. However, there are underlying values in the article that project hetero-normativity as a universal lifestyle. The article's message is that those who "choose" to live a different lifestyle will feel shame and stigma and must conform to mainstream beliefs in

order to be accepted and understood as a member of an alternative way of living. Warner also touches upon notions of conformity referencing Erving Goffman's concept of the "stigmaphile" and the "stigmaphobe." In focusing on the "stigmaphobe" better known as "the dominant culture, where conformity is ensured through stigma of fear" (Warner 43), it is evident that the *Sports Illustrated* article encourages of societal norms. In referring to Johnson as a guard line-backer, wrestler, and lacrosse player, it begs the question as to the extent of his general acceptance a result of his ability to behave in a hetero-normative manner. Though Johnson's sexuality may not adhere to what is perceived as "normal," his performance of gender and the characteristics of masculinity are beliefs of the dominant culture. Warner talks about the irony that can be found in the "stigmaphobe" and that irony is also prevalent in the Sports Illustrated article:

The worst irony is that the stigmaphobe group will claim to represent the others. It will present itself as more general in scope and more respectable in tone. It will, in consequence, gain power. Yet, given the dynamic of ambivalence, it is the group closest to respectability that is least likely to have made its peace with sexual shame. (Warner 44)

The irony which Warner discusses exists in most of the discourses which focus on Corey's "coming out." Though one would assume that such positive attention from media outlets would create advances for the gay community, the overall message has somewhat of an opposite effect. The article, adhering to values of the stigmaphobe, claims to be representative of diversity, yet it is only reiterating a culture of dominant hetero-normative beliefs and values. The article may possess a tone of celebratory achievements by focusing on ways in which a football team was "tolerant" of their gay captain; yet it praises Corey for complying with the overall ideals of the stigmaphobe. The irony in this article can also be seen in many other discourses where the queer lifestyle is admired, but the norms of a heterosexual culture are reinforced.

In keeping with the notion of conformity, I will shift my focus to a different article which further displays values of the dominant culture. In the first of a two part series written for ESPN's high school sports section, the reporter begins the article stating, "He is a 17-year-old senior at Masconomet High. He is fresh off a standout three-year varsity football career as a middle linebacker and right guard, crowned by his co-captaincy of a relentlessly overachieving '99 squad. Corey Johnson also happens to be gay." The reporter characterized Corey Johnson as the

most masculine of men, displaying to his readers that Corey Johnson was not only good at being a male, but also he had perfected his performance of gender. He even refers to Corey as “crowned”, pointing out his highest rank as captain. The reporter continues to say, “Corey Johnson also happens to be gay,” as if homosexuality was some kind of disease that would prevent a person from accomplishing their goals. The reporter is implying that Corey Johnson was able to accomplish what many of the men in our culture strive for, while facing what the writer implies is a(n) -obstacle. Through this framework, Corey is honored because he was able to perform masculinity in a hetero-normative manner so well that it was almost like another talent of his, that he could achieve so much as a gay male. His highly achieved performance of masculinity is what captivated the attention of media outlets around the nation. If Corey Johnson hadn’t been such an accomplished athlete, there wouldn’t be a story. He would simply be another high school student struggling with his sexuality.

In John Sloop’s, *Disciplining Gender*, a chapter discussing .. ang, explained why her coming out was much more accepted because of her transition in music and the notion of her “being true to herself.” Sloop notes, “the discussion of lang’s coming out is always coupled with some discussion-overt or subtle-of the importance of such truth telling in allowing the person to express the true self” (Sloop 96). It is hard for our culture to accept the confused, but we have this repeated notion that the truth is the root of one’s sexuality, and therefore of their identity. Corey Johnson was quoted in the same ESPN article saying, “just by telling the truth, I’ve been able to help people because they see that somebody can live their life without hiding things about an integral part of who they are.” The ESPN article is surprisingly not the only one to integrate this concept of truth telling. The Sports Illustrated author notes, “Corey can take the hits now, but hiding the truth about himself was so depressing in his sophomore and junior years that he let his grades drop, skipped practice and even skipped school...He knew he had to do something (Sports Illustrated).” The author uses the phrase “hiding the truth” and attributes Corey’s slipping grades and poor attendance to the fact that he hasn’t been true to himself or others. By doing this the author is presenting self-identification as the solution to Corey’s poor academic behavior. Repeatedly in the discourse surrounding Corey Johnson, as well as in many of the cases in Sloop’s book, particularly the case of .. ang, we see this concept of the truth that our culture has become obsessed with. Sloop refers to Stella Bruzzi’s explanation of why the notion of “truth telling” allows for a shift from a problematic identity to one that is then easily categorized. Sloop sums up Bruzzi’s concepts by saying, “While

the question of lang's sexuality was an almost palpable "problem" in the past, it is no longer a cause of trouble [...] her gender "appropriateness" and her sexuality-now truthfully exposed and signified more conventionally-fit snugly within existing categories" (Sloop 97). The argument is that in this shift from ambiguity towards a truth telling "self identity," gender semiotics become less problematic because we are able to categorize ang, in reference to this case, as a lesbian. The same holds true for Corey Johnson, after expressing his true identity, he fits the category of gay male who performs gender to a hyper-masculinized degree. The discourse presents the ability to be categorized as a problem solver for those who live a "non-normative" lifestyle.

Johnson was praised in the discourse surrounding the story because he was able to tell the truth to his family and friends, meaning he was being true to himself. Both the ESPN and Sports Illustrated articles display the truth as a problem solver and promote self identity as a way to gain acceptance. However, it is how oneself identify and the ways in which one tell the truth and what exactly that truth entails about oneself that will ultimately determine the acceptance of the dominant culture. Corey Johnson's ability to self identify as gay male may have had a positive effect on his coming out but it's important to remember the role in which Johnson's performance of masculinity had on the way he was perceived publicly. His athletic ability was so prominent it helped to overshadow Johnson's sexuality and because of this we associate truth telling as a positive and liberating concept. We forget that in many cases it only applies to the exemplary. While our culture may place a strong emphasis on unveiling the truth as a form of legitimacy, it is impossible to position self identification as a solution that can pertain to all lifestyles.

Corey Johnson became a hero in the media, and was consistently coupled with his athletic achievements. The discourse surrounding the case praises Corey for his captaincy, his three varsity letters, and his ability to achieve excellence in various sports before ever mentioning his sexuality. The case displays the ways in which dominant culture promotes feelings of fear and violence as a method of conformity. Athletic teams, especially those most associated with masculinity, define and police the heterosexual lifestyle. Sports teams often create a homophobic world, forcing gay athletes to perform gender in an extremely heterosexual manner. The ability to be "true to one's self" is consistently reiterated as a notion that self identification is a concept worthy of approval. The "true identity" as a problem solver can be seen throughout the discourse of queer lifestyles. The underlying message in the story of Corey Johnson is that in order to be fully accepted in a community as homosexual

one must be able to perform gender in a hetero-normative manner, at an award winning level. By fitting into the cultural category of “normal” to the best of one’s ability, one’s sexuality may be overlooked. In the case of Corey Johnson, one’s accomplishments as a gay male may even be admirable. The discourse made Corey Johnson the homosexual who ultimately defined and raised the bar for the heterosexual.

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DEXTER: MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES



DUSTIN SOMERO

Introduction

In 2006, Showtime debuted a television series that received critical acclaim from the start. Thus far its four seasons have attracted a record breaking audience. The finale of the fourth season aired on December 13, 2009 to an audience of 2.6 million viewers, making it Showtime's most-watched original series episode ever. The show centers on the life of its namesake character.

Meet Dexter. He is a bookworm, a neat freak, and a good listener. He is timely, considerate, non-confrontational and good with children. He's often protected by his more masculine younger sister, and his disinterest in strip clubs and sports even leads co-workers to question his sexuality. This is not the typical description of a man's man and certainly is not a description of a compelling or interesting character. So how is it that such a character is the centerpiece for a show that has captivated audiences and achieved extensive critical acclaim? To answer this question you have to know a bit more about Dexter Morgan, the mild mannered blood splatter analysis.

Dexter Morgan happens to have a peculiar hobby that manages to make his mundane description seemingly more fascinating. Dexter is addicted to killing people. The audience comes to understand this through the show's chronological narrative structure, each show representing the development of a day in the life of Dexter. By day, he's an average forensic officer and, by night, he's a serial killer. Through ritualistic fashion, Dexter chooses a target, plans his attack, and kills. As the audience comes to know Dexter, they are witnesses to his evil acts and the warped inner workings of his mind. Although this makes for a fascinating character, how is it that audiences have come to embrace and identify with such a man? Through analytical analysis this study provides a possible explanation to this case, the case of the loveable serial killer.

Literary Analysis: Part I

The most common suggestion as to how audiences identify with Dexter Morgan relates to the manifest content of the show. Dexter does in fact have a code for his killings. His father, who we later find out is

not of biological relation, has known Dexter's addiction since he was a child. Dexter's father taught him to channel his urges towards those that deserve punishment. Dexter's occupation as a forensic analyst allows him access to information that he uses to target unsentenced murderers. It is only once Dexter has identified a worthy target that met the strict restrictions of the "code" instilled in him by his father that he commits murder. It is this aspect of the show that allows the audience to accept such a character.

J. M. Tyree, a Jones Lecturer in Fiction at Stanford University, suggests that "Dexter's 'code' allows him only to kill other killers, so the viewer indulges him and actually grows fond of him" (Tyree, 2008). The Wall Street Journal's Deputy Book Editor Mark Lasswell suggests that in the case of *Dexter*, "a taste for slaughter is presented, at worst, as a flaw in an otherwise good man" (Lasswell, 2009). Though this is arguably the initial reason that viewers are attracted to the character, as the show further develops the writers introduce many more flaws within Dexter's character. We learn that even though he is regulated by a code, he is still a mentally deformed sociopath. It is easy to argue that Dexter is framed as a hero because of his "code," but a deeper reading of the show reveals that this is merely the way in which Dexter acts upon his urges. If not for the strict training of his father, Dexter's true nature suggests that he would indiscriminate killer.

Tyree also argues that *Dexter's* audience accepts the idea that fake violence is separate from real violence. This idea further nullifies the way in which viewers are disturbed and repulsed by the main character (Tyree, 2008). This is common in many shows, where violence is trivialized in order to appeal to the viewer, but not in the case of *Dexter*: Every murder Dexter commits is displayed with painstaking detail. Dexter prepares the murder setting, dressing the room in plastic sheets with loving care, before he kidnaps his victim by drugging them. Dexter patiently waits until the victim, naked and bound to a flat surface, awakes. Dexter draws the victim's attention to a carefully devised display of the victims that he or she murdered (with much irony ensuing) before he explains his intent. With a scalpel, Dexter slices their cheek and gathers his souvenir: a drop of their blood neatly placed on a glass slide. Finally the moment arrives as Dexter raises his knife, basking in the hesitation and the pleasure to come, before he drops the blade into his victim's chest, feeling the life drain from them. The audience witnesses the disturbing spectacle and understands that Dexter Morgan is a monster. This brutal depiction is perhaps the clearest indicator that *Dexter's* appeal does not originate from the manifest content.

Melissa Rosenberg, the writer and producer of *Dexter*, explicitly denounces claims that the show's intent is to ingratiate viewers into Dexter's twisted point of view. She has stated that, "every time you think you're identifying with Dexter and rooting for him, for us it's about turning that back on you and saying: 'You may think that he's doing good, but he's a monster. He's killing because he's a monster'" (Lasswell, 2009). Identification with television characters is a common and often inevitable consequence, although it may not be the intent of the writers and staff. This leaves one to wonder how millions of viewers could be able to identify with a monster like Dexter.

Literary Analysis: Part II

There is little doubt that gender roles have changed in recent years. We are experiencing changes in our culture's hierarchal structure that once placed man at the top, with gender having been the first determinant of status. Our culture has begun to develop a far more egalitarian face than ever before, with various genders filling what were once non-traditional roles (Gilgoff, 2009; Cotter and Hermsen, 2004). With these changes, the definition of "man" and "woman" continues to change as efforts towards equal representation persist. The clear divisions that once separated the roles typically associated with either of the sexes have become increasingly blurred.

Of the studies that address the changes in gender depiction on television, female characters have received the most attention due largely to the efforts of the feminist movement. These members have sought to illustrate how television contributes "to the social construction of beliefs about gender roles and abilities" (Lotz, 2007: 1). A lack of necessity can be associated with the limited amount of scholarly work that emphasizes the depiction of male characters in the media. In general, men have seemed content with the stereotypical depiction of their sex. Traditional portrayals of men represent them as the stronger, smarter, and superior sex, but in recent years non-traditional depictions are becoming increasingly prevalent (Rossenwasser, 2002).

A study was recently conducted by Amanda D. Lotz, Associate Professor of Communication Studies at the University of Michigan, that provides a summarized history of the changes in masculinity over recent years. Her research relates closely to "hegemonic masculinity", a term that was first introduced by R.W. Connell. This term refers to the dominant form of masculinity within the gender hierarchy, or more specifically the most socially endorsed form of masculinity within a culture (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). In her study, Lotz identifies

a new narrative form that has emerged during the last decade that she describes as “the male-centered drama” (Lotz, 2007). Her work loosely analyzes *The Sopranos*, *Playmakers*, and *Nip/Tuck*, but primarily focuses on the FX series *Rescue Me* and *The Shield*. Lotz suggests that these shows have “introduced a set of male television characters, a particular narrative form, and a distinctive discourse about the experience of male crisis that was different from their predecessors and repeated in a manner that suggested a significant cultural resonance” (Lotz, 2007). Lotz argues that Connell’s idea of hegemonic masculinity is losing its relevance as a category by which contemporary depictions of masculinity on television can be analyzed and examined. She continues, arguing that television stories are targeting narrower audiences and appealing to particular niches in viewership because of the growing complexity of the television audience. She suggests that these shows have managed to “tap cultural sentiment on some level,” which is evident in their ability to attract audiences (Lotz, 2007).

Cultural ideals are inherently linked to the fictional portrayals on television. As those ideals become more diverse, the portrayals do as well. A review of relevant scholarly publications will show that symbolic stories presented on television tend to reflect economic, social, and ideological changes (Olson and Douglass, 1997; Lotz, 2007). There are publications that question whether the depictions of reality on television represent a “symbolic reality” or a “social reality.” For the purpose of this study it is enough to simply note that there is a connection between what is presented on television and what is experienced in real life (Zemach and Cohen, 1986).

Although research suggests there are ongoing changes in society’s gender roles that are reflected on television shows, it is not the intent of this study to deny that stereotypical portrayals still exist. It is not difficult to find a woman on television that fits the traditional female stereotype, nor does it take much effort to find a stereotypical portrayal of a man. However, this does not negate the link between reality and the fictional worlds that are depicted on television shows; this represents the real way in which our culture is divided. American society is a melting pot of liberals and conservatives, which is why television shows are becoming increasingly diverse. The liberal viewpoint is reflected by the non-traditional gender roles on television and the conservative viewpoint is reflected by the more traditional representations.

Analysis

Dexter represents yet another change in the mediated representation of masculinity, which has led to the show's success. This complex model of masculinity is not immediately apparent in the manifest content of the show. Instead, the model is derived from the overall structure of Dexter's life and the latent content within the show. Audiences have identified with this underlying model, suggesting a cultural resonance with this new depiction of masculinity.

Upon first impression, Dexter is hardly intimidating while around to which he is closest, but the viewer witnesses Dexter's other side - a cool, calculating serial killer. Dexter is often pushed around by co-workers and rarely seems troubled, but we come to find that his attitude is a performance. He puts great effort into retaining his identity as a normal citizen and acts passive in order to go unnoticed. Dexter uses this submissive front to hide the sinister reality within- the self proclaimed "dark passenger" that feeds off of taking another's life. Just as Superman has his alter-ego Clark Kent, the serial killer within Dexter finds his in the mild-mannered Dexter Morgan that his "loved ones" see. In a sense Dexter's two personalities represent a yin and yang of gender identity. "Daytime Dexter" is quiet, submissive, seemingly weak, and even somewhat effeminate. "Nighttime Dexter" is bold, dominant, and powerful—a virtual symbol of raw masculinity by the traditional definition, which is associated with physical prowess and domination.

For much of the show these two halves remain separate, and it is suggested that "daytime Dexter" is merely a ruse to hide the "true" Dexter. As the show progresses, this alter-ego actually becomes a part of his personality. Dexter begins to feel real emotions that conflict with the darkness inside of him. We witness Dexter trying to find his true self, and we see how he begins to change when the two polar opposites of his life slowly merge. We are essentially inside Dexter's head as we hear his thoughts through the recurring narration of the show. At one point he actually recognizes the feeling of missing someone, the woman he eventually marries. He finds joy in spending time with his new family, which is something he never believed could happen. Dexter once confessed to the viewing audience, "I am not human," but slowly he begins to have hope for the possibility that one day he might be. All the while Dexter continues to satisfy his utmost urge of killing. Despite his best efforts, the various facets of his life become intertwined.

Both sides of Dexter persist throughout the show, but as he develops into more of a "human" another ego arises. Essentially Dexter becomes a three-headed monster: the submissive, the partially humanized

and contemplative, and the dominant personas all take stage at various points throughout the narrative. These three personas all represent a unique classification of masculinity. In almost every episode the viewer can catch a glimpse of Dexter's various personas, whether it is from his thoughts through the narration of the show, his time at work examining crime scenes, his time with his wife and kids, or his time hunting his prey. It is through this that the show represents a change in the presentation of masculinity while maintaining appeal to such a large audience.

Lotz articulated in her study that male characters on television have been subject to an identity crisis and that it is "a crisis of men figuring out how to be men in an environment in which they face a broader range of socially acceptable ways of being men than in the past"(Lotz, 2007). Just as this was shown in the main characters of shows such as *The Shield* and *Rescue Me*, *Dexter* represents yet another complexity in which "man" seeks his identity. Dexter's frustration with identifying himself is apparent throughout the show as he seeks to please his family, friends, deceased father, and himself. In accordance with this a wide variety of viewers can identify with Dexter's character, because of his segmented personalities. While it may be true that some viewers identify with him as a monster, his personality is not limited to that classification. He is all at once a man's man and a lady's man; a hero and a villain; innocent and evil; and everything in between.

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INTERSEXUALITY IN WOMEN'S SPORTS: THE CASE OF CASTER SEMENYA



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Introduction

In August 2009, the successful athletic career of South African runner Caster Semenya was called into question as suspicions grew about her seemingly masculine appearance. In response to growing speculation, the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) decided to conduct a series of tests to verify Semenya's sex as female (Adams "Could This Women's World Champ Be a Man?"). After results of the test were leaked, international media sources began reporting that Semenya was intersex, meaning she had both male and female genitalia (Daum "The Case of Caster Semenya").

Throughout the course of this investigation, I will examine the way in which a media dominated by portrayals normative gender viewed a binary-blurring issue such as intersexuality. Additionally I will discuss the way in which intersexuality is portrayed by the media in the world of sports and how this conveys to us society's understanding of intersexuality as an identity. Caster Semenya's recent experience will provide a case study by which we can better understand the media and society's view of intersexuality in athletics.

Methodology

My role as a critic will mirror the role John M. Sloop describes in *Disciplining Gender: Rhetorics of Sex Identity in Contemporary U.S. Culture*, stating "...rather than being concerned with knowledge of the essence of objects (e.g., the "truth" about sex) or philosophical discussions about meanings, critical rhetoric is concerned with public argument and public understandings about these objects" (18). To demonstrate public arguments and understandings of my case study, I will investigate the public discourse surrounding Caster Semenya and intersexuality in the media. I have used the Lexis Nexis and Academic Search Premier databases, Internet searches, and news organizations' online archives to survey the articles, produced within the American media, about Semenya in the days following the initial break of the story in August 2009. I will emphasize Internet articles, as the Internet has become a widely used and accessible resource for news and

information. However, many of the Internet articles I examined were also used in print. It is through the study of media discourses surrounding this particular case that we will gain greater insight into society's understanding of intersexuality.

Terminology

To clarify, I would, first, like to explain the difference between the terms "sex" and "gender." Modern dictionaries define sex as:

Either of the two major forms of individuals that occur in many species and that are distinguished respectively as female or male especially on the basis of their reproductive organs and structures." Whereas gender is "the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex (Merriam-Webster "gender").

Therefore, sex is usually referred to as one's biological makeup whereas gender is culturally defined. It is important to note that one's sex does not necessarily determine one's gender. For example, transgender people are one sex but relate to the opposite gender (e.g., a woman who gender-identifies as male).

Throughout this paper, I will invoke the term "gender performance." Sloop draws upon Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* to explain the concept of gender performance, claiming, "Butler posited gender as performative, 'where 'performative' suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning' ...in short, gender is what we *do* rather than what we *are*'" (6). Here Sloop's quoting of Butler defines gender as a construction of normative behaviors and performances to which we conform to properly perform our gender. For example, I perform my gender by wearing makeup and skirts, traits attributed to the female gender.

A Woman or a Man?

18-year-old Caster Semenya barely had the chance to celebrate her record-breaking time of the Woman's 800-Meters at the World Championship in Berlin, Germany before questions about her sex arose (Adams "Could This Women's World Champ Be a Man?"). Semenya's competitors began citing Semenya's "masculine" traits and questioning the fairness of the race. In a *Time* magazine article, William Lee Adams quotes the frequently cited Semenya's Russian and Italian competitors to explain their speculation. He quotes, "'Just look at her,' barked Mariya Savinova, the fifth-place finisher from Russia, following Wednesday's

race. Italian Elisa Piccione, who finished sixth, was equally harsh as she stated, ‘*These kinds of people* should not run with us. For me, she’s not a woman. She’s a man.’” (Adams “Could This Women’s World Champ Be a Man?” emphasis mine). Almost immediately, the international media latched on to this story, reiterating the question that Semenya’s competitors had so crudely asked: Is she a woman or a man?

In his book *Disciplining Gender: Rhetorics of Sex Identity in Contemporary U.S. Culture*, John M. Sloop provides five case studies in which the media acted as a policing force to regulate the ambiguous gender and sexuality of people who did not fit the norm of heterosexuality and/or an “appropriate” gender performance. Sloop’s case study of the discourse surrounding Janet Reno’s rise to power relates to the discourses surrounding Semenya. Sloop explains that Reno’s six-foot-two large frame troubled gender norms of how a woman should look (109). Sloop explains that media reports made “direct references to Reno’s height and the ‘imposing’ nature of such stature provides the reader with a frame through which to understand other comments and observations about her personality and actions” (108). This is similar to Semenya’s case, in which her large muscular build signified her questionable femininity. Jim Litke, writing for the *Huffington Post*, explains, “Semenya’s times so unnerved her competitors that some looked at her muscular build and listened to her deep voice and concluded she wasn’t a woman at all” (Litke “Caster Semenya Gender Testing Murkier Than It Sounds”).

The accusations made by Semenya’s competitors work to reify societal concepts of the way a woman should look and even sound. The implications of this are even more troubling “because female masculinity is a form of gender ambiguity that is so troubling to ‘commonsense’ culture, it becomes a key location from which to view their cultural ties to males and females, respectively, including the articulation of heterosexuality as a norm or expectation” (Sloop 105).

Clearly, the accusations surrounding Semenya’s sex set limitations for female athletes, sending the message that you can be muscular but not too muscular and you can be successful, but not too successful. If you defy these norms, people may question if you are a man. In her *New York Times* article “The Sex of Athletes: One Issue, Many Variables,” Alice Dreger explains that women could not possibly ever compete equally with men, “Let’s start with the reasonable assumption that we want to maintain gender segregation in most sports. It provides girls and women — half the planet’s population — a real hope of winning. Without that hope, many may not bother.” The fact

that Semenya's sex was questioned after breaking a world record is not a trivial detail, but incredibly relevant. Semenya was breaking norms not only in the way she presented her gender, but the way in which she competed in a traditionally masculine sport.

In her article "Verifying the myth: Olympic sex testing and the category 'woman,'" Laura A. Wackwitz explores the history of sex testing in athletics and examines the common belief that women should not compete in sporting events: "Heracles was considered both a great hero and an accomplished warrior. A woman was not allowed to enter the presence of such a great hero-warrior, for fear that if she did, the strength of the warrior would be reduced." Likewise, in her book *Self Help Inc.: Makeover Culture in American Life*, Micki McGee explains that society views gentleness, weakness, and failure as feminine characteristics (McGee 37). In this view, Semenya betrayed feminine nature and exhibited male characteristics with her strong physique and record-breaking times. Therefore, Semenya was illuminating gender stereotypes by simply being a successful athlete.

"She Always Wore Pants"

In response to growing speculation, the IAAF made the decision to conduct a series of tests to verify Semenya's sex (Adams "Could This Women's World Champ Be a Man?"). But as the world waited on the results of the test, the media searched into Semenya's past for an explanation about her ambiguous sex. In a *Los Angeles Times* article entitled "Gender issue has always chased her; African runner often teased as a child," Robyn Dixon explains that Semenya would often play soccer with the boys and cites a quote by Semenya's high school principal who stated Semenya "always wore pants instead of skirts, played rough-and-tumble with the boys and...he didn't realize she was a girl until she was in the 11th grade" (Dixon "Gender Issue Has Always Chased Her"). *Huffington Post* contributor Jim Litke likewise writes "Semenya's tale begins with a tomboy who always wore pants to school, didn't mind playing rough, and endured plenty of taunts from the boys she regularly competed against in a poor village 300 miles north of Johannesburg" (Litke "Caster Semenya Gender Testing Murkier than It Sounds"). On the *New York Times* online "Topics" section, Semenya's brief biography includes "Like other girls, she was expected to fetch firewood from the bush at first light. Unlike them, she then went off to play soccer with the boys" (New York Times "Caster Semenya").

In Sloop's *Disciplining Gender: Rhetorics of Sex Identity in Contemporary U.S. Culture*, he examines the case of biologically female,

gender-identified male Brandon Teena. Sloop shows how the media created a narrative around Teena's childhood (during which he exhibited more "masculine" traits than his sister) as an explanation and early sign of his transgender identity as a male (Sloop 65). Just as "Brandon's clothing is consistently used to signify his masculinity" (Sloop 65), Semenya's choice of pants over skirts and choice to play with boys is used as a signifier of her masculinity.

The media pointed toward the traditional gender roles as indicators of Semenya's sex, only working to reinforce these gender role stereotypes. Although these might signify cultural differences, the way in which they were interpreted as symbols of gender by the U.S. media demonstrates the power still attributed to these traditional roles. Girls wear skirts and dresses, while boys wear pants; girls do chores and boys play sports.

"Wow, Look At Caster Now!"

The makeover of Caster Semenya featured in South African *You* magazine could possibly provide Sloop with a sixth case of the ways in which ambiguous gender is policed by the media. The September issue of the South African English language magazine featured a made over Semenya as the cover model with the tagline "Wow, look at Caster now!" (Smith "Caster is a cover girl. ").

The *You* magazine feature on Semenya serves to reaffirm her femininity by portraying her in a dress, makeup, and jewelry. The magazine declared, "Exclusive: We turn SA's power girl into a glamour girl – and *she loves it!*" (Smith "Caster is a cover girl.," emphasis mine). In the cover photo, Semenya can be seen posing in a very feminine manner with her legs crossed and wrists draped limply over her legs. This is rather contrary in comparison with the photos that circulated after winning a race in which she is flexing her muscles in a show of strength. Clearly the cover photo portrays softness and gentleness-- what Micki McGee describes as "feminine characteristics" (McGee 37). It seems as if Semenya's makeover was an attempt to prove her femininity through portraying gender role stereotypes and thereby confirm her womanhood, ending questions about her sex in relation to her "masculine" look.

Whether or not Semenya really loved the makeover (as the magazine headline suggests) remains uncertain. However, it is clear that she felt pressured to display her femininity in this way. The mounting speculation and rumors surrounding her sex resulted in very little flexibility in the way she presents her gender. Before, Semenya clearly felt comfortable portraying her gender in a more fluid, less normative

way. However, now, after speculation and the makeover, Semenya will find it difficult to perform her gender fluidly and will instead be incredibly constrained.

Gender V. Sex

The blatant insensitivity and misinformation that circulated in media discourse surrounding Caster Semenya is appalling. Any reporter that does their research would realize the striking difference between the terms “sex” and “gender.” However, in many of the articles, “gender” was used where “sex” was in fact the correct term (Inquirer Staff “Sports in Brief: Runner’s gender tests complete,” The Boston Globe “Sports:Track and Field,” Dixon “Gender issue has always chased her; The African runner accused of being a man was often teased as a child,” Litke “Caster Semenya Gender Testing Murkier Than It Sounds,” Brennan “Adults fail runner in gender case,” Yaniv “Caster Semenya, forced to take gender test, is a woman...and a man.”) Likewise, they would realize that intersex people consider the term “hermaphrodite” offensive, and yet many articles referred to Semenya in this way (“A sorry saga that keeps on running” *Economist*, Jacobson “Report on S. African runner’s gender sparks uproar,” Venezia “Runner a gal- and a guy,” Yaniv “Caster Semenya, forced to take gender test, is a woman... and a man”). The many news organizations that continued to use the term “gender” in place of “sex” and “hermaphrodite” in place of “intersex,” are only working to perpetuate the ignorance and insensitivity that is already pervasive in today’s society. Instead of working to open a dialogue about intersexuality and discuss the communities of support and resources for intersex people, reporters using the term “hermaphrodite” continued to humiliate a significant part of the population. Resources such as the Intersex Society of North America were rarely mentioned in the many articles that I read.

Laura A. Wackwitz elaborates on the danger in using the terms “gender verification,” “sex testing,” and “femininity testing” interchangeably. She says, “The constellation of these three terms suggests the inseparability of sex from gender and of sex and gender from femininity,” (Wackwitz, “Verifying the myth: Olympic sex testing and the category ‘woman’”). This is clear in Caster Semenya’s case as she felt the need to play up her femininity and change the way in which she was performing her gender for the cover of *You* magazine. Semenya’s gender was questioned along with her sex despite the fact that she identifies as female and was raised female (Litke “Caster Semenya Gender Testing Murkier Than It Sounds,” Adams “Could This Women’s

World Champ Be A Man?”).

In her book *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*, Anne Fausto-Sterling explains that one of the problems facing intersex people comes at birth when their “condition” is treated as an emergency and “corrective” surgery is suggested (45). The parents usually have little knowledge of intersexuality and are forced to make a decision (Fausto-Sterling 45). Media that reinforce societal beliefs that sex and gender are inseparable, that provide few resources about intersexuality, and work to ostracize Semenya because of her ambiguous sex, will only perpetuate a society in which parents have their children undergo “corrective” surgery because of the lack of information and resources.

The Shame of “Case by Case”

Semenya is certainly not the first female to undergo sex testing in order to participate in an athletic competition. Laura A. Wackwitz explains that women are now able to compete in the Olympic games, but with a few stipulations:

Today, women are allowed to participate in the games, but in doing so, they face the suggestion that they may not be real women and, as such, may be required to submit to a genetic sex test to prove their female validity (Wackwitz, “Verifying the myth: Olympic sex testing and the category ‘woman’”).

She explains that sex testing was mandatory for women athletes between the years of 1968 and 1998 but is now only conducted on a case-by-case basis (Wackwitz, “Verifying the myth: Olympic sex testing and the category ‘woman’”).

Huffington Post contributor Jim Litke explains how all around sex testing changed into a case-by-case basis:

The International Olympic Committee dropped mandatory gender exams before the Sydney Games because the standard in place before then – chromosome testing – could be interpreted several ways. In place now is a case-by-case analysis that brings together a gynecologist, endocrinologist, psychologist, an internal medicine specialist and gender expert.

So, it is only when one person is singled out for an exceedingly masculine appearance that they are forced to undergo a series of incredibly intrusive exams. In a similar case to Semenya’s, Santhi

Soundarajan of India was forced to undergo sex verification tests after competing in the same event, the 800m, in the 2006 Asian Games (Singh “India Athlete makes plea for Semenya”). In a CNN article, she shared her experience of being alienated and humiliated, resulting in her suicide attempt in 2007 (Singh “India Athlete makes plea for Semenya”). Similarly, Anne Fausto-Sterling discusses Spanish Olympic hurdler Maria Patino who was stripped of her medals and banned from competition when she failed the sex-test (Fausto-Sterling 1). Fausto-Sterling describes Patino’s battle with the IAAF to be reinstated, at which she was successful and was allowed to compete again (Fausto-Sterling 2). She was shown to have androgen insensitivity meaning that although she had testes that produced testosterone, her body could not respond to the testosterone (Fausto-Sterling 2). Since it was never confirmed that Semenya was in fact intersex, we do not know if she also is androgen insensitive.

In his book *The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life*, Michael Warner argues that society creates standards that are considered the “norm” and when one diverges from this norm, one is shamed or stigmatized. Warner explains the consequences of a “politics of shame,” stating, “It also involves silent inequalities, unintended effects of isolation, and the lack of public access” (7). Clearly, the experiences of Soundarajan, Patino and Semenya coincide with this politics of shame. These three athletes have been incredibly humiliated, isolated and ostracized for not fitting into a certain “norm.” The IAAF only works to create more shame and humiliation by sex testing on a case-by-case basis because the international media then humiliates athletes who are chosen.

Signs of Hope

Being an optimist, I also searched around for hopeful signs, alternative discourse, or to put it quite bluntly, people who “get it.” I found quite a few articles that expressed sympathy for Semenya and placed blame on her coaches and athletic council (Brennan “Adults fail runner in gender case”, “A sorry saga that keeps on running” *Economist*). Although these articles seem different than the others, they do not discuss the experiences of intersex people, or question the sex binary of sports, but instead throw pity on Semenya, still working to make her the “other.”

However, the cartoon above by Mikhaela Reid is just one example of the differing forms of alternative discourse relating to the “gender” testing of Caster Semenya. Many widely followed blogs,

such as *feministing.com*, added their take on Semenya's story. Not only do these blogs provide a different point of view from traditional news sources, but also they are written in a more casual style and allow space for discussion to take place through the "comments" section. For example, on Boiling Point Blog, Mikhaela B. Reid exclaims, "Seriously, screw gender testing, and screw those IAAF jerks telling this world champion runner she's not a real woman." Reid also pokes fun at the "gender" testing with her cartoon (above). On the popular blog *feministing.com*, contributor Ariel wrote, "Athleticism is stereotyped as a strictly male trait. The public's discomfort with female masculinity led to the expectation that as a woman, Semenya must compensate for her threatening athleticism with femininity."

Some other examples I found were articles such as the CNN commentary "My Life as a 'Mighty Hermaphrodite,'" in which Hida Viloria shares her experience growing up intersex and works to inform those who are ignorant to what intersexuality is. A CNN article by Stephanie Busari entitled "Gender row athlete: What is intersexuality?" explains the term intersexuality as the reason why "hermaphrodite" is offensive, and provides resources such as the Intersex Society of North America. In *The Nation*, David Zirin and Sherry Wolf condemn media outlets and the IAAF for their handling of Semenya's sex testing and advocate for fluidity in the system:

Whatever track and field tells us Caster Semenya's gender is--and as of this writing there is zero evidence she is intersex--it's time we all break free from the notion that you are either "one or the other." It's antiquated, stigmatizing and says far more about those doing the testing than about the athletes tested. The only thing suspicious is the gender and sex bias in professional sports. We should continue to debate the pros and cons of gender segregation in sport. But right here, right now, we must end sex testing and acknowledge the fluidity of gender and sex in sports and beyond.

Luckily, there are those challenging the status quo and promoting a view of sex and gender that better reflect reality. Although there is alternative discourse and point of views being reflected in this matter, the sheer number of articles circulated that worked to reinforce societal norms concerning sex and gender were overwhelming.

Conclusion

Currently, the IAAF has decided to allow Semenya to keep her medals, continue competing, and keep her test results confidential although the damage has clearly been done (Associated Press “Gender tests to remain private matter”). Throughout my discussions with people on this matter and after leading a discussion in the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs at the University of New Hampshire, many tried to propose a solution. Some believed that the sexes should remain segregated in sporting events with “male” and “female” as the only categories. Others suggested adding another category in which people could compete. However, I look upon this skeptically because I believe, invoking Michael Warner’s “sexual politics of shame,” this category would be considered the “other” and amass a considerable amount of shame for those competing within it. Some suggested dissolving sex segregation in sports altogether. Although this would be nice, I am not sure our binary society is ready for this step. Yet another suggestion was to allow intersex people and transgender people to choose in which category they would like to compete. Each suggestion has its pros and cons. Although I cannot say I have a solution, the first step in solving any problem is admitting there is a problem.

It is clear that the international media worked to shame Semenya and also to restrain Semenya’s ability to perform her gender in a fluid fashion. But how does this inform us about society’s understanding of intersexuality? Anne Fausto-Sterling explains that society usually sees gender as constructed but sex as “real” but she argues “sex is, literally, constructed” (27). Fausto-Sterling goes on to describe the “corrective” surgery that many intersex children go through in order to construct their sex as “male” or “female” (27). Therefore, society is constraining intersex people who do not necessarily end up on the front page of every major world media outlet. Clearly, as a society, we have a long way to go. Media discourse surrounding Caster Semenya has shown the ignorance by many as to just what intersexuality, sex, and gender are. The discomfort surrounding Semenya’s ambiguous sex and gender performance was obvious in her competitor’s, the IAAF’s, and the media’s reactions. This is not the first time that sex testing in sports has had such extreme consequences, however by recognizing the problem, we can identify our own discrimination and privilege, while also working towards a solution.

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PERSPECTIVES: THE CULTURE OF UNDERAGE DRINKING AT UNH



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Abstract

Underage drinking can be seen on college campuses around the country, but it is an especially vexing issue for the communities that make up the University of New Hampshire. This discourse is worth analyzing not because of how it is discussed, but because of what is being discussed. All involved parties (students, parents, health services, administration, and police) construct an individualized definition of the problem, leading to the author's central thesis: the rhetorical communication of each contributing party suggests that the members of the upper hierarchy (the administration and police) have greater authority over the impact of publics, arguments, and the language being used.

Underage drinking has always been an issue at the University of New Hampshire. This problem has been under the watchful eye of the members of the university, including the administration, the police, the students and the parents, for many years. This topic has become more important as this practice has become more predominant in society, especially on the UNH campus. The University of New Hampshire has been on the rise as one of the top party schools in the nation and, as a result, the university and the police have cracked down in recent years. Because of this, more students are finding themselves in trouble with the law, which then goes onto their record and affects them in the future.

Even though the problem itself hasn't changed, the discourse taking place among the parties involved has changed and it is worth analyzing. The changes reside in what is being discussed in regards to the problem of underage drinking. It is interesting to see the different solutions that are proposed for solving this problem. Many are proposing new ways to reduce the amount of underage drinking, such as new awareness programs on the issues of arrests and health concerns.

On the other side of this issue are the students who believe that

officials should try to focus their efforts on safety concerns with drinking, rather than to reduce the amount of underage drinking that takes place. It is interesting to see the different views between the students and the parents compared to the university and the police administration because, through the analysis of discourse, we can see how the latter has more influence over the issue. The following research shows that the rhetorical communication of each contributing party suggests that the members of the upper hierarchy have greater authority over the impact of publics, arguments, and language being used.

This rhetorical analysis will discuss the discourse that different players use to advance their positions on this issue. Each party has an alternative view on the problem of underage drinking. The police, the university, the students, the health services, and the parents recognize the federal law, that no person under the age of twenty-one can consume or possess an alcoholic beverage, but where they differ is on why it's a problem and how to solve it. Each party will discuss their view through the the arguments they employ and the language they use. Through this language, one can deduce their motives.

What is a public problem and who are the main players involved with such a problem? When it comes to underage drinking, there are many different participants involved with the problem, including the police force, the university, health services, the parents and the students, each of who define the problem in varying ways. Some of these participants may choose to own or disown the problem, attempt to assign political and causal responsibility, or work within different public spheres in order to help them understand more about the public problem. All of the participants are very important and with their viewpoints placed together, they form an idea of what the public problem really is.

As a group we watched a documentary, taped in the spring of 2008, that looked at several students from UNH who had been arrested for underage drinking and the consequences each one faced due to the decisions that were made. Clearly underage drinking is a public problem in the town of Durham and it needs to be resolved, which is the exigence of this analysis. As defined by Bitzer, "Exigence is an imperfection marked by urgency" (Crick 132). It affects not only the student being arrested, but also the law enforcement, the University, the other students of the University and the parents. Within a public, people's decisions can affect other perspectives and impact people within the community; we see that through the issue of underage drinking at the University of New Hampshire. The first perspective comes from the view of the police force.

The police force defines the public problem as a legal matter that needs to be acted upon. Deputy Chief Paul Dean, the chief of the UNH Police Department, maintains that if you are under the age of 21, it is illegal to consume any alcohol. The police force also expects that the students at the University act according to UNH policy as well as to the UNH community. If this expectation is not met, some students may find themselves being arrested.

In the larger sense, the police force is attempting to own this problem. According to Gerard A. Hauser, “Ownership refers to the ability to create an influence the public definition of a problem” (Hauser 79). The police want the University community to view the problem in the ways in which they do, as a legal problem, so they make appeals to their audience in order to engage them with interest. “The rhetorical audience consists only of individuals who are capable of being influenced and must be capable of mediating change” (Hauser 48-49). Some of these appeals may be that the safety of the community is put at risk from underage drinking that leads to drunk driving, or that the safety of the alcohol consumer, as well as the community, is put at risk since alcohol inhibits people’s ability to think properly. In addition to this, the police assign political and causal responsibility for the problem. Jacob Schiff argues that “we assign responsibility to an agent or agents whose faulty actions are causally connected to a harm, as long as those actions were undertaken voluntarily and performed with adequate knowledge of the situation” (Schiff). Political responsibility is “the owners attempt to insure that the problem is corrected.” Causal responsibility refers to a shared belief about the sequence of occurrences that factually accounts for the existence of the problem” (Hauser 81).

The police may be seen as having political responsibility, since they are the ones who keep a community safe and make arrests of underage drinkers when they see fit. The police force believes the main cause of the problem is the students engaging in underage drinking. Due to the fact that students are the main cause of the problem, they disown the problem. “Groups disown public problems by acts of word and deed that distance them from the problem” (Hauser 80). No one can force people to drink alcohol, so this problem is internal to each individual, and could be prevented. In order for the police to get across their message across that underage drinking is not only illegal, but very harmful for students, they must engage in a public sphere where individuals and groups can meet to discuss these matters of interest and make a common judgment about them. One such public sphere may be at a town hall or even at an on-campus meeting where the issue of underage drinking is

being discussed. These public spheres will ultimately help in the process of fixing the public problem.

Another source that is responsible for the underage drinking problem is the University itself. If an underage student is caught under the influence or in possession of alcohol in a public campus area, the police will handle the situation as previously mentioned. However, if an underage student is caught on UNH property, then the University will have complete ownership. The University is assigned political responsibility by federal law. “The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 require that the University of New Hampshire, as a recipient of federal funds, including federally-provided student financial aid, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on University property is prohibited” (New Hampshire, Student Rights, Rules, Responsibility 44).

The first attempt of political responsibility in the University’s order is putting the student on probation for one year. This means that if a student gets as much as a noise violation, they could receive a longer probation sentence or possibly be evicted. With this in mind, the University hopes that students will realize what they did was illegal; they broke the Student Rights, Rules, Responsibility code of conduct, they were a nuisance to the students and the community around them, and they could have been a hazard to themselves. “The University is committed to maintaining an environment of teaching and learning that is free of illicit drugs and alcohol” (New Hampshire, Student Rights, Rules, Responsibility 44). These documents, plus other relevant laws, are important constraints on public deliberations about the problem. Constraints are, “limitations and the opportunities present in a situation that bear on what may or may not be said to the audience about the imperfection they are being asked to remedy” (Hauser 50).

Another aspect of this problem comes from the concerns of Health Services as they worry about the health of the students who participate in underage drinking. When a student is arrested or gets in trouble for being intoxicated while underage, he or she faces consequences and must do many things to redeem him or herself. This can include Alcohol Anonymous meetings or other alcohol and drug counseling sessions. This is all due to the fact that underage drinking is illegal as well as a health issue. In effect, when someone is charged with underage drinking, it is taken into many people’s hands to decide what to do next with the student and how to treat them. If there is an underlying risk for more offenses, such as binge drinking or acting out in public, then it becomes a public problem. Not only are they doing harm

to themselves, but they are also causing many other people to deal with what they have done. In the health field the problem is viewed as not only an illegal action, but also viewed as being harmful to the body and mind. It can impair one's judgment or lead him or her to do things that are out of character for the person. At the University of New Hampshire, underage drinking is seen by Health Services as a problem that must not only be punished, but fixed in a healthy manner. In light of this, the student may have to take AA classes or another form of drug counseling to ensure that the problem does not persist or intensify. The discourse of how to resolve this problem is taking place in the public spheres, which are places anywhere on campus where underage drinking is being discussed, such as dorms, dining halls, off campus housing, or Greek life.

The UNH Parents Association put out a documentary called "Choices Matter" that tries to teach the community of Durham, especially the students of the University, about the dangers and consequences of underage drinking. Through this effort, the UNH parents owned their share of the problem of underage drinking in Durham, for they attempted to educate and hopefully change the mindsets of students and residents in Durham. The problem was defined through the terms of consequences students will face if they get caught drinking and the effects on the community. The parent's rhetorical audience in this case are the students of UNH, because only they have the ability to decrease the amount of drinking on and off campus. Once the drinking decreases, the other problems that stem from it will too. Parents are also attempting to take on some of the political responsibility by producing this educational film on the big problem in the town of Durham. The causal responsibility through the parents' eyes is a difficult one to solve. It is obviously the student's fault if they are involved in underage drinking and get in trouble with the law or the school, but it can also be attributed to the parents' of the students themselves. Lynne Erb, a parent of a UNH sophomore, states that it is the parent's responsibility to prepare their son or daughter for the pressures of college life, which includes drinking as a major part of it. The effects of the parents' education in this area will be shown through the student's behavior, once they are out of the house and on their own at college. She states that all students make mistakes and will try to learn from them, but it is only with the guidance and previous education from their parents that this will happen. So in terms of causal responsibility, it is the student's fault if they participate in underage drinking, but it is also in part the parents' job to educate their children to live in the college world.

With all of these potential owners, of the problem of underage

drinking in Durham, comes extensive analysis on the discourse between the groups. As Bitzer states, “a particular discourse comes into existence because of some specific condition or situation” (Crick 132). Therefore using rhetorical concepts such as deliberative stasis, external appeals, and Burke’s concept of dramatism, which includes identification, division, god and devil terms, and his dramatic pentad, one can see where the potential owners agree and disagree on this issue and the tactics each uses as they try to persuade others and change the situation.

An additional owner that is almost always involved in the problem of underage drinking is the Durham Police and/or UNH Police. These owners are most likely to have a clashing argument on the issue of underage drinking with that of the other owners including the students or the parents. The point of clash between two opposing issues is known as stasis. Kendall R. Phillips states in his article “Spaces of Invention: Dissension, Freedom, and Thought in Foucault,” that “such a point might be thought of as a stasis point between the relations of power and the forces of resistance and be characterized as a point of possibility” (Phillips 9).

Durham Police and UNH Police typically have a similar view on underage drinking. They believe that the problem, or ill, is due to a “host of social issues” says Dave Kurz, the Chief of Police at the Durham Police department. “Kids are more assertive and act as though there is an entitlement to their ‘right’ to get drunk, make noise in residential neighborhoods and seemingly do what they please.” In this sense, the police are placing blame on the underage students. They blame the students’ attitudes for the problem of underage drinking.

In order to fix this problem, both the Durham and UNH police are mainly responsible. Both police forces have the right to make arrests on the UNH campus and within the Durham community. Dave Kurz states that the most important issue on the topic of underage drinking is, “The challenge of understanding how to address allowing some latitude for young people to experience life, live through it while not disrupting the community they live in while doing it!” He also believes that it is hard to strike a balance between the community demand to address the “rowdiness” and the fact that UNH is in Durham and does not seem to be leaving anytime soon. Even though arrests have been made, the problem is still very large.

Both Durham Police and UNH Police maintain that underage drinking is against the law, and therefore, illegal, so it is their job as police officers to take the proper precautions in managing the problem, even if this means countless arrests of students. Recently the UNH

Police received a privately donated grant in order to combat the issue of underage drinking on campus. This grant led to more arrests. The police's reasoning can be related to logos, which is the argument addressed to an issue. More specifically, it is an external appeal made by the police, which means that the police do not create this appeal themselves, since it is already a written law, but they are able to use it in their arguments.

Both UNH and Durham police have similar vocabularies involving underage drinking. They include both "god" and "devil" terms, which are able to represent an overall view on the issue. Some of the god terms include law, justice, responsibility and safety, while some of the devil terms include alcohol, drugs, irresponsibility, and criminal. These terms are similar to those of the University, who agrees that alcohol and drugs are devil terms, but are dissimilar to the terms used by students.

Due to such "god" and "devil" terms, identifications and divisions are invited among different owners of the problem. As Kenneth Burke states, "Identification created by a particular constitution has a counterpart division" (qtd in Murray 8). Identification is how we show that our ways are similar to other people; division occurs when we use identification, because attraction to one view implies that we ignore the other, or that we can outright depict its proponents as "others". A recent article in the student newspaper titled "Busted: Alcohol Policy at UNH," portrays the view of University of New Hampshire Police Sergeant Steven Lee. Lee states that "the UNH police department does not issue warnings or ignore underage drinking because doing so is a liability for both the department and the University. In this community, the standard has been set that there will be arrests for all violations to keep it consistent and fair for everyone" (Macarchuk). In a similar note, Anne Lawing, the Dean of Students, states "let's focus on whether you were doing something illegal or not" (Macarchuk). These two quotes by the police sergeant and the Dean of Students represent an identification that is made by the two owners. The point of identification is the legality of the situation, for drinking under the age of 21 is an illegal activity and is also dangerous to the students. This creates a division with the students, who do not frame the situation in terms of its legality.

As stated above, the police believe in making arrests and keeping it consistent and fair for everyone. Since they are identifying with this view, it is implied that the police are dismissing its opposing views by the student. There can then be consequences of these vocabularies for how people in the community understand the issue and

respond to it. One consequence may be that the UNH community is filled with so many different viewpoints that they are unable to determine who is right and who is wrong, and are thus unable to figure out how to solve the problem.

Another way to look at underage drinking is to think about how it affects health. Students in Durham, especially on the UNH campus, are known to drink illegally and it causes problems for the community as well as for themselves. While some people in the community might not see this as a health issue, there are others who believe it does have an impact on the well-being of students. This clash of opposing views is the main stasis.

Kathleen Grace-Bishop, the Director of Education and Promotion at Health Services, owns the issue of underage drinking in an opposite light to the illegality of it. She is “very committed to the role of prevention, of assisting others in self-care and decision making that enhances their health and well-being.” Grace-Bishop believes in enforcing the laws and that “research/data shows that the drinking age does make a difference” in decreasing the risks associated with underage drinking. On this note, she will try to prevent underage students from drinking in order to keep them healthy.

The reason kids may continue to drink so often underage could be due to several factors. It could be peer pressure, or in some cases a lack of enough health education. The problem is that students are drinking under the legal age. The cause is that they aren’t aware of the impact it has on their health, and the remedy is more education on the health factors associated with drinking. It is important to maintain education, because as Grace-Bishop sees it, underage drinking leads to “drinking and driving, high risk use of alcohol and therefore more negative consequence to health and well-being and an increase risk of addiction later in life.” She sees the most important issue of underage drinking as “the impact of alcohol on health and well-being of underage drinkers.” Because there is not quite enough education on this topic, the remedy is to send a clearer message out to students that there are many opportunities and chances to become educated on the subject. Although there are many resources available to students, they may not be aware of these resources, and therefore don’t access them. The one who would need to address this problem would be members of the UNH community working in healthcare, and the remedy would be more prevention education for underage drinkers. These steps are necessary as it not only impacts students’ reputations and affects them in the legal system, but it puts their health at risk and is a major cost to them.

Students should be at their peak while in college, and the fear is that they are putting themselves at risk in terms of health and education. Being a place of education and fulfillment, values such as academic excellence and athleticism in this community are threatened when so many students engage in underage drinking.

Looking at the issue of underage drinking from the perspective of Health Services on campus would give a different set of god terms and devil terms. Some god terms that Health Services would use in order to portray that students should not be drinking would be getting "involved", being "substance free", and being "healthy". Some devil terms, which would point out the negativity behind underage drinking, would be "peer-pressure" and "anti-socialism". Those two terms would suggest that students are drinking for social reasons and thus only doing it for negative reasons, or to "fit in".

Health services makes use of these terms on their website and the way they are presented shows a specific message in which students or anyone who reads it will realize that Health Services is trying to prevent underage drinking.

On the other hand, students can voice what they think in this scenario about underage drinking. A student may use the exact same god and devil terms listed above but shine them in a different light. "Peer pressure" may not be considered a god term in the eyes of students, but it is not a devil term either, because in their sense, drinking will become a "social event" and create a shared environment among other underage drinkers. It might also be called "friendliness" or "friendship," because most students believe they will make friends when they drink and go out and "socialize." They would not consider using "peer pressure" as a god term, or the ideal term of goodness, because some students see it as a "right" to drink, since they consider themselves adults with adult responsibility.

In an article titled, "Individual Personality Differences Moderate Perceptions of Alcohol Drinking Behavior and Receptivity to Alcohol Health Messages," the authors talk about studies done on binge drinking by college students and how it is a recurring public health problem. "It has been estimated that 80% of college students drink, with 40% routinely engaging in 'binge' drinking, despite widespread exposure to behavioral interventions through both the mass media and school-based programs" (Weaver). In the article, they refer to underage drinking as a public health problem. Taking this issue from the health perspective they use 'binge drinking' as a devil term and 'behavioral interventions' would be deemed as a god term. "Binge drinking" is clearly opposite of what

would be considered healthy, due to the fact that it is regarded as heavy and episodic drinking. A 'behavioral intervention' could be looked at as a god term in the light that it is helping students with a drinking problem and trying to reverse the action of underage drinking. (Weaver)

Depending on which party is speaking, each set of terms could be used in different ways depending on the context of the situation. When students are speaking about underage drinking, they will most likely not speak too negatively about it. However, when an organization such as Health Services has a discussion about underage drinking, they are trying to promote healthy activities and would describe it as unhealthy and present separate modes of entertainment.

An additional owner in the issue of underage drinking is the parents. Lynne Erb, a parent of a UNH sophomore, disagrees with the university and UNH police's strict policies on underage drinking. She believes that the policies should be more lenient to ensure the students' safety and futures. She believes that students will choose to drink regardless of the fear of getting arrested or evicted and the policies should reflect that. Her view on college drinking, especially at UNH, is that it is "always a part of college life and always will be. It is up to the parents [sp] to prepare their child to be on their own and deal with the pressures of college life, which therefore translate into the student not getting in trouble." Erb's remedy for this is that parents need to teach their children responsibility for their actions before they come to college, which in turn translates into the child exercising responsible drinking. This view is further enforced in a study, done by the American College Personnel Association, titled "The Influence of Perceived Parenting on Substance Use during the Transition to College: A Comparison of Male Residential and Commuter Students." In it, the authors focused on the transition to college life and underage drinking with emphasis on the parent-child relationships before child leaves for college. The study found that, "Positive, emotionally responsive interactions with parents predict lower levels of alcohol use among first-year college students whereas parent-child conflict is associated with significant drinking-related problems such as driving while intoxicated and not being able to complete academic course requirements" (Sessa). One main problem Erb sees in this issue is the fact that students' fear of getting in trouble prevents them from calling for help for another student who needs medical attention. The fear of both of them getting in trouble will compel the student to deal with it on his/her own, which puts both of them at risk.

Erb also believes that the police are misdirecting their resources

by only focusing on catching underage students who are under the influence. She is worried about the rising number of physical and sexual assaults on campus and the fact that the police have not solved those cases, because they are too busy focusing on arresting intoxicated students for stumbling or falling. Erb says, “There is a difference between being drunk and dangerous, one that the UNH police do not recognize.” She is also worried about the future of students who get in trouble for just having a couple drinks, for they have a criminal record that will potentially keep them from getting a job or succeeding later in life. The consequences they have to deal with following an arrest or eviction takes their focus away from the most important part: their academics. The problem is that the police arrest every drunk individual they come across, and Erb places the blame on the police for not using their discretion. Her remedy for this situation is a more nuanced enforcement of law, in which they use their discretion to arrest individuals who pose a danger to themselves and to those around them by their level of intoxication.

Erb believes that the logical approach to handling this situation is to monitor potentially dangerous situations and only reprimand students who are being dangerous or creating a dangerous situation for others. She evokes the emotion of fear and relates to pathos, because she is fearful for students (like her daughter) who choose to drink and risk losing their future, falling behind in classes, and losing money when they are in trouble. She believes that, regardless of the rules, students will still choose to drink because this has been happening for decades. The only logical approach to this situation is to try to monitor it and keep the students from injuring themselves and others, not to try to change it.

These features and Lynne Erb’s view on this situation contradict and do not agree with the University’s beliefs and views on the situation. The University of New Hampshire’s Parent’s Association’s view on the situation is in concordance with the federal law that it is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to consume alcohol. Since they cannot change the law themselves, they are trying to reduce the number of students drinking and the amount of alcohol being consumed by underage students all over campus. They have lobbied to do so through their endorsement and production of the “Choices Matter” documentary. Through this, The UNH Parent’s Association highlights and commends the University and UNH police for their control of the situation and their policies (which Mrs. Erb highly condemns as being too strict and unrealistic).

While both the UNH Parent’s Association and parents of the

UNH students agree that underage drinking is impermissible since it is illegal, the UNH Parent's Association is keeping with the University's view that there needs to be something done to reduce the amount of drinking. The parents of the students interviewed believe that the officials should only monitor the situation, instead of getting the students in trouble. The UNH Parent's Association sticks to the rule that drinking under the age of 21 is illegal; therefore any student who participates in this behavior is committing a crime and should be held responsible for it. UNH Parents want to increase the number of police out on weekends, and the parent's of the students want the police to monitor the situation for potentially dangerous situations instead of focusing on catching random students drunk. Lynne Erb, a parent of a UNH sophomore, is more concerned with the safety of the students, present and future.

This use of god and devil terms implied that the law is absolute and those who break it are criminals – no matter the severity of their offense. The identification that these two groups share is that they both believe that underage drinking is against the law and that it is dangerous to the health and future of the students. Where the division occurs is when they talk about the solution to the problem. The UNH Parent's Association uses vocabulary to strengthen the official policies of the university and of the law. The consequence that arises from this use of vocabulary is that Durham officials, UNH officials, and the police – all of whom respect the law and will not budge – have crafted similar arguments. While opposing voices may be heard and listened to, these officials cannot change the law.

Burke's dramatic pentad is a method for unlocking a rhetor's attitudes that are locked within his or her language choices. James P. Zappan summarizes Burke's pentad in his article "Kenneth Burke on Dialectical-Rhetorical Transcendence. He states, "dialectic explores the substance of a person or thing—all that 'supports or 'substands' it—from multiple and shifting perspectives, viewing human action dramatically as act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose" (Zappan 279). To break down the argument of Lynne Erb toward this issue in the format of Burke's dramatic pentad, one finds that her vocabulary suggests she is against the University and community's policies and enacts a vocabulary of concern for the student's safety. She calls the act of police's law enforcement as a "misdirection of their time," therefore the police are mistaken; their purpose isn't to keep kids safe, but to get them in trouble, and their agencies are wrongful tactics (such as frequent arrests). She uses a distrustful vocabulary to describe the police in Durham.

The drama enacted in her speech translates to what she thinks

should happen. The act, or what was done, would be to monitor the students who are out at night, instead of getting each one in trouble. The scene, or where the act occurred, would be the UNH campus. The agent, or who performed the act, would be the UNH/Durham Police and University officials. The agency, or how the act was done, would be the police themselves, patrolling for dangerous situations and students who are in trouble. Their tactics would shift from arresting every underage individual they see drunk, to using their discretion to arrest only those who pose a potential danger to themselves and those around them. The purpose, or why the act was performed, would be to protect the future of students (criminal records) and to protect the students from dangerous situations. Once police stop focusing on drunk students, they can be alert to the physical and sexual assaults that have been occurring on campus.

The final owner is the student body. Other owners believe that students disown the problem of underage drinking, but certain analyses do in fact show ownership. The main stasis point between the students interviewed was whether or not the students on the UNH campus have a drinking problem. Meghan McGrath and Patrick Costa are both students at UNH. They believe that drinking as a whole is a big issue on campus. They feel that drinking is associated with peer-pressure. This would be considered the ill. "Everybody is doing it. I feel like more than half of our campus drinks illegally," McGrath said. McGrath and Costa put all the blame on the students. They say that the students are drinking illegally. The remedy to the situation would be stricter law enforcement from the police and university officials. Costa says, "I believe underage drinking shouldn't be a problem if you can do it responsibly, but not many people can around here." They also feel there is too much at stake, also known as cost. "I think people forget why they come to school in the first place. We are here to get an education. Academics are important," Said McGrath "The most important value at stake is your self-respect," said Costa.

When it is shown that, "A certain proposition must be true, a further and quite distinct proposition must be true in consequence, whether universally or for the most part, this is called deduction in dialectic, enthymeme in rhetoric (Yarbrough 80)." McGrath and Costa would say the enthymeme: kids who drink that are under the age of 21 are breaking the law and more than half of UNH students who drink are under the age of 21; therefore UNH students are breaking the law.

Two other students, Jordan Stack and Wesley Bland, had a completely different take on the issue. "The problem is that cops are making more and more arrests, but kids are still going to drink

regardless,” Bland said. The problem here is that the police are trying to resolve the problem of underage drinking by making many arrests, when in fact underage drinking has a cause that can’t be resolved by police action. Bland feels the problem is inevitable and the cops aren’t doing anything to help it. The remedy is that “the cops need to re-evaluate their priorities,” Stack says. He is saying that the cops need to determine if arresting students under the influence that are walking back to their apartment, doing no harm to anyone, is the best use of their time. The cost is a student’s future. Bland says, “These kinds of violations can go on your record and stay there forever.” They support this position by recognizing that they are college students and are suppose to be socializing. “You need to have a social life. You need friends,” Bland says. In terms of rhetoric rather than analytical philosophy, one could say that the force of discourse is not dependent on the image of self the orator produces in speech. It is dependent on his or her social position and the access he/she can have to the language of the institution, that is, to the official, orthodox and legitimate speech (Amossy 2).

The University of New Hampshire and the students that attend it also have conflicting views on the problem of underage drinking. For one thing, the language each owner uses is on opposite extremes. Each party uses specific “God” and “Devil” terms. The god terms for the University include words such as responsibility, law, and community. Their devil terms are alcohol, drugs, and unlawful possession. According to the students of the University, the god terms would be words like alcohol, party, and socialization. Their devil terms include police, probation, arrests and violations. The use of this language shapes the way they interpret the situation.

Identification refers to the ways in which we find ourselves similar to others. “At the most basic level, identification occurs when we try to show that our ways are like the other person’s” (Hauser 213). UNH’s own newspaper, *The New Hampshire*, had an article about the drinking problem. “According to the Dean of Students Anne Lawing, alcohol and drugs are the single biggest health problem on the UNH campus”(Macarchuk). This would be the University identifying with Health Services. From that same article she says, “We take all state, federal, and local laws seriously and it is our responsibility to enforce them. Yes, we take high-risk, illegal drinking very seriously” (Macarchuk). This is an example of how the University identifies with the police or the law, but also shows “compassion” for the student drinkers.

Another interesting identification is with the UNH Legal Service

Attorney, Joanne Stella. “What I see as the problem in this community is that we’re not directing police to the most serious problems. It’s a misdirection of police resources” (Macarchuk). This is an example of how the student counsel identifies with the students. When the student’s lawyer and Health Services identify with each other, they are dividing from the students. When the University (represented here at the UNH Legal Service Attorney) and the students identify with each other, they are dividing from the law enforcement perspective.

After looking at these varying perspectives, the police and university employ a dialogue of motives that aims at enforcing the federal law and punishing those who break it to make them aware of the consequences. Parents and students use a dialogue of motives that suggests that the administration should avoid solving the problem, and instead simply monitor it to ensure the safety of the members of the community.

The research shows that the rhetorical communication of each contributing party suggests that the members of the upper hierarchy have greater authority over the impact of publics, arguments, and language being used. According to Wolin, issues of hierarchy and social order are, “the dialectical nature of sociality and pure persuasion”(Wolin 298). “All statements of more and less, better and worse, imply a hierarchical order. Sometimes we codify these in our laws...”(Hauser 205). Because the law is the highest authority the police and administration, or those who continuously enforce the ideal of the law, have a higher authority than the students and parents. The police enforce the law over the students, parents, and university officials. The university enforces the law over the students. Therefore the administration will have a greater impact in the discussion of the problem and its’ solution, because they are in essence higher up in the hierarchical order. Regardless of the arguments made by both sides, students state that they still plan to drink illegally and police state that they are going to continue to make arrests for those who violate the law, which is why this is a continuous problem.

One might ask the questions, “So what?” or “Why do we bother analyzing this problem?” It is important to recognize the arguments and language that different owners employ in order to continue to try to get to the root of the problem. The University of New Hampshire is an integral part of Durham, which means that underage drinking is a problem in both communities. This helps shape the perception of the town of Durham because when one hears of Durham, they think UNH. When one associates with Durham, they associate with UNH and may associate with the party aspect of the school. This could impact how the incoming

freshman choose their higher education and also how graduating seniors will be taken seriously in the professional world.

When one breaks down the discourse of each participating party, one can see how each thinks and can take that knowledge into consideration by trying to cooperate to solve the problem. If one understands the opposition's reasoning, they can understand their motives. Understanding their motives leads to some agreement on the subject and a step in the right direction for solving the problem. This is what needs to be done for the issue of underage drinking at the University of New Hampshire. Right now, the police and University are not making an effort to recognize the student's argument, while the students are not making an effort to understand the administration. Once they all make a conscious effort to listen to each other's reasoning and arguments, they can then take the steps to solving the problem of underage drinking. Only when we understand each other clearly will we be able to communicate effectively.

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PERFORMING MATERNITY: LIMITING THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL WOMAN IN ABORTION DISCOURSES



KATIE RAMSAY

Throughout the past year, the issue of health reform has undoubtedly dominated the national political discourse within the United States. From town hall meetings to dining room tables, the perceived problems with the American health care system are being fervently debated. At the center of the issue is the desire to find an affordable, accessible solution that will be beneficial to all U.S. citizens. Until recently, a collective female voice within the deliberative discourse has been absent. This has sparked a series of mobilization campaigns designed to encourage more active participation from members of this demographic. Although the outcome of health insurance reform does have significant implications for women, there has been a trend in these recent mobilization campaigns geared towards female populations that perpetuates maternity as a valued performance of femininity. By publically positioning women to act politically through a form of maternal performance, their capacity to lobby for reproductive rights, that include affordable access to abortion procedures, has been limited, as their role of mother subordinates their rights of citizenship to those of the child.

In *Disciplining Gender*, John Sloop discusses the ways in which mediated rhetoric surrounding cases of gender trouble are often used to reinscribe cultural norms related to gender performance. Through five case studies, he demonstrates how mediated discourses that are present in the selected gender trouble narratives are intended to bend our perception of dominant norms, but instead, they implicitly reinforce them (Sloop 2). In combining Sloop's work with Michael Warner's analysis of normalization and shame in *The Trouble with Normal*, it is evident that through the reification of particular norms these mediated products produce a particular moralism. (Warner 4) If hegemonic in nature, this stigmatizes those who do not perform in normative ways (Warner 60). There have been mediated productions within health insurance mobilization campaigns that are directed towards women who demonstrate this concept through their articulation of a particular moralism related to performances of femininity. One such initiative is Michelle Obama's recently released web clip entitled *Why Health Insurance Matters to Women*.

The opening of the clip begins with narration from Obama in which she states, “Hello. In my role as First Lady, I want to focus my attention on where policy and people intersect, and the need for health insurance reform is a critically important issue for families all across the country. Health care is something I’ve thought a lot about, myself, as the mother of two young daughters” (de Nies, “Michelle Obama Pushes”). Obama continues, in the middle of the piece, stating, “We’ve all heard stories about how tough it can be when dealing with insurance companies gets in the way of caring for those we love...Barack’s plan will make sure that every family gets to have the same piece of mind that we’ve had” (de Neis, “Michelle Obama Pushes”). Finally, in her concluding remarks, she states,

Barack’s plan is about ensuring that everyone in this country can care for their families, and follow their dreams, and have the chance to make of their lives what they wish. And it’s hard to achieve those dreams if you can’t rely on quality, affordable health insurance. That’s what’s at stake and that’s what we’re fighting for. That’s what this health care is all about, particularly for women who are raising kids, taking care of families...(de Nies, “Michelle Obama Pushes”).

In her message, interspersed between clips of women sharing health care reform stories and the dialogue on specific instances of discrimination against women in the health care system by Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sibelius, Obama continuously defines normative femininity in a particular way, ultimately queering those who do not perform in accordance with dominant norms.

In her first section of narration, Obama frames the production in terms of maternity by linking her concern for health insurance reform to her role as a mother to her two children. Stating, “Health care is something I’ve thought a lot about myself, as the mother of two young daughters,” (de Neis, “Michelle Obama Pushes”) she then accounts how her daughter fell ill with meningitis. She claims that without adequate health insurance, her child may have become deaf or worse (de Neis, “Michelle Obama Pushes”). This introduction is a critical moment in the narration because it defines the importance of health insurance reform as the ability to be an effective caretaker to their children. This link reinscribes particular dominant norms about the presupposed naturalness of maternity within the female body, which ultimately promotes the subjugation of the woman’s rights to citizenship to those of her child.

In her work, *America, “Fat”, the Fetus*, Lauren Berlant argues

that the rise of “fetal personhood” has redefined the role of women as citizens. She claims that current research has found that technological advancements within the field of reproduction have caused the unborn child to be viewed as a helpless subject of the mother’s desire. This ultimately constructs the need for societal entities that will protect the child (Berlant 98). Berlant extends this argument later in the text, stating that the mother ends up yielding her rights to those of the child in order to evade stigma and perform her gender in appropriate ways. She states, “the mother is not a person when she is pregnant...Her technological and political irrelevance to the child’s reproduction in the new sacro-political regime of “life” is a condition of political as well as visual semi-erasure, in which she can gain value only by submitting to law and forfeiting the intense competition between American fetuses and their mothers” (Berlant 111).

By understanding proper femininity through the mother’s willingness to put her interests after those of her child, it is evident that there is a particular kind of moralism at work. As previously referenced, Michael Warner, in his work *The Trouble with Normal*, emphasizes how dominant moralism is presumed to be a singular morality (Warner 5). Those who do not conform to this perceived morality become queered and are shamed for their queerness, which ultimately perpetuates the dominant moralism (Warner 24). This shaming is implicit in the Obama audio, especially the final part of her narration where she links the American dream to the act of caring for children.

She states, “Barack’s plan is about ensuring that everyone in this country can care for their families and follow their dreams, and have the chance to make of their lives what they wish...That’s what this health care debate is all about, particularly for women who are raising kids, taking care of families...” (de Nies, “Michelle Obama Pushes”). Through this, Obama takes a final step in identifying the proper performance of femininity as being that of the caretaker. By placing the agency with the woman as the maternal figure, rather than the woman herself, Obama is implicitly reaffirming that femininity is achieved through maternity and is shaming those who do not perform maternity in expected ways.

Ultimately, this piece, intended to illuminate barriers for the female population, iterates a particular ideology about a woman’s need to put her maternal responsibilities before her own needs. In doing so, the piece establishes proper femininity as performance of motherhood and stigmatizes those who do not engage in this performance.

The Obama narrative is not alone in its perpetuation of this particular moralism. Around the same time of the release of Obama’s

video, the National Women’s Law Center launched their “A Woman is Not a Preexisting Condition” campaign with the premiere of an advertisement identifying the inequalities the female population faces in the health insurance industry. The narration of the video states, “Health care isn’t fair. Men make the rules, but women pay higher premiums. In some states, domestic violence can be a preexisting condition. Ever had a caesarian section? You could be denied coverage. Pregnant? Many individual plans don’t cover maternity and other reproductive care” (NWLC, “A Woman is Not”). Although this particular text is not explicitly linked to familial or marital bonds, it also does not leave room for the single woman. In speaking about domestic violence and caesarian sections, there is an implicit link to relationship and family.

Specifically, the dialogue about cesarean sections without mention of the difficulty for women to secure an abortion is an example of how a woman’s ability to lobby for abortion is limited within mass mediated productions. Much like the Obama video, this message stigmatizes those who would seek an abortion through perpetuating a discourse that queers them because they do not desire to employ the performative of maternity. Additionally, there is an emphasis on being pregnant itself. Like the Obama narrative, there is little emphasis placed on the female citizen herself, as it is instead placed on her child.

In both aforementioned initiatives, each medium works to perpetuate a moralism about model performances of femininity. By situating the importance of health care reform to women in the realm of maternity, the pieces propagate the cultural logic that the rights of the individual woman fall after the rights of her child. This discourse has considerable consequences when iterated within public debate surrounding health care reform. By being motivated to act, individuals are limited in their capacity to lobby for reproductive rights that include abortion. If they do act in ways that diverge from the norm they will become stigmatized, as they fail to meet the cultural construction of normativity. Because of the rhetorical limitations placed on normative gender performance, exemplified in these campaigns, there has been a failure to question the status quo of abortion legislation within current discussions of health care legislation.

Valerie Hartouni demonstrates this phenomenon in her work, *Cultural Conceptions: On Reproductive Technologies and the Remaking of Life*. In the introduction to the book, Hartouni outlines the 1993 Supreme Court Case *Bray v. Alexandria Women’s Health Clinic*. In this case, the Supreme Court was to determine if a group of pro-life demonstrators preventing access to facilities that provide abortions

were trespassing on the constitutional rights of abortion seekers. She states that the court, in their final ruling, affirmed that there had been no encroachment on the rights of these individuals. Hartouni notes that the logic leading to this decision is interesting, demonstrating that the Court's decision was not based on the hindrance of a woman's right to choose, but rather in the demonstrators' desire to protect the unborn child (Hartouni 1). She defines this reasoning, stating, "...anti-abortion demonstrations do not deprive women of having or exercising any constitutionally secured right or privilege because such demonstrations are conducted for the sole purpose of protecting abortion's 'innocent victims,' and thus *have nothing to do with women*" (Hartouni 1).

In the current discourse surrounding health insurance reform, this rhetoric has become pronounced once again in the debate surrounding the Stupak-Pitts amendment. Introduced by Representative Bart Stupak (D-MI), the Stupak-Pitts amendment sought to extend the provisions of the Hyde Amendment to the reform that may be passed by Congress (Haberhorn, "Abortion Takes Driver's"). The Hyde Amendment, passed in 1976, was intended to ensure that no federal funds would be used to provide abortions, specifically through the Medicaid Program (ACLU). During the current debate, Congressman Pence gave a floor speech in support of the amendment. In this particular discourse, rhetoric of the fetus's need to be protected from the mother is evoked. Pence states,

...I am grateful this amendment has been brought to the floor and I wish to commend Mr. Pitts and Mr. Stupak for their principled leadership. Ending an innocent human life is morally wrong but it's also morally wrong to take the tax payer dollars of millions of Americans and use it to provide for a procedure that they find morally offensive. In the Congress of the United States, we have a responsibility to respect the moral beliefs of the majority of the American people. I urge my colleagues to prevent federal dollars from funding abortions, take a stand for life, support the Pitts-Stupak Amendment, to vote no on Pelosi health care. (11-7-09 - Pence)

In this statement, Pence iterates the moralism for maternity as a valued performance of femininity, stigmatizing those who would speak in support of abortion. Hartouni reaffirms this when she speaks about the logics of fetal protection statutes. She claims that these statutes function to queer those who reject the discourse of maternity as a natural stage in the course of femininity performances. She argues, "...fetal protection statutes imply by their mere existence that women have lost

heart or touch with the deepest source of their identity and thus become not only dysfunctional but potentially dangerous” (Hartouni 42). In this particular situation, there is a clear affirmation of the cultural work that the mediated messages by Obama and the National Women’s Law Center do to discipline women to understand that proper performances of femininity are accomplished through maternity. He continues, furthering the disciplining mechanism of these rhetorics, by shaming the non-normative, as he marks those who would seek abortion as separate from dominant culture.

This is not to say that pro-choice discourses are outside the realm of cultural intelligibility. Pro-choice discourse remains culturally intelligible so long as it seeks to situate its rhetoric in the realm of dominant morality. Hartouni argues that pro-choice discourses validate the act of abortion by presenting it as a difficult choice that causes a great deal of emotional suffering to the mother. She states, “Within the context of a discourse that, at least in principle, has no way of registering moral seriousness or generating moral argument – and such is the case with liberal discourse about abortion – psychological hesitation and uncertainty have come to function as their sign and substitute” (Hartouni 59).

This has been exemplified by many of Barack Obama’s statements on the topic. In the following statement taken from a debate leading up to the 2008 election, Obama states,

You know, I think most Americans recognize that this is a profoundly difficult issue for the women and families who make these decisions. They don’t make them casually. And I trust women to make these decisions in conjunction with their doctors, and their families, and their clergy. And I think that’s where most Americans are...The broader issue here is do women have the right to make these profoundly difficult decisions and I trust them to do it (Barack Obama - Abortion).

In this discourse, Obama frames the woman who seeks the abortion as one struggling with a difficult decision. He is doing implicit cultural work to locate his pro-choice stance, within the realm of cultural intelligibility, by marking the abortion seeker as a moral individual who has wrestled with the possibility of participating in the immoral. To argue the issue in any other way would be to place oneself outside of the realm of dominant culture or to become stigmatized.

Hartouni confirms this when she elaborates on her notion that pro-choice discourses are always framed as emotional suffering and a

difficult choice for the women who seek abortion, claiming that there has been limited articulation of the increased individual freedom women are provided with the option of abortion (Hartouni 65). She argues that based on awareness of the presence of the fetus and the discourse of selfishness intended to shame those who would condone or receive an abortion, the claim of enhanced freedom has been resituated to stigmatize those who the pro-life discourse seeks to queer (Hartouni 65). Hartouni states, “In the public vernacular of abortion, freedom and power have an at best pejorative resonance and function, when invoked, as a potential indictment of all women in the phantasmatic rendering of one – the casual, capricious, career-minded woman who has abandoned hearth and home and kills without conscience” (Hartouni 65). Essentially, Hartouni is claiming that, in order to approach the topic of abortion in a supportive way, one must identify it as a struggle to the woman; a dilemma that blurs dominant definitions of morality. In other words, pro-life arguments framed in this way do not deny the dominant morality, but seek to reframe those who defy it as individuals who are trapped in moral conflict. Their situation is such that they escape the dominant morality for a brief moment.

This is problematic in regards to the current debate surrounding abortion that is taking place within the greater theme of health care reform. What could be a moment of generative dialogue, which articulates the limitations of dominant discourse, is instead shut down in favor of maintaining the status quo. This is illustrated through the pro-choice discourse surrounding the Stupak-Pitts amendment. Instead of questioning the reasons why it is important to maintain the foundations laid by the Hyde amendment, there is only discussion of why we should maintain the status quo. While the first conversation would be beneficial to all women, the latter is only beneficial to those who can afford to pay.

In a floor speech in opposition to the Stupak-Pitts amendment, Representative Diana Degette (D-CO) states,

The Hyde Amendment states that no federal funds shall be used for abortions. This has been contained in our annual appropriations bills for many years. In the Energy and Commerce committees, the pro-choice and some pro-life Democrats came together and compromised. We said, no federal funds in this bill will be used for abortions...This amendment goes much further. It says that as part of their basic coverage, the public option cannot offer abortions to anyone even those purchasing policies with 100% private money (Rep. Degette Floor)

In this statement, Degette is articulating a pro-choice stance on abortion. However, she is articulating it within the realm of what is culturally intelligible. She does not call into question the existing status quo, implicitly affirming that only those who can afford the abortion should be permitted the right to receive an abortion if they perform in a manner that suggests emotional struggle.

President Obama also evokes this discourse when questioned by ABC News's Jake Tapper on whether the Stupak-Pitts amendment goes too far in its attempt to ensure that federal funds will not be used to subsidize abortions. He states,

You know I laid out a very simple principle, which is this is a health care bill not an abortion bill. And we're not looking to change what is a core principle that has been in place for a very long time, which is federal dollars are not used to subsidize abortions, and I want to make sure that the provision that emerges meets that test. That we're not, in some way, sneaking in funding for abortions, but on the other hand, that we are not restricting a women's insurance choices... (Obama Hedging on)

In this statement, Obama reiterates the implicit logic evident in Degette's floor speech. Those who are able to afford abortion coverage on their own should be able to have it, even if they are receiving government subsidies. Those that must rely on government programs to survive are absent in the discourse, as it does not seek to question the status quo. Although the greater discourse circulating is about health care reform for the greater American population, there is still relevancy for the abortion debate within the reform discourses, as it falls under a woman's need for adequate reproductive care. The speeches of both Obama and Degette imply this notion for those who can provide for abortion themselves, but deny rights to the woman who falls victim to economic hardship, further excluding her from normative culture.

Ultimately there is significant discursive work being done to situate women in the dominant moralism through perpetuating traditional maternity as a proper performance of femininity. These discourses work in coordination with the dominant rhetoric of abortion politics to limit a women's ability to choose the course of action that is best for her. Instead, she is disciplined to subjugate her rights to those of her child – born or unborn. This narrows the field of discursive options available to those individuals who seek to keep the option of abortion open to women, while at the same time narrowing the woman's ability to choose this option, even when it is open to her.

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THE MASS MEDIA DEITY: THE REPERCUSSIONS OF BARACK OBAMA'S CAMPAIGN COVERAGE



COREY NACHMAN

Before Barack Obama was set to give a victory speech following his sizeable victories in the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia Democratic Primaries, MSNBC's *Hardball* anchor Chris Matthews announced to millions of viewers that when then candidate Obama spoke, he would get "a thrill going up his leg."¹ The anchor prefaced this quote by stating that most people get some sort of feeling when Barack Obama speaks, as if to say it is odd if Obama's speaking doesn't reach you. Despite Matthews' attempt at validating his own statement, fellow anchor and noted liberal commentator Keith Olbermann responded by telling Matthews to take it "easy."²

Despite Olbermann's criticism of Matthews, there were not a lot of requests made by other anchors, or the general public for that matter, for the media to take it easy; and *that* has impacted the situation we are in today. It would make logical sense for a population to be patient with a new administration that has to take on the problems left behind by the last, especially problems of this magnitude. How can the public have such a small amount of patience for an administration that has taken on two wars, a major economic recession, the huge national debt, a national mandate for universal healthcare, and the frightening prospect of irreversible climate change? The answer can be found through analysis of how the media covered Barack Obama from the beginning of his campaign.

Examples similar to what Chris Matthews said are somewhat rare, but the message behind what Matthews said--that Barack Obama is a one of a kind politician that has the power to captivate the masses and will most assuredly fix everything--was not rare at all. The words used by the biggest publications and news organizations in the world seemed to hint that the junior senator from Illinois had some sort of mystical aura about him. The quotes from various pundits across the political spectrum hinted that this man transcended politics and was a breath of fresh air from the 'business-as-usual' model many Americans perceive the government to be predicated upon. Even magazine covers that adorned the newsstands across the country had pictures of Barack Obama that made him look more like a religious icon than a politician. The media

coverage created the idea that Barack Obama was a God-like figure and the general public believed it. The general public believed in the idea so much that they set their expectations too high for any mortal human being to possibly succeed.

Specifically, this study has been designed to highlight the most interesting quotes and headlines that tie into my theory that the media is responsible for the depiction of Obama as a prophet-like figure. The content I have found in my research of the major television news networks (MSNBC, PBS, etc.) and major print media sources (Time Magazine, Newsweek Magazine, newspapers with wide circulation, etc.) ranges from words of praise to words of devotion uttered by supposedly neutral media. Additionally, I have researched the covers of major news magazines and how they depicted Barack Obama in relation to my theory. I will also compare the content of the coverage of the Obama campaign to the campaigns of Hillary Clinton and John McCain to show that Barack Obama's coverage was unique. The comparison to Hillary Clinton is especially interesting since it not only compares Obama's depiction as a new age politician to Hillary's old school style of politics, but it also compares the potential history that could have been made in both campaigns; Obama aiming to be the first black president and Hillary Clinton aiming to be the first female Commander-in-Chief.

There is one specific study that I used for inspiration to pursue this topic, and that was Michelle McSweeney's, "The Mediated Image of Gary Hart: Before and After the Donna Rice Scandal."³ That study encouraged me to analyze the grammar variables of photography and how they were used to show Barack Obama as a larger-than-life figure. Joshua Meyrowitz's work with electronic media theory and politics in, "New Sense of Politics: How Television Changes the Political Drama,"⁴ was also an inspiration for my research since I paid special attention to cable news and how it covered the campaign differently from print and photographs.

“A Star Is Born:” The Mass Media Coverage of Obama’s First Exposure to the Nation

On July 27, 2004, Barack Obama, a young and aspiring Senator from Illinois went from a relative nobody to an obvious somebody when he delivered the keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention. Obama's speech sent immediate shockwaves throughout the nation, thanks mostly to the intense response given by political news sources in print and television. Obama's hometown paper *The Chicago Tribune* described him as "The Phenom."⁵ *The Christian Science Monitor*

said that news networks that did not cover the speech, “missed the national debut of what could be one of the most exciting and important voices in American politics in the next half century.”⁶ The generally conservative pundit David Brooks said that speeches like Obama’s are “why you go to conventions,”⁷ and his fellow pundit Mark Shields followed that up by stating, “a star is born.”⁸

Notable political figures, using various media, also had very bold statements concerning Obama’s speech. The quotes laced with the most praise came from Obama’s fellow Democrats and a lot of Chicago-area politicians. Emil Jones Jr., the President of the Illinois Senate from 2003 until 2009, said, “It was such a moving speech that I had tears in my eyes...It was electrifying. When I looked around the room, all across the people were so emotional, tears in their eyes.”⁹ Carol Moseley Braun, the only African-American woman ever elected to the U.S. Senate, said, “Obama represents the best of what we brought from our generation.”¹⁰ U.S. Representative Artur Davis of Alabama hinted that Obama should run for president since he transcended the racial barriers that long prevented an African-American to be a viable candidate, stating that, “if anyone can do it, Obama can...Obama may help break down the stereotypes that an African-American politician is someone only for other blacks...When Obama runs for the White House, he will run not as a candidate for blacks. He has the capacity to run as a candidate for everyone.”¹¹ Former Senator, future rival and eventual Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was quoted as saying that Obama’s speech, “...was one of the most electrifying moments that [she could] remember at any convention.”¹²

After watching and listening to the speech, some pundits and analysts went as far as declaring that Obama *will* be the president one day. Jimmy Carter’s former speech writer Hendrick Hertzberg said, “If he wrote that speech, then he should be president, because it’s such a great speech. If he didn’t, he should be president because he found such a great speechwriter.”¹³ Chris Matthews was the most notable pundit to envision and, by extension, predict that Barack Obama would be an eventual President of the United States. While hosting the Democratic National Convention coverage on MSNBC, Matthews said, “I have seen the first black president there.” He also said, “I have to tell you, [I have] a little chill in my legs right now,”¹⁴ as an initial response to hearing the address. Interestingly enough, the night of his speech was not only the first major national exposure for Barack Obama, but it was also the first time Chris Matthews mentioned the exhilarating feeling he got when Obama spoke; both events were signs of things to come.

The actual live coverage of the speech was somewhat limited since several major networks did not broadcast it (only an estimated 9.1 million people watched it live).¹⁵ The coverage of the aftermath of the speech was much more widespread and garnered a great deal of attention from the public.

The quotes from political figures, especially from de facto party leaders like Hillary Clinton, resonated with the party's followers. When someone who is seen as a leader by millions of people has a strong opinion regarding anything, the followers will absolutely listen. However, a person who follows someone like Hillary Clinton will subscribe to the new ideas and ideals that go hand-in-hand with their political affiliation no matter what the person says, which means that, even if Hillary Clinton declared that Barack Obama was the greatest man in the history of the world, this would not change their feelings about her. What holds even more weight than a partisan political leader making claims of greatness is when a supposedly centrist-oriented news source makes the very same claims.

American mainstream news sources all typically claim that they look at all news stories from a moderate perspective. The Fox News Channel is the most infamous for this claim thanks, in part, to their much talked about mantra, "Fair and balanced."¹⁶ Fox News is not alone in claiming that they have an unfettered perspective on socially relevant stories. CNN, MSNBC and Fox News employ both conservatives and liberals to give their perspectives on many types of stories as a means to level the playing field. Even though news media scholars have tried to explain that it is more likely for a story to have thousands of perspectives, American news media sources have been successful in convincing most of the public that finding a place between a liberal perspective and a conservative perspective is the only way to obtain objectivity.

It is in a news source's best interest to be considered objective for two reasons. The first reason is that if a news source is perceived as having an even, impartial view of deciphering information, then every American could become a viewer or a reader. Any news source is the product of a business enterprise, and the first interest of a business is to make money. Why would a business want to lock out potential customers? If every possible viewpoint is being expressed on a particular network or in a newspaper, everyone would have reason to watch or read. The second reason it is in the best interest of news sources to appear objective is because being objective creates the illusion of being infallible. If a news source appears to have taken into account

all variations of a story, eliminated partisan spin, and the only thing remaining is ‘just the facts,’ then how could they be wrong?

The American mainstream news media has done an excellent job convincing millions of people that what they report is indisputable. With that in mind, when news anchors, who are supposedly reporting just the facts, announce that we just witnessed a future President, history tends to write itself.

The Real Campaign

Barack Obama announced he was running for the Presidency in February of 2007, but it certainly seemed as if there was a pre-conceived notion that he was inevitably going to run. At the very least, Barack Obama had an amazing speech that most people heard about, so why wouldn’t he at least attempt to run for the highest office? In 2005, *Time* named the new senator from Illinois one of the *Time* 100, which is their list of the 100 most important people on the planet. The small article that accompanied his selection to the list was titled “The Future of the Democratic Party?”¹⁷ The article, written by Perry Bacon, Jr., concludes with this:

“In only his fourth month in the Senate, Obama is still learning the rules of Washington, but he realizes that many Americans have even greater hopes for him. They see him as a man who cannot only repair the growing divide between Democrats and Republicans but also ease racial tensions that persist more than four decades after Martin Luther King Jr. proclaimed his dream at the Lincoln Memorial. It’s an almost impossible set of expectations, but for a man whose first name in Swahili means ‘blessed by God,’ nothing seems out of reach.”¹⁸

From the very beginning, Barack Obama was sensationalized as a prophet-like figure.

Time Magazine had a cover story about Obama in October of 2006, as well. The most interesting attribute of this article by Joe Klein (besides the fact that it was the second article published by *Time* about Barack Obama possibly being President before even officially announcing his candidacy) was that it emphasized how the general public reacted to him. There was very little policy discussion involved in the article until the very end. Most of that discussion was related to Obama’s book, *The Audacity of Hope*, and not related to how he would serve as a president. Instead, Klein depicted the throngs of people who would flock to Obama’s speaking events as utterly infatuated with him. One man interviewed for the article was quoted, stating that he had not seen people

reacting to a politician in this way since the Robert Kennedy campaign in 1968. A woman was shown to be borderline obsessed with Obama because of her incredible exuberance which stemmed from the fact she touched his shirt sleeve.¹⁹ The seeds planted by the coverage of Obama's first exposure had started to grow and a movement was in the works.

When the 2008 campaign was in full swing, the Democratic race quickly narrowed to a two-horse sprint between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. The media coverage followed suit. Prior to that, however, news sources were quick to write off the Hillary Clinton campaign following her underwhelming third place finish in the Iowa Caucuses. *Time* magazine's Karen Tumulty said that the loss in Iowa was crippling to Clinton's campaign and that, "The scope of Barack Obama's victory in Iowa has shaken the Clinton machine down to its bolts."²⁰ E.J. Dionne of *The Washington Post* said that, "[Clinton] has answers to hard policy questions, but [Obama] has the one answer that voters are hungering for: He offers himself as the vehicle for creating a new political movement that will break the country out of a sour, reactionary political era."²¹

Hillary had more delegates going into Super Tuesday, a day when most of the primary elections are held, but as more and more primaries passed, the delegate math became increasingly bleak for Clinton's campaign. She was not mathematically eliminated until the June 3rd primaries in South Dakota and Montana. However, prior to her official elimination, pundits explicitly wondered when she was going to withdraw. CNN started polling people on whether or not they thought Hillary should concede as early as February.²² Jack Cafferty stated that, after going over some poll responses, "There's a growing chorus of voices starting to call for Hillary Clinton to give it up."²³

Barack Obama was ahead in delegates by the end of February, but there were thirty more primaries left and no one could safely predict what the confusing 'super delegates' were going to do. Polling had indicated that Obama had an advantage in most of these remaining primaries, but nothing was certain and polling had failed in a few other primaries, most notably, New Hampshire. Hillary had no obligation to drop out of the campaign, yet some experts said that it would be wise to let Barack Obama take the reins of the party in order for her to save face for possible future political endeavors.

What these political correspondents did not seem to realize is that the nature of their job has changed thanks to new technology. Now that everyone in the world has a camera and means to publish footage in public domains such as the internet, the term 'anything can happen,' has

taken on a much more literal meaning. It is well documented how finicky the American public tends to be with political controversy. Anything from a scream into a microphone (Howard Dean) to a candidate using a bizarre racial epithet such as “Macaca,” (George Allen) can derail a candidacy. A young, newcomer to the political scene easily could have made a mistake that someone could verify through audio or video and Hillary Clinton, a seasoned veteran, most likely knew that. Yet, the mass media’s agenda from the very beginning appeared to be that Barack Obama was destined to be the president and a political force as strong as Hillary Clinton was no match for destiny.

Barack Obama’s biggest test was beating his fellow Democrats since the general feeling from most politically savvy people was that no matter who the Democrats ended up nominating, they would most likely wind up winning the Presidency because the incumbent, George W. Bush, was so unpopular. Since most people agreed that Obama had the inside track to the White House, the mass media took the opportunity to further elevate his status as an icon once it became clear who his opponents were.

The Messages in Magazine Covers

John McCain, the, then, 72-year old senator from Arizona, was the nominee for the Republican Party’s bid to retain the presidency. If the initial idea supported by the media was to make Barack Obama look as good as possible, then they got exactly what they wanted with John McCain’s nomination. A young, handsome black man is more aesthetically pleasing in photographs than an old white man with scars and wrinkles. For that reason, it makes sense that Barack Obama was on the cover of more magazines than John McCain since Obama’s face was more likely to sell magazines.

Obama received more exposure from magazines known for their coverage of topics other than politics which was very beneficial for his campaign. Obama graced the cover of *Rolling Stone* twice. John McCain was the publications cover only once, and it was not the most flattering picture. McCain was shown as a political cartoon character crashing a plane behind a bold-faced caption that read “THE MAKE BELIEVE MAVERICK.”²⁴ Compare this depiction to Obama’s first *Rolling Stone* appearance in which he is standing in front of a well-lit sky beaming celestial light. The photo is doctored to look as if Obama is a child of the light since it appears that he is emerging from it. The caption from Obama’s cover reads “A New Hope.”²⁵ The photo is also taken from the waist up from a lower angle, giving Obama a more powerful

looking appearance. John McCain's drawing is approached from a higher perspective since his plane is pointed towards the ground. This perspective not only made McCain look like a crazy individual, it also made him look less important than Barack Obama.

Newsweek and *Time* featured both Obama and McCain on their covers multiple times. Most of those covers were fairly non-partisan; however *Newsweek* had an interesting cover depicting both McCain and Obama.²⁶ On the left of the picture is Barack Obama under blue lighting and on the right side of the picture is John McCain under red lighting. The blue lighting gives Obama an appearance of being calm, cool, and collected. This appearance is highlighted even more since McCain's red lighting makes the blue lighting seem calmer. John McCain looks fairly intense and reactionary on this cover - a depiction that could not have helped his chances in the election considering America's increased intolerance for war. Additionally, the aforementioned surface imperfections that adorned McCain's face were somewhat highlighted in this picture thanks to the low-angle shot under his neck while Obama's shot (although close to the same angle) was much more flattering.

More iconic magazine covers were published after Obama had won the Presidential election in an electoral vote landslide. With McCain no longer relevant, magazines could portray Obama anyway they wanted. *Time* featured Obama on the cover after he was named Person of The Year in 2008.²⁷ The picture is a cartoon of Obama that is decidedly more flattering than John McCain's previous depiction in *Rolling Stone*. In the middle of the red and blue divide stands Obama looking out into this distance as if he is looking towards the future. The shot is taken from a low angle to portray the concept power to the viewer.

Newsweek also featured Obama on its cover after the election. It shows Obama from a level angle, but at a distance, as if it were a medium-long shot. Only the top-half of his body is exposed. When coupled with his crossed-arm stance, Obama conveys an appearance of solidarity and strength amidst the activity going on around him. The issues that are plaguing the world are in cartoon form along the edges (money, weapons, terrorism) of the cover and there are some names of important and infamous people arranged around Obama's picture, yet he appears un-phased by these issues as if to say, "Don't worry, America. I've got this."²⁸

These magazine covers of Obama alone have become icons for this generation. I recently went over to my friend's house and noticed that he had the celestial light *Rolling Stone* cover adorning his

wall. I asked him what he thought of Obama's job so far. He replied, "Disappointing."²⁹

Conclusion

It appears that my friend is not the only one who has been disappointed by Obama's performance thus far. At the time of this writing, Barack Obama's approval rating is 44%, according to Rasmussen Reports. This is down from twelve months ago when Mr. Obama's approval rating was near 70%. I have discussed Obama's performance with both liberal and conservative friends. Representatives from both groups have expressed dissatisfaction with the President. The liberals stated that Obama has been too 'centrist,' while the conservative compared Obama to the Carter Administration in a negative way. I believe that these plummeting approval ratings and disapproval from the nation represent the repercussions of Obama's various iconic depictions and constant praise from the media. This unfair amount of hype surrounding the President from the very beginning has created an unreachable ideal to which the public holds Obama.

With the public perception of a president being fairly inconsistent due to constant reporting, my theory of Barack Obama's representation God-type figure in the media seems to still hold some weight. In my research, I did not come across a single president who has been marketed and idolized as much as Barack Obama. Products with President Obama's face can be found everywhere and he even stars in commercials on occasion. The vast majority of the black population see Obama as a leader of a race and a culture, similar to Martin Luther King, Jr., a man who is idolized maybe more than any other American. My generation has bought Obama posters and t-shirts by the truckload and has been fairly patient in dealing with the negative press surrounding him. From the very beginning, Barack Obama has been groomed as a cultural icon by the way he has been portrayed in the media. This perception of him as an icon has led the public to be irrationally disappointed with his performance as president.

ENDNOTES

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THE WORLD'S FIRST PREGNANT MAN



SAMANTHA BELL

The World's First Pregnant Man

In American culture, disruptions to the gender binary are rejected. People performing in non-normative ways are pushed out of normative culture and become marked in the public sphere. Transgender people exemplify individuals that fit in this “other” category, as they are stigmatized for not fitting into social norms. Normative society uses shame and stigma to control those who defy its constraints, but with the protection of gender policy articulated in the International Bill of Gender Rights, these individuals can seek normalization within society. Thomas Beatie, a transgender individual who recently gave birth, exemplifies this concept.

Thomas Beatie, The World's First Pregnant Man

In order to understand Beatie's story and how it relates to the International Bill of Gender Rights, it is important to understand the meaning of being transgender. A transgender person is somebody who identifies as the gender of their biological sex (MacKenzie Pg. 12, 1994). Thomas Beatie, “The world's first pregnant man,” was born as a female named Tracy Lagondino, but always felt that he better identified with being a man. In the late 90's, Beatie decided to legally change his gender from female to male and his name from Tracy to Thomas. Although Beatie decided to get his breasts surgically removed, he did not remove any of his reproductive organs. Beatie's reasoning was that he felt that, “it's not a male or female desire to have a child. It's a human need. I'm a person and I have the right to have a biological child” (Oprah, 2008). After having his gender reassignment surgery, taking testosterone hormones and living beginning his life as a male, Beatie legally married his supportive and encouraging wife, Nancy. Nancy had dealt with a severe case of endometriosis, which resulted in a hysterectomy that left her infertile. Because of this, they decided that Thomas would stop using male hormones and carry their child. He naturally delivered a healthy baby girl, Suzan Juliette, on June 29, 2008. This adds to the ‘otherness’ of Beatie's life, and in order for him to be comfortable with himself, it

is important for him to acknowledge and live by the International Bill of Gender Rights.

Understanding the International Bill of Gender Rights

In order to understand why the International Bill of Gender Rights is significant to Beatie's life, one must first have an appropriate grounding in the background and meaning of the bill. Drafted by JoAnn Roberts and Sharon Stuart The International Bill of Gender Rights was adopted in 1996 by the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, Inc. The idea of these rights was to "express fundamental human and civil rights from a gender perspective" (Currah, Juang & Price Pg. 327, 2006). It is important not to view them as special rights only applicable to specific interest groups, but rather as rights to be claimed and exercised by every human regardless of their sex or gender.

Breaking Down the Bill

The Right to Define Gender Identity

All human beings carry, within themselves, an ever-unfolding idea of who they are and what they are capable of achieving. The individual's sense of self is not determined by chromosomal sex, genitalia, assigned birth sex, or initial gender role. Thus, the individual's identity and capabilities cannot be circumscribed by what society deems to be masculine or feminine behavior. It is fundamental that individuals have the right to define, and to redefine as their lives unfold, their own gender identities, without regard to chromosomal sex, genitalia, assigned birth sex, or initial gender role (Currah et al., Pg. 328).

The first section of the bill gives people the right to define their own gender identity, no matter what their chromosomal sex, genitalia, assigned birth sex or gender role initially was. They can identify as whatever gender they decide is most comfortable to perform.

In the media, Beatie is considered the first male to successfully conceive and naturally deliver a baby. He is not considered male because of the organs his body possesses, but because of the gender with which he identifies and performs. S.L. Samons explains that the individual determines gender. "There does not seem to be any reliable determinant of gender, except for the fact that most people seem to have a clear internal sense of self that includes gender... It appears that the closest that we can come to the truth is to allow individuals to define their own gender" (Samons, Pg. 21, 2009). This means that there is no predetermined gender Beatie is to perform, but rather, he can chose to perform the gender most comfortable to him.

In defining gender performance, Sloop references Judith Butler, quoting, “The “performative” dimension of construction is precisely the forced reiteration of norms” (Sloop, Pg. 23, 1963). Beatie’s gender performance pertains to his presentation of himself to the world as a male in addition to functioning in social roles associated with the male gender. He is now considered a legal male citizen of Oregon, and he is the male in a legal heterosexual marriage. In a CNN interview with Larry King, Beatie explained that many of his neighbors did not even believe that it was possible he could be pregnant, because they assumed that he was male (King, 2007). In an interview with Oprah, Beatie said, “I see pregnancy as a process, and it doesn’t define who I am. Ironically, being pregnant doesn’t make me feel any more female or feminine” (Oprah, 2008). Fundamentally, he feels that he is a male accessing the right to have a biological child. However, many people will argue that men do not have the right or means to have a baby and that makes spectacle out of his story.

The Right to Free Expression of Gender Identity

Given the right to define one’s own gender identity, all human beings have the corresponding right to free expression of their self defined gender identity (Currah et al., Pg 328).

The second section of the bill grants every human the right to freely express their self-defined gender identity without being restrained. The bill does not allow people in society to constrain others from acting freely.

Beatie is interesting because he is known as the “first pregnant male.” The first person to do something new is always interesting because there is no one else that can offer a comparison. G.O. Mackenzie maintains that it is rare that people think about gender, unless they are presented with a “gender spectacle” (Mackenzie, Pg. 1, 2004). The reason that they do not think about gender is because, as a society, Americans are quick to categorize people as male or female. G.O. Mackenzie explains, “There are only two ways to express gender in mainstream society, masculinity and femininity, and these are seen as diametrically opposed. In contemporary America one is labeled either a boy or girl or a man or woman. There is no real non-stigmatized or non-sensationalized category for a male-woman or a female-man” (MacKenzie, Pg. 14, 2004). When a person like Beatie does not fit into one of these categories, they are forced into a non- normative, marked group. Society stigmatizes marked groups by policing gender norms.

There is a need to control them because their ambiguity defies the constraints of the binary gender systems.

Beatie does not fit into a specific gender category, tending to challenge normative boundaries. As he challenges people's perspective of normative behaviors, many are unwilling to accept him for who he is or the choices that he has made. Society tries to police his sexuality because it does not meet the standards of the socially acceptable gender binary. In doing this, he is denied the right to feel like a man and is not given credit as "the first pregnant man."

One YouTube video suggests that the media takes Americans for idiots through believing audiences would actually understand Beatie as the "first pregnant man," especially when his possession of female genitalia proves his claim false ("Pregnant Man" A Hoax on Stupid Americans! Shame on Oprah! Buck 2008). Still, Beatie feels that having a uterus is not what defines his gender. He will continue to identify himself as a man. Beatie would probably agree with Sloop, who says that "The brain is the most important sexual organ as a way of suggesting that one's beauty, one's ultimate sexual attraction, lies more in how one presents oneself, how interesting one is as a mind, than in the superficialities of the body"(Sloop, Pg.40, 1963). This quote proposes that it is not the exterior of the body that should be judged, but rather one's mind that should be evaluated and seen as the most significant part of a person. Beatie and his wife exemplify this, as understands him as the man as which he identifies. Beatie does not feel that he has to comply with societal norms and he will not allow society to judge him based on his queered gender performance.

Beatie does not allow society's opinions to control the way he sees himself. Regardless of his biological makeup, his self identity and the gender he chooses to perform is male. In the book, "When The Opposite Sex Isn't," Sandra L. Samons explains why Beatie was so adamant about identifying as a male while having female reproductive organs. Samons makes it clear that both sexual orientation and gender identity are fundamental aspects of human sexuality and, because the two are related, they are often confused (Samons, 2009). In Beatie's case, it is safe to say that he is truly a man that had a baby, contrary to the belief that only females are able to conceive, because he is performing outside of the realm of the gender binary. Ultimately, Beatie is forcing individuals to think outside of their hegemonic notions of gender and sexuality.

The Right to Conceive, Bear or Adopt Children; The Right to Nurture and Have Custody Children and to Exercise Parental Capacity

Individuals have the right to conceive and bear children, to adopt children to have custody of children and to exercise parental capacity with respect to children, natural or adopted, without regard to chromosomal sex, genitalia, assigned birth sex, or initial gender role, or by virtue of a self-defined gender identity or the expression thereof (Currah et al., Pg. 330-31).

The concept of shame is placed upon Beatie by society because the majority of people in his life feel that he should not have a baby. However, according to the International Bill of Gender Rights, regardless of chromosomal sex, genitalia, birth sex, gender role or self-defined gender identity, all individuals have the right to conceive if they are able to have custody of their children. Because he does not fit the standards of bi-gender normativity, he is placed in the category labeled as “other.” Most likely, he feels “a sense of being different in a way that is not acceptable, of never feeling free to be fully one’s self, of always feeling separate rather than connected to others, a profound sense of loneliness” (Samons, Pg. 37, 2009). For many, he represents the un-relateable . This made him, and even his wife, subjects of shame. Because Beatie does not conform to dominant gender constructions, he is stigmatized within society.

This feeling of shame was placed on him from the beginning of the fertility process. Beatie and his wife went to nine doctors before they found one that would help them through the procedure. Many people in the medical field said that they were not comfortable enough with the situation to take an active role in it. Some turned him away because of religious beliefs while many others refused to speak to Beatie using male pronouns or recognize Nancy as his wife. But it was not only strangers that disapproved of the couple’s actions. In an interview with Oprah, Beatie explained how his family reacted in an unsupportive manner. Even Beatie’s father is still refusing to recognize Beatie’s identification as a man, continuing to call him Tracy. Additionally, after the first trial resulted in a fatal atopic pregnancy, Beatie’s brother said “it was a good thing you lost the baby it would have been a monster” (Oprah, 2008).

The Right to Control and Change One’s Own Body

All human beings have the right to control their bodies, which includes the right to change their bodies cosmetically, chemically, or surgically, so as to express a self-defined gender identity (Currah et al., Pg. 329).

This provision means that no individuals should be denied the right to change their bodies as a means of expressing a self-defined gender identity. Individuals shall not be denied human or civil rights on the basis that they have changed their bodies.

Public depictions of Beatie and his appearance are controversial in nature. Many people disavow his integrity as a man because they understand his role as the first pregnant man as a deception. According to Sloop, “Deception implies intent to make truth out of appearance” (Sloop, Pg. 57, 1963). The contradiction represented within Beatie’s pre-pregnancy aesthetic and subsequent revelations of his female reproductive system is what the public finds deceiving. Thoughts like these often arise against transgender people, because they are trying to perform as the sex they were not born.

A similar story to Beatie’s is that of Brandon Teena. He was a female-to-male transgender that moved to a new city to live as a male without anyone knowing his past. After being arrested, Teena was exposed as a female creating a feeling of betrayal in his closest relationships. Teena was forced to show his female genitalia in front of many people and was additionally raped by male friends. After sharing what had happened to him, the rapists killed him, using the excuse that Teena was deserving of their actions because of his deception.

In Teena’s situation, as well as Beatie’s, “deception is a term that logically favors fixed notions of sex/gender over an ideology of gender fluidity” (Sloop, Pg. 57, 1963). Because people outside of these situations do not understand the mindset of those who defy normative gender constructions, they feel a sense of betrayal related to their relationship with the transgender person. In both of these cases, confusion occurs in the people outside of the situation. In Brandon Teena’s case, his acquaintances felt enough betrayal and disloyalty to commit unforgivable acts. In regards to Beatie, an inexplicable amount of confusion and uncertainty occurred. This was exemplified in Beatie’s attempt to fill out his daughter’s birth certificate. Beatie states, “I filled it out as me father, Nancy mother, and they changed it last minute, and they put her as father and me as mother. And then they changed it again and put us as parents. That’s fine and dandy, but we don’t have a domestic partnership. We’re not a same-sex marriage. We’re legal man and wife” (King, 2008).

Conclusion

The International Bill of Gender Rights protects Thomas Beatie because it provides validity to the way he lives allowing him to be

content, happy and proud of himself. He is a wonderful husband and an amazing father and those are the most important things to him. He chooses to endure the ridicule, harassment and judgement, because he knows that if he is true to himself, the mockery will subside and he can then live the life he has always dreamed of with his new family.

All ten rights that make up the International Bill of Gender Rights pertain qualities of life that most people usually view as right rather than privilege. Most believe that there is no need for the rights to apply to them, but these rights are meant to apply to everyone. The other six rights that conclude the International Bill of Gender Rights are:

The Right To Secure and Retain Employment and To Receive Just Compensation.

The Right of Access to Gendered Space and Participation in Gendered Activity.

The Right to Competent Medical and Professional Care.

The Right to Freedom from Psychiatric Diagnosis or Treatment.

The Right to Sexual Expression

The Right to Form Committed, Loving Relationships and Enter Into Marital Contracts. (Currah et al., Pg. 328-331).

Transgender people, such as Beatie, have to work hard to be accepted by society. These rights give them the chance to be normalized, as well as help them to learn to accept themselves, which is most important. These gender rights are helpful to transgender people so that they never forget that they are worthy of living a life that is equal to others and a life full of happiness.

Being a transgender person is a hard thing to go through, because it is a difficult journey. It is hard to get to a point where the person is finally comfortable, can accept themselves and have other people able to appreciate them. Beatie persists beyond the shame that people try to place on him and is proud of the obstacles that he and his wife have overcome. Beatie continues to look past people's deceitful comments and also knows that they do not know him well enough to understand or make judgments about his situation. Working through the policing of society is a task within itself, but Beatie's non-normative and unconventional decision was a bold and brave move that got people to realize that everyone is different and should be accepted for who they are. Despite the tendency of normative society to shame and stigmatize marked groups, the International Bill of Gender Rights promotes the empowerment and acceptance of transgender people.

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Media in the Digital Generation

Aaron Mohammed

Being a part of the digital generation is a phenomenal experience. The evolution of technology during this time has given people of all ages exposure to an environment that no previous generation has ever experienced and rarely imagined. Children are given access to the world from a very young age, causing the imagination of what the world to be thrown out the window, and the reality of what the world truly is to be made available to them through technologically advanced mediums. One technology has lead to another and “new media” has been lead to “new new media.” “New new media” consists of different social networks such as MySpace, Facebook, and Twitter along with blogging, YouTube, Wikipedia, Digg, Second Life, Podcasting, among others (Levinson 1). Growing up during the digital generation gives children and students a taken-for-granted experience of a completely reformed tradition of learning, researching, educating, and communicating.

These days, a group of friends can come together to hang out and spend time together. As the three or four of them sit next to each other, they are all on their laptops, conversing into the world with friends through their Facebook accounts. They are rarely conversing with each other. As they sit, one of them notices how beautiful the sunset looks outside of their window. Each person takes a break from Facebook and “tweets” about it by updating their Twitter account status. One of the friends turns on their webcam and records themselves viewing the sunset. They save the video and upload it to their YouTube account. One of the friends posts a comment and blogs under the video making a reference to how she feels about the beautiful video. Another friend copies and pastes a link of the YouTube video into her new status update on Facebook and mentions it on her MySpace.

Even though all of these friends are physically present in the room, they are communicating much more extensively with the “global village” that Marshall McLuhan predicted would exist more than 50 years ago. These friends are exemplifying what McLuhan would call an extension of body, stating, “In the electric age, when our central nervous system is technologically extended to [the] whole of mankind and to incorporate the whole of mankind in us, we necessarily participate, in depth, in the consequences of our every action. It is no

longer possible to adopt the aloof and dissociated role of the literate Westerner” (McLuhan, 6-7). Although McLuhan’s critics considered him to be crazy for explaining this phenomenon at the time, those who followed his insight would have agreed that his prediction makes even more sense in the digital age in which we currently live. Those friends demonstrate similar actions in every aspect of their lives including work and school. The technology they now surround themselves with has singlehandedly changed the culture in which they live. Because of the “new new media,” communication has once again evolved for the better and, in some cases, for the worse.

Some of the major distinctions between “new new media” and new media are that “new new media” includes characteristics such as: *every consumer is a producer*, *you can’t fake being nonprofessional* and *you choose your medium*, to name a few. The meaning of *every consumer is a producer* is exactly how it sounds. Unlike blogs on websites of new media, “new new media” blogging consists of readers having complete control in being a primary writer in response to the blog read, or to be an author of a completely new blog altogether. This aspect describes readers becoming writers and viewers becoming producers (Levinson, 1). This hallmark gives children and young adults of all ages entitlement beyond any previous culture. This change in culture blurs the gap between adult and child privilege as writers and authors. There are no specific qualifications necessary to be considered a producer. The meaning of *you can’t fake being nonprofessional* is that not only can “new new media” be done by anyone; it can be done at anytime and in any setting. Because money isn’t necessarily made through these mediums, the authenticities of these authors are established because they *don’t* write for a newspaper or produce for a broadcast medium of old media or even new media. Money is not the main purpose of the communication so professional standards are not required (Levinson, 2). This directly relates because members of the digital generation are typically still in school or are just now breaking into the working world. After being brought up through such a non-professionalized culture of media, most need to re-adjust and re-learn the professionalism aspect of similar or different mediums. The last distinction is *choosing your medium*. This refers to the diversity of talent throughout these mediums. Some people may be great writers and choose the blogging media. Others are weaker writers but have good voices and choose podcasting media. There are “new new media” that corresponds with short bursts of consuming and producing and others that require longer texts (Levinson, 2). This openness to the different media of the digital era allows the culture to strive in the transformation of communicating.

It is important to understand these distinctions in media to understand how exactly the change in culture and communicating occurs. In an analysis of media evolution and the change of culture, it is learned that “most scholars have been hesitant to explore the intricate ways in which changes in forms of communication—such as the addition of writing to oral societies, the addition of printing to scribal societies, the addition of radio to print cultures, and the subsequent wide use of television, the Internet, and other electronic media [such as “new new media]—may encourage new forms of social organization and undermine old ones (Meyrowitz, 1). It is important to understand this to grasp what McLuhan meant when he described what the new medium at the time, television, would do to the culture of communicating between people in a room in which the television was on. He predicted that television would affect conversations between two people and also affect the attention one person gives to another while all of their senses are being completely dedicated to whatever was going on the television. The same concept must be understood in the case of the digital generation and the effect “new new media” has on a generation of children and young adults who spend their time and live their lives through these media. This concept can be related to presenteeism. Presenteeism indicates a person who is present in a physical body presence however, is absent in the sense of the mind. This is a problem among workers who are at a job, but are not fully functioning, because they are absent in the mind and their productivity is cut by a third or more (“Working Parents”). This very concept is what McLuhan warned people about and predicted the future would be like. It is also the same concept that relates to our digital generation and the many technologies that occupy our minds, kidnapping us from our actual physical surroundings to a global cyber world.

While professors lecture, students are able to converse freely to one another or to others around the world without even opening their mouths. As these conversations go on, the essence or key points of the lecture at hand may be lost. The many different social networks allow young adults to portray the most private aspects of their lives for all of the internet, and inevitably the cyber world to see. If they are seeking employment, many companies have the ability just as anyone else, to find their potential employee profiles and learn about things that the young adult may not have wanted their potential job to know, causing the once future worker to lose their opportunity to prove they are capable for the job. Education and economics are not the only aspects that are seriously affected by social networks and “new new media.” The psychological and emotional aspects of people in this generation are also tremendously

affected. Many people become dependent on the different media to express themselves and even to communicate. They lose the ability to fluently communicate in ‘real life’ situations and become socially awkward. In a relationship, partners lose the ability to show their love and affection without the crutch of the new technology. Emotional stagnation is exhibited and may not be able to overcome without psychological counseling.

Although the newest form of media during the age of the digital generation has provided a futuristic technologically advanced atmosphere and has afforded many luxuries to simplify communicating and life in general, it has also weakened the consciousness of people’s physical surroundings, and provided distractions for students and workers. Just like the advent of the cellular telephone, the emergence of “new new media” has presented a heavy dependency and reliance for people of this era. Media such as social networks have exposed privacy into the public and blurred lines between work and home settings. Actual and personal communication has been left at a standstill and artificial intelligence has become increasingly dominant. People who pursue an education in writing may lose their competitive edge to an up and coming student who has been blogging his entire conscious life. Professionalism in the area has been redefined. Access to media such as Wikipedia and the likes have opened doors to ‘editors’ that are pursuant of experience over salary. “New new media” has changed the world of the digital generation by expanding opportunities and exposing and creating new faults.

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Internet's Rise to Power

Katie Relihan

Every new era of communication has emerged through the development of a more advanced medium. When a new form of communication is first introduced the impact is small because the opportunities and potential have yet to be realized; but once the technology is created and designated practical uses the medium can become a mass medium. This has been true for all new media, from the printing press in the print era to radio and television in the electronic era, and now we are beginning to see the internet in the digital era. As society embraces the digital era, the potential for the internet becomes more apparent. The future of the internet is clear: it is the new mass medium and will come to embody the prominence television has enjoyed for the past fifty years. The general consensus among media sources and companies is that the internet is the future of communication; however, the impact of the emerging internet is full of controversy over the benefits and problems the public's heavy reliance on the medium. The debate is focused on three key issues: Net Neutrality, availability, and the impact on other media. With the internet's usage and functions rapidly growing, the coverage of these issues in the media is escalating as law makers and reporters are looking for answers to the concerns.

The growth of the internet has created an issue of who should control it and the types of regulations that should be put in place. Specifically, there has been an immense amount of coverage regarding "Net Neutrality," a principle favoring keeping the internet a free and open medium without restrictions on content or speed of access. Many of the internet service providers and big companies are trying to impose different prices for different levels of content and speeds of access to sites. The new FCC chairman Julius Genachowski has been adamant in the media lately declaring his commitment to keeping internet access equal. In an article in *The Washington Post*, Genachowski affirmed the regulations he is proposing "seek to preserve the Internet as unparalleled engine for economic growth and prosperity" (Kang, *Washington Post*). FCC officials and consumers are concerned about censorship and the future of innovation if internet providers begin to discriminate among its users offering better access only at higher rates. In the absence of Net Neutrality the internet providers would have the ability to censor information, through limiting the speeds that content can be sent and downloaded and the capability of transferring and viewing content

depending on your level of access. Small businesses, consumers, and big internet based companies that rely on consumers having equal access need Net Neutrality to prosper because otherwise “the Internet’s doors [will be] shut to entrepreneurs, the spirit of innovation stifled, the full and free flow of information compromised” (Richman, MSNBC.com). The outcome of the Net Neutrality issue and the laws the FCC puts in place will determine how the internet is used and who is able to use it. If full Net Neutrality is not put into place, the future of the internet as the major medium could be compromised because limitations to consumers and businesses would prevent them from using the internet to its full potential.

The internet cannot become the major medium it is anticipated to be if it is not made available in terms of uses, costs and network size. The use of the internet is rapidly expanding, and there is expected to be a “thirtyfold increase in wireless Internet traffic over the next five years with only a threefold increase in network capacity” (Pham, LA Times). However, right now the networks are not large enough to handle the suddenly increasing demand brought on by the development of internet accessible phones and net books. The lack of network availability has been referred to as a “looming crisis” by Genachowski in a Wall Street Journal article because the internet cannot be utilized without sufficient channels of distribution. The FCC is committed to ensuring the future of the internet as the major medium, and to do so have developed “two solutions: making more efficient use of the current network and freeing up more airwaves such as the ones the FCC auctioned off last year” (Pham, LA Times). Although the supply of available network coverage is fixable through expansion, the internet faces problem of availability from the demand side as well. The internet itself is an open and free medium, however, the equipment and service can be extremely costly. The high cost of computers and internet service have created a fear of a “digital divide” between those who can afford computers and service and those who cannot. Costs are a key issue for many Americans, as one article noted the “vast majority of South Carolinians have access to high-speed Internet, but many choose not to subscribe, partly because of the monthly costs... Others said some need more than Internet access; they also need help getting the computers and software to hook up to it” (Behre, Post and Courier). Local governments and cities are tackling this issue themselves, by offering free computer use and internet access in libraries and schools and creating free Wi-Fi networks in public areas. For example the city of Philadelphia is attempting to build a 135 mile Wi-Fi network to provide the city with low cost internet service. The

internet is a key channel of communication and in order for everyone to remain in touch with society and the world it must be expanded to comply with the increased reliance and need.

The most significant effect of the rise of the internet will be on other key media sources, specifically television and cable. Today, everything has a website and can be accessed online and “the rising popularity of online video has cast doubt on the long term business models of both film and TV industries” (Schechner, *Wall Street Journal*). Services such as Hulu.com, YouTube and iTunes make video entertainment readily available for consumers online whenever they want. Many cable industry officials have alluded the expanded use of the internet is not the biggest issue, but rather that “the Internet in some ways poses an even bigger threat: free content” with an “increasing amount of programs...being offered free of charge on Web sites” (Grant and Worden, *Wall Street Journal*). This “cable bypass” (WSJ) is taking away audience and profits from cable companies and other traditional media, since many newspapers and radio stations are also accessible free online. For many consumers the Internet is more appealing for viewing programs and getting news, because they can watch and read on their own time. Cable companies are not giving in to the internet, however, as they “are experimenting with packaging cable service and Internet content together: subscribers to cable service can also watch TV on their computers, but nonsubscribers can’t get the shows” (Grant and Worden, *Wall Street Journal*). This is just one form of media convergence cable and television companies are practicing in order to remain competitive in the digital era. Comcast is the most aggressive company in responding to the rise of the internet and has received a vast amount of coverage for its attempted acquisition of NBC Universal. If the merger is successful Comcast would control a wide and complex media base, and is a part of “Mr. Robert’s [Comcast CEO] recent strategies” which “were a reaction to the Internet threat” (Grant and Worden, *Wall Street Journal*). The rise of the Internet is beneficial to consumers from this standpoint, as cable companies are forced to offer better packages, prices, and innovative technologies to keep customers. Television and cable are not going to completely disappear, but the rise of the internet will force them to change their approach and structure in the media world.

The world is swiftly moving into the digital age of communication, and the upsurge of the internet as the mass medium drove the shift out of the electronic age. The Internet has already expanded the availability of knowledge and capability of communication in ways never imagined, yet we have merely scratched the surface of its

potential. The possibilities of the Internet are endless because of its openness and free access; and will further grow if Net Neutrality prevails and the availability of the internet improves. There are many new innovative uses for the internet to improve everything from medical treatment to fighting crime. For example some hospitals are using telemedicine, in which the internet is used to can confer with experts in other areas and hospitals to find best treatment for patient, and limits the hassle of patients traveling far for special treatments or tests. Other useful innovations regard crime fighting and the use of tracking the “digital fingerprints” criminals leave behind. The capabilities of the internet are infinite, as anyone can create a website or blog to start a company, express their ideas, or raise awareness about a cause; and everyday new uses are discovered for anything from entertainment to research. There is no doubt “Internet-access business is likely to become more valuable as the Web becomes central to everyday life” (Schechner, *Wall Street Journal*).

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Facebook and Interpersonal Relationships

Kimberly Rogers

Introduction

The Internet is a vast span of information and networking systems that can link us to people, places and things we never thought possible. Initially the Internet was believed to be a personal journey through space and time; many did not see the Internet as a true means of communication. However, it is currently one of the main methods of communication and interaction that we utilize. Interaction can be a unique and diverse kind of communication depending on the site or venue it is executed within. This applies to both face-to-face interaction and online interaction. Both contexts encourage and allow communication to transpire, but the content and the details of the interaction can vary depending on which place it had actually occurred.

Both sites, face-to-face and online, can be private and public locations for communication. Face-to-face interactions can be public in places like parties, bars, and sporting events. Online interaction can be public in chat rooms, instant messaging conversations, or social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace. These settings, among many others, allow large numbers of unacquainted people to become acquainted, a concept provided by Goffman (1963). Acquaintanceship is made possible through verbal and visual language in face-to-face interaction, and through the ability to understand others through self presentations on web pages, and textual correspondence in online interaction. According to Gardner (1995) public communication takes place in sites and contexts that are open to all. This is made possible through the use and visitation of any of the previously mentioned locations.

Although both forms of interaction can be public, the techniques one uses to make sense of those they communicate with are quite different. In face-to-face interactions one can utilize several different techniques that not only involve verbal communication, but the visual and bodily forms of language as well. These physical methods of communication may or may not be voluntary, but are still useful in understanding the situation at hand. Online interaction only allows those in conversation access to the information the other chooses to present. One's primary means of understanding the other is through the information they willingly provide, whether it is true or false. Additionally, they could also apply other previously known data to make

a supposition of that person. According to Sacks (1985) one can make sense of others and situations through varied information and details to create a logical conclusion or inference. This is what he calls the Inference Making Machine, which is employed unknowingly by individuals when they make assumptions in their interactions. This theory is employed in both face-to-face and online interaction.

Both face-to-face and online sites do allow privacy to some degree. In face-to-face interaction, one can surround themselves with those they are comfortable and acquainted with, and they can have private conversations (Goffman 1963). Online sites allow private and intimate conversations, and exposure through the implementation of privacy controls, which can limit access to interaction and personal information to those you truly know. So although the World Wide Web appears to be extremely public, it can be private if a user wants, or needs it to be.

Through understanding these communicative perspectives, I would like to open a new site of investigative space through the application of these concepts to Facebook. Facebook allows interaction through personal web pages, where members that you allow have the opportunity to visit your profile. “Friends” can leave messages and comments, or just visit your page to see and learn more about you. This site encourages members to visit and explore other’s pages, and to make connections through mutual friends and interests. This venue gives members many opportunities to meet people, and was an ideal setting for my research. I also realized that many others who use the site also analyzed the interactions they witnessed and partook in themselves. As I conducted my research, I witnessed true examples of ordinary people employing the concepts of the scholars we have studied.

Fabricated Online Identities and their Lack of True Accountability

There are three concepts that are questioned and tested by the implementation of the World Wide Web. These are privacy, publicity, and accountability, entities that are usually accepted, understood, and rarely questioned. Lee (2006) addresses these concepts and it is these ideas that help probe the discussions and explorations that will be vital to this transcript.

As I have previously mentioned, I chose to research Facebook. Facebook is a site that was originally designed for college students, but is now open to the entire public. Initially it was a private place and ones ticket in was the ownership of a college e-mail address, however even at this time it was public to everyone within your college network. Now, it

is ultimately open to the entire public, regardless of educational status or lack thereof. If one would like to make their profile private, and accessible to only a select sample of people, there are privacy controls available. If one does have a restricted profile, only their picture, network, and links to inquire about gaining access are visible (Appendix 1). Unless one employs the privacy controls, one's profile is on display for the entire public within their network.

Gardner (1995) discusses privacy and publicity and also proposes that public places are sites and contexts open to all, and private places are sites and contexts only open to a select few. Public places are a kind of leveling ground, and widen the range of possible kinds of interaction and people. So Facebook is in a sense both a private and public venue, depending on the member and their comfort with the site and the other members. It is in this way that Lee (2006) shows the Internet's ability to be a private and a public network.

On one's Facebook account various types of information are presented to the site's visitors. The site's owner decides what types of information, how much information, and different applications and textual details they want to describe and express them. Many use descriptions of their interests and preferences of music, movies and television as well. Some members use the About Me section as an opportunity to give lengthy descriptions or detailed analysis of the kind of person they believe themselves to be. Applications, which are extra sections that are used to decorate and express ones self even further are a new addition to the Facebook community, and are widely used to at least some degree by most members. Pictures are also a popular feature of Facebook, and help to create a visual aspect for the Facebook visitor of that particular member and the types of interactions, people, and activities they partake in. All of this information can be used and assessed to create an inference about that member, whether it is true or false. One can view where another member is from, what they like, who their friends are and from this information one can deduce what kind of person they are, or appear to be. Using the information on a Facebook site to make inferences about others is like employing Sack's Inference Making Machine (1985). You can take bits of information, add them together, and from that you could produce an assumption about whom or what that person is.

Accountability, however, is never guaranteed in an online venue. The information presented to you on one's Facebook site is not guaranteed to be genuine and should only be taken at face value especially if you do not personally know the other member. A lack of accountability is compromised in all online settings regardless of the site. One could

be having a conversation with one person that they do not particularly know, when they believe that they are truly conversing with one that they are acquainted with. Someone could present himself or herself as one person, when in reality they are completely different. The Internet gives people the opportunity to be something or someone else; and Internet users must remember this at all times. Online accounts, and their lack of true accountability, allow the timid to be more social, the unattractive to be beautiful, and the boring to appear fun. However keep in mind, that these ideas can be used in reverse as well. One could personally know someone and have a clear idea of whom and what they are about, and then view their online site and revamp their view of that person, whether in a negative or a positive way.

Through the use of textual descriptions, and vibrant applications one can design an identity, the kind of identity they perhaps wish truly fit them in reality. Through the use of applications, words, and pictures one can build, and create themselves, in the virtual world. Lucal (1999) discussed being perceived as someone she was not. Lucal was a woman who was mistaken for a man. She presented herself in a manly fashion, and through her self-presentation and appearance she lost her true identity, and those who encountered her used what they saw on her outer person to infer that she was a male. This is another example of the application of Sack's Inference Making Machine.

The online world gives members the opportunity to present themselves in a manner of their own creation and ingenuity, so that those who encounter their web page perceive them in a particular way. The creation of a virtual personae (Turkle, 1995) is the person and image one generates to represent them in the online world. This new ability to create ones self in a virtual realm has a severe impact on identity, and is questionable in regards to accountability and validity, which I have previously mentioned.

Earlier I discussed how we can use information, online presentation, and supposed identity to make inferences about a person, now I will address these in terms of "pattern knowledge" another concept proposed by Lee (2006). "Pattern knowledge" is one of Lee's main focuses in his article; it is directly related to themes expressed by both Sacks (1985) and Garfinkel (1963). Lee's concepts borrow aspects of these other distinguished scholars. From Sack's it employs his use of the Inference Making Machine, which has been discussed several times within this text. However from Garfinkel he borrows his Documentary Method of Interpretation, which is the idea that our sense is selective, and what we chose to see or acknowledge helps to shape and mold our views and

opinions. These two ideas can be used to help create our image and opinion of others online. Lee uses these ideas, but provides examples of the uses in the online realm. From ones screen name, ones e-mail address, the ways one types and communicates are all indicators that we use to make inferences and interpretations about what and who people are.

According to Goffman (1963) there are different kinds of interaction among those acquainted and unacquainted, because each category has different rules for engagement and interaction. It is clear by viewing a conversation what types of relationships and the level of comfort two people within a conversation have. By using the previously mentioned methods for making inferences any knowledgeable person should be able to create logical assumptions about the kinds of relationship two people share.

Conclusion

It is clearly obvious that the internet does hold a vast amount of information about people, places, and things. But is any of the information truly accounted for? This is the greatest problem for the internet, and for its users. And how are our minds and perceptions manipulated by the design and structure of web pages and those who create them? It is alarming that such an important and ordinary tool in our modern world may be unreliable because there is no true accountability to support it. This applies to the old adage, “You have to see it to believe it.” To completely trust anyone or anything it truly is necessary to have face-to-face interaction and personal knowledge. Although the online realm is helpful and necessary, it is not always accurate and can not always be taken literally, without proper proof and accountability.

Online contexts such as Facebook and MySpace encourage social interaction and relationships, but the types of relationships and how they form in the modern age may be compromised too, according to Lofland (1975). Lofland claims that in today’s contemporary world many maximize their knowledge of others with a minimum of information, and this can result in more categorical knowledge than personal knowledge of others. This can be witnessed in Facebook where many members try to meet multiple people, through what they know about them online. So with minimal information we categorize those we technically don’t know. Facebook could potentially make it very difficult to achieve a true relationship by only using Facebook as grounds for acquiring knowledge about others. One cannot gain friends through Facebook alone. The internet may be sacrificing the

types of natural communication and interaction we as humans are meant to have, Language and verbal communication are necessary to truly make sense of the people and the world around us.

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A Healthy Look at Social Media

Andrew Hennessy

Imagine a surgeon giving live updates while in the operating room. Or a hospital broadcasting up to date information on groundbreaking research. Well, it's too late to imagine because this is happening already. Worldwide, hospitals, doctors, and healthcare executives are adjusting to this new world of Health 2.0; or more specifically: social media.

Introduction

Access to information and communication technology (ICT) is growing every year in all regions of the world.¹ In 2009, about one in four people globally were using the Internet.³ According to Carleen Hawn, "Although health care may be one of America's leading industries in terms of size and scope, it's been among the slowest to embrace advances in communications and information technology (IT)."⁴

As a combination of communication and IT, social media is becoming increasingly popular as well. Social media can be defined as, "media designed to be disseminated through social interaction."⁵ It "supports the human need for social interaction, using the Internet and web-based technologies to transform broadcast media monologues (one to many) into social media dialogues (many to many)."⁵ This holds true in the field of healthcare; especially hospitals. There are multiple web resources that publish health information such as Web M.D.⁶, however, these sites do not deal with individual patient information and thus are not included in this discussion.

Social media tools such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are directly related to the new phenomena known as Health 2.0 (See Table 1). Health 2.0 is an outgrowth of the Web 2.0 era, using modern, flexible web site design methods. Web 2.0 web sites typically leverage social networking and the collective knowledge of the masses to create value and quality for users of the Web site.⁷ Social media relates to these tools that are being used while social networking refers to establishing relationships and networking with others using the social media tools. However, along with the advancements of information technology comes the age of hackers and those who violate others privacy. Hospitals are required by law to keep patient medical information confidential; however with this potential "boom" in hospitals using social media, it raises an interesting ethical dilemma.

Hospitals and their employees should be using tools such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and Linked-In allowing hospitals to maximize their potential return. This essay examines both the risks and advantages of hospitals using social media. It seeks to convince the reader that the benefits of social media greatly outweigh the risks of compromising patient confidentiality and staff safety in the workplace.

In recent months there have been more and more news stories about hospital employees violating patient privacy by “Tweeting” (Twitter word for posting a message) or putting updates on their Facebook account in regards to patient information. Even if no personal information is posted, this can lead to a huge violation of The Privacy Act of 1974 or the more recent Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

In October 2009, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a final ruling to modify HIPAA. The rule states that, “Minimum civil penalty per violation for covered entities unaware of violations and exercising reasonable diligence is \$100 under the new rules, while the minimum civil penalty per violation for instances deemed unreasonable for the covered entity to comply is \$1,000. Violations resulting from willful neglect that are not corrected carry minimum penalties of \$50,000 per violation, and violations from willful neglect that are corrected carry minimum fines of \$10,000.”¹⁰

This new rule applies directly to hospital organizations using social media as it’s use can lead to a violation of this new policy. Violations can lead to lawsuits, and lawsuits can not only result in a loss of money, but perhaps more important, a loss of reputation. Hospitals throughout the United States pride themselves on their reputation to deliver the best health care possible. This includes protecting patients and their rights.

In response to this, many Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and other health care executives have limited the use of, or altogether outlawed the use of social media in the workplace. These executives view social media as more of a risk than a benefit. The problem is that people using social media in hospitals are using it for the wrong reasons or do not know how to maximize their return. There are some risks, however, with proper instruction on how to use these tools, these hazards can easily be avoided and hospitals have the opportunity to reap the benefits of social media.

Risks of Hospitals Using Social Media

Although social media should be used in hospitals, it is important

to note the risks and ethical issues that come along with this behavior. There are two issues on the immediate surface; negligence and lack of respect (autonomy) towards patients. Both of these issues can lead to lawsuits for hospitals. Any patient that enters a hospital has the right (and wants) to feel safe and secure. The last thing a patient should have on his/her mind is worrying about their privacy being violated. It is imperative for physicians and other hospital employees to defend these rights. Compromising patient information or reproducing it in any form without consent is highly illegal. Social media provides a direct link between confidential hospital information and the general public. It is extremely important not to overlook these risks as doing so can prove to be very costly not only for the individual, but the organization as a whole.

The risks associated with using social media in hospital organizations are not just a fear of hospital executives, but have become a reality as hospitals across the nation have banned the use of social media in their hospitals. In fact, according to New England Cable News (NECN) Director of Digital Media Ted McEnroe, as of October 2009, “54% of companies have banned worker access to sites like Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace while at work; 19% say access is permitted for business use only, 16% allow limited personal use and just 10% say they aren’t clamping down at all - yet.”¹² Dr. Daniel Sands of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) in Boston, MA believes that, “physicians’ concerns over complying with HIPAA is one reason the use of social media in health care hasn’t taken off even more quickly.”¹⁴

In October 2009, New England Baptist Hospital in Boston, MA banned the use of Facebook and other social media tools after it was discovered a hospital employee was posting patient information on their Facebook account. There was no specific patient information (e.g. name of patient and illness of patient) available, however, hospital CEO Patricia L. Hannon was not going to take any chances. She immediately banned all use of social media in the hospital until further notice. According to sources, the hospital’s plan is “to come up with a social media policy and then unblock the sites.”¹³ Carleen Hawn notes that, “Already the first lawsuits have been filed against physicians whom patients accused of violating the privacy of medical information.”¹⁴

Despite the risks of using social media in hospitals, the benefits greatly outweigh the risks associated. “Any form of communication (even conversations in the elevator!) can violate important privacy rules, but limiting people’s access to social media in the workplace will mainly inhibit the growth of community and discourage useful information

sharing. It also creates a generational gap, in that Facebook, in particular, is often the medium of choice for people of a certain age.”¹⁴ says Paul Levy, President and CEO of BIDMC in Boston. Levy has been blogging for several years, providing transparency into what goes on at BIDMC. Regardless of which social media tool is “best”, each one is significant in that each has its’ own unique qualities that separate it from the rest.

Prior to the discussion about the benefits of using social media, it is important to note that all of these social media tools are free to any individual and/or organization. In terms of social media presence, this eliminates the divide between the small, not-for-profit hospitals and the multi-million dollar ones. Using social media in health care “is about changing the locus of control to the patient and altering the relationships between care givers and care reviewers.”¹⁴

Benefits of Hospitals Using Social Media

Blogs are the most popular form of mass communication between a person/organization and its audience. Blogs allow for a more personal relationship between hospital and patients. Blogs works in two ways. “First of all, they’re an easy way for the readers to find information and resources they want or need. That’s obvious and could be used internally in many organizations. Second, blogs are a kind of “university light” for the blogger. Blogging is on-the-job learning.”¹⁵ Media sources can also easily follow hospital news with updated blog posts. Some believe Paul Levy serves as a role model for other hospital CEOs across the country. Scott Kashman, CEO of St. Joseph Medical Center in Kansas City, Mo., argues, “It’s likely that other hospital CEOs who choose to blog, did so partly because Levy paved the way.”¹⁶

As Levy previously stated, Facebook is the social media choice for people of a certain age. Facebook was originally used mainly among college students and has now expanded so that everyone (even your grandmother) is on it. In fact, as of October 2009, Facebook, has more than 62 million active subscribers and is still growing!¹⁷ Each registered user has their own personal profile page. According to web veteran Steve Chang, “Facebook encourages word of mouth advertising. If someone likes your profile page or the products or services you sold them, they may be able to recommend you to their network of friends and also their groups. This means that the people on Facebook will be the ones that will advertise for you.”¹⁷ This allows for hospitals to easily advertise without spending any money.

Twitter is newest among the other social media tools. Those who do not understand how Twitter works often view this tool as pointless.

Also, those who do not use the Twitter for its designed purpose get nothing out of it. Sure, one can “Tweet” a message saying, “I am eating a tuna fish sandwich”, but in all honesty, who cares? Twitter has the unique capability of delivering a message to thousands of people instantly. It allows for quick human responses. Using Twitter gives hospitals the ability to alert the public of a new service or breakthrough research in a matter of seconds.

Haydn Bush notes that, “most hospitals using Twitter today do so as an extension of existing public relations efforts, with their posts limited to links to news or hospital events.” For example, “In late April, the most common update on hospitals’ Twitter pages were about the outbreak of swine flu.”¹⁸

According to Bush, “In January 2009, Henry Ford Health Systems used Twitter to post updates on a robotic bladder removal surgery, part of a live broadcast of the surgery to a robotic urology conference in Las Vegas. Only the surgeons at the conference could see the live video feed, but the general public could follow the Twitter postings. The event is believed to be the first time a hospital used Twitter to cover a live surgery.”¹⁸

Paul Levy says that hospital CEOs should personally use Twitter only if they have a strong interest in doing so along with a commitment to update their postings regularly. “If you’ve got a media department and a corporate Web site and you’re putting out new stuff, it’s inconceivable that you wouldn’t want to do this,” Levy says. “This is a low-risk, low exposure medium.” More broadly, he says, “Every hospital should be using Twitter to directly communicate with patients and generate interest in the hospital. The service is free, so the only cost is in labor hours.”¹⁸

Not only can Twitter be used to push out information, but also to get feedback and individually communicate with patients and/or the general public. Bill Ferris, manager of Web services at Henry Ford Health Systems, says he initially signed the company up for Twitter because he hoped to find feedback about the hospital from patients who use the social media tool.¹⁸

Linked-In, also known as the “professional Facebook”, is similar in that the user can connect with hundreds or even thousands of people but in a more professional manner. Linked-In allows the user to set up his/her personal profile in a professional sense. For job seekers, one can post their current and/or past job experiences. A user can put up his/her resume in their profile. They can also connect with and establish relationships with potential employers that they would not normally be able to communicate with without the internet. Linked-In can improve a

hospital's visibility and its ability to connect with patients, doctors, and/or the general public.

Social media also plays a huge role in terms of funding for non profit organizations. "Forty-five percent of the non-profits studied in 2009 reported social media are very important to their fundraising strategy."¹⁹ These hospitals struggle to get money donated to their organization; especially with the recent economic recession. Rick Shadyac, CEO of ALSAC/St. Jude's Children Research Hospital, says, "online fundraising increases the profit margin by cutting costs associated with traditional methods of fundraising, such as direct-mail campaigns. The Lupus Foundation of America (LFA) uses the "Causes" application on Facebook to engage its members by sending out e-mails and notifications two to three times a week."¹⁹

Still Not Convinced?

"Health is a logical area in which individuals will want to seek opinions from others and communicate their experiences."²⁰ A recent study of the engaged e-patient population by the Pew Internet and American Life Project estimates that between 75 and 80 percent of Internet users seek health care information.²¹ Similarly, Harris Interactive News reported that 81 percent of all Internet users, and 66 percent of all adults (or approximately 150 million consumers), used the Internet to seek out health information.²¹ Hospitals are doing themselves an injustice and putting their organization at a disadvantage by not establishing an active online social media presence. It is an easy and free way to reach out to patients.

Sarasohn-Kahn reports that the top five medical reasons consumers use social media are: "to see what other consumers say about their medication or treatment, to research other consumers' knowledge and experiences, to learn skills or get education that helps me manage my condition, to get emotional support, and to build awareness around a disease or cause" Also, "53 percent of those who were 18 to 24 years old used the web to find hospitals and urgent care facilities."²¹ The hospital organizations that have put the time and effort into building a strong social media presence will be able to reach out to this population. Ultimately this organization will reap the benefits in terms of patient volume, financially, and hospital reputation.

The fact is: social media is here to stay and we have to learn to adapt. Each social media tool has its own significant purpose that separates itself from the others. Having the ability to use multiple social media tools simultaneously is an acquired skill that has proven to have

distinct advantages. Using these tools together makes an organization's social media and online presence much stronger (e.g. using twitter to direct people to hospital blog which boosts traffic). However, one must understand the importance of using it in a correct manner. Using social media is a great way to develop a strong marketing strategy to get the word out about a hospitals services and products. Given this, too much exposure or disregarded information can produce negative responses. It is important to keep the messages clean and limited. The means to use social media correctly yields the power to connect with thousands of people instantly without getting out of your seat.

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Internet Culture: Popular Culture by the People

Kendra Mack

What would cultural theorists have thought fifty years ago if they were told that someday there would be a medium in which everyone could produce their own content to instantaneously share with anyone in the world in a seemingly infinite space? It would be an interactive medium in which everyone is simultaneously a consumer and a producer, and a medium in which what is considered culturally important is whatever is made most popular. Would they have thought of it as impending democracy of the media and popular culture? Or would they have feared an onslaught of amateur material that would overshadow quality cultural content? Whatever they would have thought, that medium is here. We are living in the age of the Internet, and it is difficult to quantify the impact it is having on popular culture. Even today, cultural theorists scratch their heads and debate about the direction the Internet is taking us and where it has already brought us. Though, whether it is a positive or negative thing, the emergence of Internet culture in the past decade is leading popular culture into a viral culture in which stories are born, shared, made quickly popular, and then fall out of popularity as quickly as they came. Not only this, but the Internet is greatly contributing to the emergence of popular culture as a participatory culture in which signs cannot be transformed into popular culture artifacts without there being some sort of direct involvement from the reader. The Internet has proven that the general public no longer wishes to just consume cultural content, but to produce and share it.

Cultural theorist and viral culture researcher Bill Wasik states that websites and web content spread “when they speak to the particular relationships between people.” (55). An item on the Internet “goes viral” when it is something that people look at and want to share with others because they want to generate a reaction from others. They want others to see the same meaning in the piece as themselves as a way of connecting. So when a person sees a “LOLcat” (an image macro of a cat doing something funny alongside a cute caption) and sends it to his her friend, the person expects to share the same meaning with that person - that it’s cute and worth a chuckle. And “sharing” does not just mean sending a link through email as it once used to. Social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter facilitate sharing as well, allowing people to send links, videos, and images to whoever is their “friend” or “follower.”

Viral culture is made up of these shared items Wasik refers to as “nanostories,” or memes (3). Popular culture as a whole is beginning to look a lot like the viral culture of the Internet as it is gradually being broken down into these short narratives that pass in and out of popularity in a matter of days, weeks, or a month at most. Wasik relates his theory to what he sees in the news. News stories today generate a lot of interest in something sensational, and its media presence spikes. By the time a follow up is ready, the news has latched onto a new story or stories (Wasik 4). An example would be the very recent media coverage of the “balloon boy” and the hoax the Heene family created that their child was in danger. The story quickly gained a lot of interest, and then fell out of popularity nearly as quickly as it took over all the news stations.

The capability of an item to go viral is what pushes it into popularity on the Internet and in other mediums like the news. This is not going unnoticed by corporations who are pouring millions of dollars into viral marketing on the web (Wasik 7). It’s not enough to just have pop up ads or banners on a webpage. In order to stand out and get people interested in a product, marketers must make something viral-worthy. They first must make something that stands out and then place it on a page where viral content surfaces, such as YouTube. A classic example is a 2007 YouTube video that features a man who can catch Ray-Ban sunglasses on his face in a seemingly impossible stunt. It looks like a home recording and nowhere in the video does it indicate that it is an advertisement. It went viral because it was so unusual and unbelievable. But when it was revealed that the stunt was a hoax and the 1:37 minute clip was paid for by Ray-Ban, this generated more interest and views. Today the clip, now linked to Ray-Ban’s Facebook page, has over four million views (Siegel 71).

What is interesting about viral culture is that the “intentional viral” (Wasik 7) is not just limited to marketers who have the intention of attracting attention to their products. The majority of the intentional viral now comes from people not looking to make a profit at all, but the attention only. These participants post videos, write blogs, make online photo albums, and more in the name of selling themselves, their experience, and ideas. What they are looking for is to be the next viral sensation - to be rocketed from an average contributor to a piece of popular culture. In this participatory culture, anyone is simultaneously a producer of content and a consumer of content. As cultural theorist Lee Siegel states, the Internet is transforming popular culture from a “culture for the masses” to a “culture by the masses” (Wasik 86).

What does this mean for popular culture? Does a participatory

culture by the masses instead of for the masses mean a purer “culture of the populous,” or an even more commercialized culture where the lives of people turn into a kind of commodity to be sold? This is where there exists a lot of debate between cultural researchers.

Cultural critic Lee Siegel argues that a culture in which “the me is the message” is the death of true popular culture (47). He says, “For over a hundred years, high culture has been merging with popular culture. But now all *experience* is available as a form of culture” (78). He believes that the result of this is a culture based only on what becomes popular as a result of viral culture. According to his theory, when everyone is pitching their thoughts and experiences as potential pieces of popular culture, not only is there a constant air of commercial culture, but what actually becomes liked by an individual is a result of what other people like. “Popular culture used to draw people to what they liked. Internet culture draws people to what everyone else likes” (102). With such mass quantities of information and content, people gravitate to things on the Internet based on what is shared the most, not what they like most. Most individuals watch the videos on YouTube that are the most popular at that time. Or they’ll check out the blogs that are linked to the most. In this way, Siegel feels that true Internet talent is overshadowed by whatever has the most views.

Along the same mentality, Internet critic Andrew Keen views the participatory aspect of the Internet as something that is killing culture. He views it as a medium that overshadows professionalism by giving amateurs a place to become part of popular culture. He sees talented journalism, filmmaking, and music as a dying breed in the hands of the Internet, where anyone can say and post anything they please without restriction. “These days, kids can’t tell the difference between credible news by objective professional journalists and what they read on joeshmoe.blogspot.com” (Keen 3).

On the other side of the debate are cultural critics Charles Leadbeater and Bill Wasik. In defense of the amateur, Wasik states that talented content creators, the ones whose work gets noticed on the Internet, are “every bit as savvy, as ambitious, and as calculating as aspiring culture-makers have ever been” (12). Anyone can put something on the Internet - a video, a blog, a picture. But nowadays, the ones that get noticed and enter viral and popular culture are the ones that study how the culture works and enters it in the best way to draw interest. These are the people that corporations would love to hire as marketers, because they understand how ideas and experiences get noticed and spread (11). Also, people can anonymously experiment with their own culture, ask-

ing questions like “How will people respond if I do *this*?” or “Can this become a meme if I do *that*?” This is something not possible in previous pop culture mediums (14, 15).

Charles Leadbeater, another pro-Internet theorist, argues that participatory culture is a culture of sharing and collaboration, and that it is an overall good thing for free speech and democracy (1). He says, “The more ideas are shared the more they breed, mutate and multiply, and that process is ultimately the source of our creativity, innovation and well-being” (6). Through the Internet, we are no longer limited to the ideas held by the few corporations that own the media. We can hear a wide variety of opinion and ideas from the masses in a mass conversation and collaboration.

The masses have made it quite clear that they want to share their opinions and ideas. They want an active participation in popular culture. People don’t want to just sit back and watch television or a film anymore. Especially within the younger generations, people want to join online fan groups on social networking sites. They want to comment on the MySpace pages of their favorite celebrities, and on their favorite music videos. Beyond the Internet, the most popular shows on television are the ones in which viewers can play an active part, such as American Idol. The general public has made it clear that it wants popular culture to be interactive. The people want to be active participants in what is produced, and this is an overwhelming symbol of a rising participatory culture.

An artifact of popular culture and Internet culture that brings all the theories of viral culture and participatory culture together is a website known as Digg. Digg is a news, images, and videos website that determines what to feature based on what people “digg,” or nominate as something worth viewing or reading. People can digg anything on the web they find of interest, and if the story, image, or video gets enough diggs within a certain time frame, it becomes “popular” and featured on the main page. The main page is where most Digg community members browse content and continue to popularize items. The site is set up like a news site, divided by sections such as “World & Business,” “Science,” and “Entertainment.” And the featured content varies so greatly that a popular New York Times article about the stock market may appear right above a popular image of a kitten in a cardboard box. It is a way of sorting through all the jumbled mass of content and information that grows each day in cyberspace, and is based solely on popularity – a concept that would make Lee Siegel cringe.

First, Digg is an artifact of popular viral culture in that it is es-

essentially a collection of “nanostories” that fall in and out of popularity in a matter of days, sometimes hours. The more a story spreads person-to-person, the more people digg it, and the more likely it is to become popular. But to step away from Digg for a couple of days means to fall behind in popular content. Stories that were featured on the front page quickly fall to the wayside to newer, more recent stories. “Diggaholics” can keep up with the latest popular content on the web by checking Digg’s front page a few times a day. Not only this, but Digg users can use Digg Labs such as “Swarm” to watch what articles people are looking at in real time. But even if an article is popular at any given second, there is an understanding that sometime very soon it will fall out of interest.

One could criticize Digg as a web popularity contest, attracting people to become or to find the latest viral sensation. Articles become most popular when featured on the front page, and being featured is determined by how many people “digg” it in the first place. So people are likely to view content not so much on what they like, but how many diggs something has. Also, one might argue that when a popular New York Times article appears on the front page alongside an equally popular article written by a satirical blogger, mixed messages are sent to readers about what is amateur writing and what is quality journalism.

However, I would argue that the more users that join Digg, the more Digg represents true popular culture, culture of the people. Digg may have once only held a community of Internet-savvy people, and thus the featured articles reflected the interests of that specific cultural group. It is true that many articles still reflect this demographic. But as the community grows and expands, anyone from anywhere on the Internet can digg things based on their personal interests. Thus the articles that make it to the front page truly represent the culture and the interests of Internet users.

Also, as a site that showcases popular Internet content, Digg motivates producers to make something that appeals to a large percentage of Internet users. Internet producers want to share a photo on Flickr, post a video on YouTube, or write a blog post that has a widely shared meaning, which is no different than the goals of big producers of Hollywood. Also, people want to be the first to find and digg something that later becomes popular by people also believing it is something worth sharing. So Digg can be a way to weed through material that isn’t fit for popular culture – if people don’t like it, or think it’s not worth sharing, it isn’t going to have a widely shared meaning and not become popular.

Digg is a collaborative effort and can be considered a successful Web 2.0 tool. Digg does not work if people don’t have the will to submit

websites and digg them. Each article is a form of connection between users. Beyond digging something, people can comment on each article, and then digg the comments that they like and giving a “thumbs down” to comments they dislike. And so nearly every aspect, down to the quality of a comment, is judged and voted upon. Everyone can have a say in a variety of ways, democratizing Internet culture and popular culture.

However, there is a threat to the authenticity of Digg. And like most popular culture mediums, this threat is advertisements. As a generator of viral culture and material on the Internet, it is only natural that marketers see Digg as an ideal opportunity to spread their message to consumers. Until recently, advertisements on Digg have been limited to relatively small side frames on the page. But within the past few months, Digg has launched Digg Ads, a campaign that Digg’s Chief Revenue & Strategy Officer Mike Maser states will “create a better experience by giving [users] more control over advertising content that appears on Digg” (Digg the Blog). But what these advertisements do, in a similar fashion to the Ray-Ban example provided earlier, is mimic popular articles on Digg’s main pages, tricking readers into thinking it is actually something made popular by Internet users, not something paid for by a company. So between popular content from that day, one sees “Terry Got Ripped in 4 Weeks With Two Free Trials” with a barely visible, gray-on-white “Sponsored by Terry’s Workout” hovering above it. And unlike other articles, users are not given the option to comment. The more diggs an advertisement gets, the less it has to pay for the spot in the news feed. Users have the option of “burying” the ad, or opting out of ever seeing it again, but it is replaced with yet another one from a different sponsor. While Digg boasts that it is a way for users to vote on what kinds of ads they want to see on their page, Digg Ads makes for an easy gateway for advertisers to enter their content directly into the viral popular culture that should be produced and managed by the general public. A banner ad to the side of the page is not the same as an ad that mimics viral material in and attempt to become viral itself. People may be given the choice of what ads to see, but the choice to not look at them at all are stripped away when marketers push themselves into the core of viral culture this way.

There are many different theories about the ways popular culture is being affected by the Internet. Some see it as progress, others as negative change. But what we can learn from sites like Digg and other technologies is that the Internet has potential to make popular culture a culture shaped first and foremost by the people, the general public. People have shown the desire to create, to share, and to collaborate. Fear of

amateurs and attention seekers should not be placed over the fear of corporate culture and media politics undermining the creativity and freedom of the web. Six major corporations own the media. As the Internet grows as an even more powerful medium, will it fall into the same hands? News Corp. has already bought the popular social networking site MySpace, and Google, a powerhouse company of the web, has already purchased YouTube for over one billion dollars (Siegel, 54). Time will tell what is to happen to the ownership of the Internet's most popular sites for sharing one's ideas and productions. But for now, we can appreciate the Internet as a participatory medium where popular culture content isn't just fed to the masses, but created and spread by the people themselves.

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The Pros and Cons of Facebook

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Facebook; you either love it or you hate it. In just six years, this social networking phenomenon has grown and found its way into the everyday lives of the growing 350 million users. Originally developed for college students, Facebook has not only opened its door to a wider age group, but has benefited businesses around the world. Facebook can be described as “an online communication platform that combines features of e-mail, instant messaging, photo-sharing, and blogging programs (Cohen)”. In today’s society, where cyberspace is such a huge part of people’s social and professional lives, this should sound like nothing but the best. However, believe it or not, Facebook has a dark side. With a demographic that continues to grow with each day, Facebookers’ leading and most daunting concerns keeps rising along with it. Because Facebook thrives off of the personal information its users post daily, privacy has become a major concern and risk for those with an active account. Throughout this paper, I will discuss the world of Facebook by explaining its strengths and weaknesses, rewards and threats, and most importantly, how it’s sitting in the driver’s seat of today’s most contemporary surveillance practices. We will see how Facebook has grown from its beginning in 2004 to one of the biggest social networking sites in the world, and what this means for its future and the future of those who use it.

In order to fully understand Facebook, it is important to understand how it came into being. It all began in a dorm room in Kirkland House at Harvard University, where Mark Zuckerberg, only a sophomore at the time, created the first edition of today’s most widely spread social networking medium. Facebook, however, was not conceptualized out of the blue. It stemmed off of an already established idea, known in many colleges as Pigbooks. A Pigbook was a booklet that listed the names of students, their photos, hometowns, and majors. After realizing Harvard did not have such booklets, Zuckerberg took it upon himself to “throw one together” that could be accessed online. Just two weeks later, with only word of mouth, two-thirds of the school had signed up. From that point onward Facebook, with no help of print advertisement, expanded rapidly throughout college campuses around the country. With Facebook continually becoming exceedingly popular, Zuckerberg’s image of the network has not changed. “What I care about

is giving people access to connect and receive the information they want as efficiently as possible.” (Kessler)

What originally was created for college students to connect with one another has now become a huge factor in many different aspects of the social and professional lives of its users. As a college student, Facebook has been a vital tool in my social life throughout the past four years of my college career. I created my account the summer going into my freshman year, and quickly became “friends” with many other soon-to-be UNH students. Facebook originally acted as the stepping-stone towards my new role as a college student. Four years later, I have spent numerous hours “Facebook stalking” my “friends”, uploading pictures (not all completely appropriate), and reading through news feed after news feed that displayed what my fellow Facebookers were doing. Facebook means a lot of different things depending on who is using it. For college students, however, it’s meaning rarely changes. According to Pavica Sheldon, “it allows users to stay in touch with old friends and those at other schools, to make new ‘friends’, to join ‘groups’ that fit their interests, advertise their parties, check how many personal messages/wall posts they received from their friends, and see other people’s pictures and the new features that Facebook continually adds” (Sheldon, 41, 2008).

With the overpowering usage of online mediums continually progressing with time, it is important to understand the motives of everyday people for using social networking systems such a Facebook. Interpersonal needs satisfied by online media include social interaction, habit, information, entertainment and meeting people. Mediated interpersonal needs include feeling less lonely, relationship maintenance, problem solving and persuasion. (Sheldon, 42, 2008) There are eight gratification factors for using Facebook. These include to keep informed, diversion and entertainment, peer identity, good feelings, communication, sights and sounds, career, and coolness. (Dong, 2008) Users of Facebook seek to fulfill these gratifications everyday leading Facebook to its success.

However, the point of this paper is not to capture only the repetitive perspective of what Facebook means to the average college student, but to analyze all the other angles Facebook has to offer the world, including the benefits and the threats it generates. In the world of today’s businesses, marketers are looking for any and every tool to reach its cliental and consumers in order to increase profit and encourage people to spend more money. In recent years, Facebook has landed a huge role in the marketing process, and has become an extremely

successful way to reach out to business' target markets. For marketers, Facebook is a dream come true because all the information is at their fingertips. One of its main features is the availability of personal information, including exact demographic information; necessary for marketers to pinpoint who they are directing their advertisements to. This easy access to information is known as "free labor". Facebook users do all the work that marketers previously had to do, by simply filling out the information necessary for creating an accurate account.

Businesses have two options when deciding to advertise through Facebook. The first is creating an advertisement directed to the target demographic and the second is creating a separate page for the business. Facebook offers four simple steps to guide businesses through the advertisement process. Part of this includes choosing your target audience. Here, it is important to target the exact audience through selecting the demographic and psychographic information of the intended market. Through the targeting process, Facebook will apply the requested demographic information to searching their databases in order to find the exact desired audience, and will then display the advertisement on their page. This makes the marketers' job as simple as possible.

Another way businesses can utilize Facebook as a marketing tool is by creating an account for the actual business. This is way of promoting any event, products, or services your business has to offer. Through this form of advertisement, big corporations can use Facebook as a highly effective viral marketing tool to reach their goals. The main idea of making a business Facebook page is to have a dense space with a lot of information, and once again for Facebook users to do all the work. Once a person clicks on the page, they have an option of becoming a "fan" or a friend of the business page. This enables the page to be linked to that person's news feed, displaying the business on their profile, and allows others to view it. Facebook's goal as a company is to offer this communication opportunity to advertisers and to continue to make it as easy as possible for businesses to connect with their clients/customers. Facebook's Product Manager, Kasey Galang explains,

"Facebook is a differentiator, its value for marketers is that we have (millions of) people on-site and they are giving us explicit information about their interests. We have people raising their hands saying I am interested in a brand or product or service, and we think that is extremely valuable. It's interesting, for example on Google there were 135,000 searches for tents in the month of February. On Facebook though, you have more than one million people who have

expressed interest in tents on their profiles. We help marketers reach people where they live outside of search engines.” (Hanson, 2009)

While these specific features are helpful to certain industries, many Facebook users have major concerns about their privacy. The way in which profiles are created offers so much personal information to the world that it could be threatening. For example, statuses or event invitations allow people to post exactly where they are or what they are doing at a certain time. This raises concerns about stalking. While at first displaying this information may seem harmless, it may cause much distress, pain, and regret. (Acar, 2008)

Facebook’s Terms of Service as of 2008 states:

By posting User Content to any part of the Site, you automatically grant, and you represent and warrant that you have the right to grant, to the Company an irrevocable, perpetual, nonexclusive, transferable, fully paid, worldwide license (with the right to sublicense) to use, copy, publicly perform, publicly display, reformat, translate, excerpt (in whole or in part) and distribute such User Content for any purpose, commercial, advertising, or otherwise, on or in connection with the Site or the promotion thereof, to prepare derivative works of, or incorporate into other works, such User Content, and to grant and authorize sublicenses of the forgoing (Facebook 2007c).

This means that even though Facebook “does not assert any ownership over users’ information, it demands a range of rights to that content, no matter how personal.” (Cohen, 2008) Because Facebook allows people to adjust their privacy settings from public, where anyone can view their profile, to private, where only certain people can view their profile, it is easily misunderstood that vital information is still accessible to unwanted users. For example, information such as name, network (school, job, etc), and, in most cases, pictures will not only be available in the search results made throughout Facebook’s database, but also to other third party search engines. This also connects with the selling of personal information to advertisers, as I discussed above. While marketers benefit greatly from the availability of this targeted information, this surveillance practice may seem too extensive to some users, whereas many other users may be completely oblivious. Another misconception people have is about where content believed to have been deleted ends up. “Even

after information is removed from a profile, it may remain viewable in cached and archived pages or if other Users have copied or stored... User Content.” (Cohen, 2008) This means that even after information or pictures are deleted from a profile, it will always remain in Facebook’s archives, never leaving cyberspace.

In 2007, Facebook users were surprised to find a new feature when signing into their account, a feature that stirred up many doubts about the lack of privacy Facebook offers to its clients. This is known as the “news feed”.

“The new feed’s function is to aggregate notifications about changes to the profiles of friends as they occur, with the intent of allowing users to know when individuals on their list of friends make changes immediately rather than requiring a user individually visit each person’s profile to keep track of update. The mini-feed tracks all changes made to a user’s profile and consolidate it on their home page so that a user and other visitors can see what recent updates a user has made.” (Lange, Lampe, 9-10)

Facebook’s news feed feature originally surrounded a lot of controversy for its users, and prompted numerous protests. Users quickly formed groups that voiced their lack of support to the founders of Facebook in hope for a change. As a response, Facebook developers wrote two letters of apologies, and took action by adding more advanced privacy control features. “The new privacy control features allowed users to more specifically control what information would be made available on the feeds as well as their profiles in general to friends, other people in their network, and people outside of their networks” (Lange, Lampe, 10).

Within the last few months Facebook has been working hard to continue improving their options for account settings in order to eliminate the ongoing concerns many users still have about their privacy control. The new privacy settings have already been launched and put into practice and have relieved some of the worry amongst Facebook users. Facebook now “gives users the option of targeting individual posts to specific people or groups of people. But most significant about the new settings is that they require every one of Facebook’s 350 million users to run a ‘transition tool’ to review their old settings and decide whether to select new ones.” (Magid, 2009) This requirement is mandatory of all users with an account. It is an important feature because it not only forces people to think more diligently about their privacy settings, but also educates people about the program and

who may have access to your information. “At the end of the day, it’s all about people thinking critically before they click or volunteer information.” (Magid, 2009)

When one thinks about surveillance, often more obvious contemporary forms come to mind, such as video cameras, cell phones, and tracking devices. However, Facebook is considered to be one of today’s leading forms of volunteered surveillance. People often do not associate social networking systems in this category because it is such a major part of people’s everyday lives. Nevertheless, Facebook can be linked to some of the earliest forms of surveillance theories.

Panopticism is a social theory based on surveillance originally developed by a philosopher Michael Foucault in his book *Discipline and Punishment*. Its main focus was to create an atmosphere where few people were surveying many people, the people being watched knew they were being watched but did not know when, and a focus on a change in behavior that was anticipated and monitored. Kevin Haggerty describes the panopticon as follows in his article “Tear Down the Walls: on demolishing the panopticon”:

“This system of visibility was to operate in conjunction with explicitly articulated behavioral norms in an effort to transform an inmate’s behavior. Hence, it was essential that prisoners be aware that at any given moment they were, or might be, under scrutiny. This constitutes the disciplinary component of the panopticon, which sought to instill a form of productive ‘soul training’ designed to encourage an inmate to reflect upon the minutia of their behavior in a subtle and ongoing effort to transform their selves in prescribed directions.” (Haggerty, 25)

Even though the panopticon was never built, Foucault’s theory of surveillance has been reworked and studied throughout the years. We can connect Foucault’s Panopticism theory to Facebook in many ways. First, Facebook users are aware that many people are viewing their account information. However, they never know exactly when, who, and how often. Second, with the growth of privacy concerns and threats, users can alter their “behavior” or volunteer information and pictures accordingly, modifying their online personality to accommodate how they want to be perceived. Third, Facebook users are able to survey other users without their knowledge, allowing them to monitor their fellow “friends” and act as a surveillance expert.

Facebook is continually rising to new heights everyday with

innovative features, settings, and opportunities for its users. Without a doubt Facebook has accomplished more than creator Mark Zuckerberg could have ever imagined when first developing its original format in his sophomore Harvard dormitory. Facebook has become a vital tool in a vastly growing demographic. This social networking medium has given the means to achieve the desires of the college student looking to enhance his or her social life, the business man/woman looking to gain profit, or the family man/woman looking to keep in contact with old friends. Despite the concerns over users' privacy, Facebook has figured out fresh ways of pleasing its cliental by continuously revising, reworking, and reexamining the privacy settings to fit Facebookers needs. Nonetheless, those actively using Facebook need to understand the drastic measures in which their voluntary information can be used. As one of today's most colossal forms of surveillance, Facebook can either be an extremely helpful or extremely wounding apparatus to the wellbeing of account holders. Like with any other device that displays personal information, educated users will be the ones that benefit the most.

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