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Disidentified Masculinities

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Disidentified Masculinities

“What are the possibilities of politicizing disidentification, this experience of misrecognition, this uneasy sense of standing under a sign to which one does and does not belong?”

—Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 219

“When I was born, they looked at me and said: What a good boy, what a smart boy, what a strong boy! And when you were born they looked at you and said: What a good girl, what a smart girl, what a pretty girl!”

—The Barenaked Ladies, *What a Good Boy*

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The media disseminates dominant ideologies to the public and in doing so has created a definition for masculinity. “Images from the media provide examples and models for men to follow” (Moss 21) and personal and public notions of masculinity are idealized and exaggerated, and unhealthy societal pressures and depictions of masculinity in America encourage traditional—and expected—masculine traits and behaviors: such as muscular physique, white skin, strong bone structure, powerful, emotionless, etc. “It is a code of conduct that requires men to maintain masculine postures and attitudes…at all times and in all places. Masculinity includes the symbols, uniforms, chants, and plays that make this the boys’ team rather than the girls’ team. It is a fulltime job” (Trago 544). Amidst navigating personal identities, Millennials, the much desired demographic of marketers, are bombarded with advertisements, blockbuster films, and examples of masculinity, more than any other previous generation, that help construct a dominant ideology around masculinity: hegemonic masculinity. But what if hegemonic masculinity does not describe what one prescribes to as one’s own identity?

This grey area of masculine identity is the realm I plan to explore and discover the struggles of what it means to be masculine in today’s Gramscian understanding of masculine “common sense.” I will create a multimedia art installation on a select few of the affected Millennial Generation’s views of individual identity and masculinity with the hopes of deconstructing the socially constructed and exclusive notions of masculinity by defining a generation’s “common sense.” My goal will be to validate the need to redefine hegemonic masculinity by way of Gramsci’s short mention of a common sense as “continually transforming;” thus, I will prove the fluidity and obsolete understanding of the most widespread conception of masculinity by uncovering the common sense of the Millennial Generation
through Muñoz’s understanding of disidentification.

My capstone project is a culmination of three influential classes and internships I have been apart of over the past four years. The first, an internship at About-Face, a media literacy non-profit in San Francisco that equips women and girls with tools to understand and resist harmful media messages that affect their self-esteem and body image. After gaining this form of literacy, the combination of another internship at a Dallas marketing firm named The Marketing Arm (TMA) as well as the course Introduction to Marketing and Communications, which I took abroad while attending Queen Mary, University of London, contributed to not only academic, but real world applications of marketing. I studied and witnessed the implementation of target marketing for campaigns, which included demographics, race, and age. Coming into my senior year with these three experiences, I recognized the lack of academic investigation of the male demographic and the effects of “masculine” messages on self-identity.

Why this project, why masculinity? What about femininity? I believe it is important, after three years of learning about the effects of the media and society on women, to explore the media’s influence on men and masculinity. Through my media studies classes and internships, I have deconstructed feminism, the media’s representations of femininity, and what it does—or does not mean—to be feminine, but never masculinity or what is means to be masculine. I hope, after completing this project I will uncover the affects of the media on young male adults and masculinity.

The format of my project will be twofold: photography and audio. The project will consist of a photographic representation of five to ten men, with two photos per person. This diverse group of men will be 18-22 year olds from the US and other countries, of different races and ethnicities as well as socioeconomic classes. I refuse to limit my models to strictly the
cisgender men and the biological sex XY chromosome and allow members of non-binary genders to participate if they are comfortable, and fortunately, I have a few prospective subjects\textsuperscript{1}. I believe if I can photograph and interview members all across the gender spectrum my end result will be a much more realistic idea of what masculinity really is. I believe these two formats will work well to combine the image of what it means for Millennials to be masculine due to their personal and possibly anecdotal accounts to my interview questions, but also the symbolism of a portrait completely controlled by their own “masculine” agency.

Why these mediums? I have chosen the mediums of photography and an audio track because not only do I have previous knowledge and skills in them, but also I feel like they most appropriately give the individualized attention necessary for my project to be successful.

A primary influence for the inspiration of the photography portion of my project includes Chad States’ *Masculinities* photography project where he explores what is means today to be a man. In States’ own words, this “project was just a natural extension of a question that I have always asked myself; “Am I masculine?” I am a gay man and have always been aware of my difference and consequently became more aware of “masculine” mens’ way of behaving and how they differed or were similar to my own behavior. This awareness then led me to question what was truly masculine. I could never answer that question fully so I decided to ask it of others, which then became the project.” He did this project through a Craigslist listing with the body of the post saying, “I am doing a photography project on masculinity. If you identify as being masculine, please get back to me” (Bahadur). He photographs his subjects in the poses and settings they find most masculine, making portraits of masculinity that broaden our ideas of what masculinity means, and this instigated my exploration into the realm of constructed

\textsuperscript{1} I will try to include at least one trans person, genderqueer person, and/or possibly a masculine female, depending on how the portraits develop as a series.
masculinity by the media.

Furthermore, Loren Cameron’s portrait work also has guided my exploration in the realm of gender and masculinity. Cameron photographs lesbian and transsexual bodies in their native environments, as well as self-portraits during his physiological transition from female to male are documented in his work *Body Alchemy: Transsexual Portraits* (1996). The front cover displays a picture of Cameron, in a nude body building-like pose, injecting a syringe into his upper buttocks of testosterone. He explores the struggle and transition involved in becoming a gender within the social constructs of the meanings of gender and what is masculine.

The theoretical basis of my project includes two viewpoints of masculinity: the mainstream “common sense” hegemonic masculinity and the disidentified masculinity. The following sources give brief understandings of what “masculinity” is—or really isn’t. The first will be binary minded and typical of “manly-man” masculinity that is displayed by the mainstream media. But first, we must discuss Antonio Gramsci’s “common sense” concept. Gramsci understood common sense to be an instinctual, “uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding.” It “is a collective noun, like religion” yet it “is not something rigid and immobile, but is continually transforming itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical opinions which have entered ordinary life” (Hoare 625, 630).

“Correspondingly [Gramsci] uses the phrase “good sense’ to mean the practical, but not necessarily rational or scientific attitude,” and “every social stratum has its own ‘common sense’ and its own ‘good sense’ ” (Hoare 625, 630). Thus, I hope to prove the fluidity of common sense by recategorizing “the most widespread conception” of masculinity, which I believe to be good sense not common sense, due to its ease of binary and practicality, and uncovering the common sense of the Millennial Generation (Hoare 630).
One of the leading thinkers on theoretical masculinity and men studies, Raewyn Connell and her article *Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept* (2005), discusses the privilege of certain forms of masculinity—the culturally dominant type—usually referred to as hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is normative and is “the currently most honored way of being a man, it require[s] all other men to position themselves in relation to it” (Connell 832): an ideal, a definitive standard to masculinity. Nick Trujillo describes similar understandings of hegemonic masculinity in his article *Hegemonic Masculinity on the Mound: Media Representations of Nolan Ryan and American Sports Culture* (1991); however, more focused along the lines of sports and the representations of masculinity through newspaper coverage. Meanwhile, Robert Hanke’s *On Masculinity: Theorizing Masculinity With/In the Media* (1998) describes hegemonic masculinity in a different way than Connell and Trujillo. Hanke’s definition refers to the “social ascendancy of a particular version or model of masculinity that, operating on the terrain of ‘common sense’ and conventional morality, defines ‘what it means to be a man.’ ” He too, uses Gramscian framework and understands “common sense [as a] fragmentary, incoherent, ambiguous, [and] contradictory” (Hanke 186), and unlike Connell and Trujillo, he recognizes that “hegemonic masculinity is won not only through coercion but through consent, even though there is never a complete consensus” (Hanke).

This incomplete consensus, I believe, is described by the queer theorist, José Esteban Muñoz and his book *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (2009) and his third mode of dealing with a dominant ideology: disidentification. This aspect “neither opts to assimilate within such a structure nor strictly opposes it; rather, disidentification is a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology. Instead of buckling under the pressure of dominant ideology (identification, assimilation) or attempting to break free of its inescapable
sphere (counteridentification, utopianism)\(^2\),” it ‘works on and against’ hegemony. It “is a strategy that tries to transform a cultural logic from within, always laboring to enact permanent structural change while at the same time valuing the importance of local or everyday struggles of resistance” (Muñoz 11-12). Disidentification works as the negotiating mechanism for common sense because it is against assimilation to mainstream masculinity as well as asks individuals to be their personal identity in spite of what hegemonic masculinity dictates. However, the unfortunate characteristic of disidentification is the ever-present power dynamic of hierarchies of the pre-established hegemonic masculinity.

I can assume after I complete this project I will discover a definition and a new understanding of masculinity for a current generation that is far different from the form of masculinity portrayed in the media, which is outdated and not a universally accepted form of masculinity due to the oversaturation of stereotypical gender roles and constructions of hegemonic masculinity. I hope to evoke insightful conversations with my subjects that will lead the discussion of masculinity to unveil what Foucault in his *History of Sexuality* refers to as “secret,” though intended towards the acts of sex that we must now bring to light in terms of the “-ness” of masculinity. By redefining mainstream masculinity as “good sense,” due to its practicality, we can reconfigure notions of “common sense” from hegemonic masculinity to disidentified masculinity.

**Consulted Sources**

\(^{22}\) The first mode is one that many of us are familiar with: ‘identification.’ Identification is where a “‘Good Subject’ chooses the path of identification with discursive and ideological forms.” Similarly, the second mode, ‘counteridentification,’ is where “‘Bad Subjects’ resist and attempt to reject the images and identificatory sites offered by dominant ideology and proceed to rebel” (Muñoz 11).
*Denotes cited in paper


Three classes I took at the Claremont Colleges influenced my approach to my Senior Project. The courses *Topics in Sound Culture: Soundscape* and *Electronic Music Studio* helped me learn to interpret, explore, and create sound (tonal and atonal) as well as noise. As a result, I will create a soundtrack of the interviews of my subjects for my installation. Also, the course *Digital Color Photography*, as well as my extensive study of photography in high school, will act as the other core tenet to the portraiture aspect of my project.

I plan to utilize these media by the process of questions: two questions that will direct the portraits and eight questions that will conduct the interview portion of my project. In advanced of the photo shoot, my subjects will receive both sets of questions in order for them to prepare their answers if necessary: such as anecdotes or specific media examples they would like to include in their interviews or specific clothing or location ideas for their portraits. After they have had time to think of their physical and verbal responses we will begin. My first portrait question, “what part of your body makes you feel most masculine?” will help guide my subject to pose in whatever way they see fit. The second photograph will also be a photographic answer to the question “what is a feminine quality about yourself?” I am looking forward to the creativity of the individuals and the poses and positions they choose.

The audio portion of my project will be created by interviews I will conduct with each subject of my photographs and I will record their responses with an audio recorder. I will splice and configure the responses to help create an atmospheric soundtrack that will produce “background noise” to surround the pictures and create a focused space for the installation. This
soundtrack will act as a tour guide to describing the photos and the implications of the media on this Millennial groups understandings of masculinity (See Figure 2).

For the actual installation of my project, I plan to use the Q114 conference room of West Hall beside the Kallick Family Gallery. The determining factor in choosing this room is the opportunity to use a space that will not limit my soundtrack atmosphere to headphones, which I find to be extremely important to the overall aesthetic of my piece. In terms of the placement of my photographs, I find the window as my “wall” to add an interesting atmosphere and dimension. Rain or shine—as a mood setting aspect of the space—will parallel nicely with the fluidity of the ideas of masculinity I am looking and fighting for with this project.

To further the concept of fluidity, the medium of my photographs will be on transparency paper. This will further allow the weather to influence the look of my images, and my installation will be viewable outside of West Hall, though without my audio component, but it will also hopefully draw in viewers enough for them to come inside and investigate more about my project. I have discovered I can use Duplicating Services at Pomona to print out transparencies (black and white or color), but they will be 8.5 by 11 inches. I will experiment with these only as test runs, unless I do not get permission from the Theater Department to use their transparency printer, which allows for larger format printing. I hope I will allowed to print using a larger format, but if all else fails, Duplicating Services will work and accomplish the desired effect, which is of utmost importance: the idea of fluidity and variability.

In terms of the organization of the images on the window, I am still undecided in the exact format through which will best represent my photos. The mock-up I have attached is most likely not what the final installation will look like, but until I have all of my images, I cannot make an aesthetic and theoretically based decision (See Figure 1). I realized the rigidity of the
mock-up can be seen as reinforcing the gender binary I am attempting to avoid and deconstruct, so in the meantime, the framing of Q114 will stay in flux until closer to the installation date.

My production schedule is to complete the photo shoots and interviews by November 18th. I plan to finish editing and splicing together the audio tracks by the week of December 2nd and print soon after in order to turn in my photographs on December 6th between 9am-12pm. I will finish the third and final paper by December 13th.

How will I recruit my subjects? Fortunately, I know the majority of the people I have in mind for my project pretty well, so it will not be too much of a problem. The main challenge will be figuring out our schedule. However, there is one person in particular, whom I will name Pomona #1, who was more of a challenge. I did not previously know Pomona #1. I only know who this person is through Facebook because he posted a Facebook note entitled My Gender discussing specifically his gender identity and his recent identification as genderqueer, in which he states he is open to those who are “about anything about my gender, feel free to ask me about it, within reason.” I have reached out to him and he responded saying he was “definitely interested in helping [me] out!” I have yet to photograph and interview him, but I believe this could be a mutual opportunity for both of us: for him to express himself through my project in an artistic way that is meant to be a safe space from the mainstream hegemonic understandings of what it means to be a “man,” and for me to get a broader spectrum of what identifying masculinity can mean. I feel he will bring great insight into my project because he “never really felt like [he] fit into guy-ness, but [he] just went with it, because [he] thought [he] was supposed to. [He] was socialized as a male—and [he] wish [he] wasn't, but the worst part was that [he] was COMPLICIT in it.” Thus, Pomona #1 recognizes hegemonic masculinity and how easy it is to conform to media ideals, but he gained the awareness to re-identify, and in my mind as José...
Esteban Muñoz’s idea of disidentification because he “neither opts to assimilate within such a structure nor strictly opposes it” (Muñoz 11).

Though Pomona #1’s case of masculine identity may be the best example of disidentification, still, my ultimate goal is to enflesh a sense of normalcy and acceptance to question ones masculinity—ideally through my pictures—but if not, at least for each individual I work with. I am sure for some of my subjects they will realize a form of disidentification, whether extreme or subtle. Either way, I want this project to be a conversation starter within friend groups and broader if possible, so the constraint of the social construction of masculinity is no longer a limited concept, but rather open to any definition and possibility. This dialogue, in my mind, will be easier for members of my generation because with the ever-present bombardment of advertisements, movie posters, and magazines, we have learned to ignore their infiltrations and instead analyze, interpret, and question. I am looking forward to seeing all of my photographs together and compiling all of my audio to see if I can uncover a new “common sense” of 2013.
Figure 2: Interview Questions

1. Define masculinity and what is means to you.
2. Describe what the characteristics of masculinity are for you?
3. Have you ever been self-conscious about your masculinity or effeminate characteristics?
4. Do you think the mainstream media, which also could be called the medium through which hegemonic masculinity is reinforced, has defined your masculinity?
5. Do you believe the representations of masculinity of the media has changed in the past twenty years, and if so how?
6. Do you think other generations have questioned their self-identification, and if so, do you believe they had the pressures of outside reinforcements of media to construe their decision?
7. Which media do you think has helped you construct or deconstruct your masculinity (television shows, movies, magazines, advertisements, etc)? If so, what are examples?
8. Do you believe the images of muscular men in the media are unrealistic and photoshopped?

Figure 3: My Gender: October 11, 2013 at 2:50pm

“Hey everyone. So apparently it's National Coming Out Day today and I've been meaning to get around to this for a while. A couple years ago I started questioning my gender - very silently. A part of me has always had this pretty powerful fantasy of waking up having
always been a girl. For some reason it felt like that would fit more. It's hard to explain. But, well, I've always been good at denial and ambivalence and cognitive dissonance. For a long time I didn't really acknowledge that feeling as part of who I was. For a long time I didn't think about my gender. I just kind of . . . accepted it as it was presented to me by the society around me. But there was always a part of me that knew it didn't fit. And there was always a part of me that was scared about that. And there was always a part of me that suppressed a lot of my femininity, and that pushed a lot of my emotions really deep inside me.

And that manifested itself in a lot of really shallow but really consistent behavioral quirks that kind of projected this pretty emotionless version of myself that wasn't entirely authentic, but was at least "male" (the most noticeable of which is probably that monotone . . . oh, that monotone). It's kind of eerie looking back on my childhood and seeing how all this developed. I never really felt like I fit into guy-ness, but I just went with it, because I thought I was supposed to. I was socialized as a male—and I wish I wasn't, but the worst part was that I was COMPLICIT in it.

SO OBVIOUSLY YOU CAN IMAGINE WHY I HAVE A LOT OF COMPLICATED EMOTIONS AROUND THIS SUBJECT.

Some time last year, I started exploring queer identities in terms of my identity. A lot of people exploring feelings like this just identify with the opposite gender, because they think it's the only other option. To be clear, I don't want any of this to be construed as disparaging that choice or shaming it as too normative or anything like that. Nobody is in a place to tell someone about their gender except them. They share that same yearning I do about how they envision their bodies and genders, which is why I definitely think I fit under the trans* umbrella.

But something that I've always realized - and that probably played a large part in my denying the possibility that I wasn't a guy for a long time - was that I don't exactly feel like a woman either. There are a lot of ways in which I identify with pieces of masculinity. I feel like living as a woman would require lying to myself, just like living as a man did. And chief among those aspects of guy-ness that I like is having a penis.

So after exploring these feelings for a while I came to an identity that I felt fit with me - I'm genderqueer. The way I'm using that, it just means that I'm neither a man nor a woman. This summer I finally "came out to myself" and started coming out to friends.

I also decided this summer that I was gonna start exercising some more agency over my appearance. I've been pretty apathetic about how I look for a really long time, and I never really made any choices about how I was going to dress or present. This summer I started buying nail polish and makeup and girl clothes, and experimenting with how I presented myself. Which was a lot of fun. Transitioning is kind of like going through a delayed puberty/tweenhood in some respects, especially when people do hormone replacement therapy, but teaching myself how to do makeup (which is way more complicated than you'd think) is another example of that. And I've decided that I really like wearing makeup. Like, I wouldn't want to leave makeup behind. Or girl clothes, or nail polish. So if you see me around and I look different that's why.
If you're like, curious, at all, about anything about my gender, feel free to ask me about it, within reason. I could go on but I think this is a pretty good length so I'm gonna wrap it up here. Thanks for reading y'all.

FAQ

- Are you changing your name? No, call me Kenny

- Are you changing your pronoun? No, still "he", but you can use other pronouns if you want I'm not gonna correct you or anything

- Are you changing your body? Thought pretty seriously about hormones because I'd like to grow some boobs but definitely not before graduating. I've been waxing my legs and arms but since coming to school I've been slacking on that

- Wait so what's your sexuality? That's kind of a silly question, but I'm still bisexual, I like people who are men or women or neither

- Why didn't you tell me in person Kenny? IM SORRRRRYYYYYY really. It's hard, I've been trying though. If I haven't seen you around that's probably why. But hit me up we'll catch up and talk about it.”

Cited Sources

My project definitely has changed throughout the semester, but only for the better and in a more refined and concise direction. However, I do believe my project has turned out as I originally expected. I did not anticipate having my installation in the Q114 conference room and using transparencies instead of printed photographs, but I believe it has improved my project and it enhanced the fluidity of the notions of masculinity as well as the environment for my work to be presented.

Of the group, we have one Chinese, one Korean, and four American individuals. Those who are not from the United States have added their own critique of American/Hollywood culture in comparison to the media back home, which helps bring an outside perspective. I believe this diverse group has validated a need for a new definition of masculinity that is far different from the hegemonic masculinity that is perpetually portrayed in the media.

Overall, I think my portraits help convey what is means to be a man today, and I will go through my project photograph by photograph. In Felly’s portrait (See Figures 1 and 2), I believe the pictures I took represented what he saw as his masculinity, which to him meant strength—physically and mentally. He meant for the shoot to be serious, but realized the moment I captured of him was more true to his character and playfulness. In Nick’s series (See Figures 3 and 4), his masculine picture represented the struggle growing up as a mixed race individual in the US, which led him to martial arts and the art of fighting as a way of protecting himself. His feminine picture represented a self-awareness with him judging his body in the mirror. Further, he saw this as feminine he could see his similarities to his mother reflected back to him.

Corry’s images presented him in the light of what he saw from his father, a man putting
on his suit and tie in the morning, and taking care of himself and his family (See Figures 5 and 6). Meanwhile, the image of him putting gel in his hair is one of the more feminine things he considers apart of his life routine. Sean’s portraits are a bit different than the majority of the series (See Figures 7 and 8). He thought about my questions for two weeks, longer than anyone else, prior to our session. His interview lasted an entire hour, where he spoke of the necessity of combining the co-existence of femininity and masculinity, which resulted in his image of masculinity as the top of his hand and femininity as the bottom. He saw the masculine as tough exterior with knuckles, a representation of masculinity, meanwhile the inside of his hand as the feminine where your feelings are internal like your emotions. Dan’s masculine portrait includes him playing the piano (See Figures 9 and 10), which he believed to be masculine and strong, meanwhile the image of him with his laundry basket above his head, in his words, mimicked what he had always seen his mother do back home in Korea.

Kenny’s images represent some of the most powerful back-story to the series, which we further expanded on because after having done five of the six portraits, I realized it would be important to include audio of each individual’s reasoning behind their images—but I only realized this during my last interview (See Figures 11 and 12). In deciding his masculine picture, he told me that “when [he] came out as queer [he] realized and thought about a lot how and what that was going to mean for Mock Trial…in Mock Trial [he is] always Mr. Kenneth Moran” instead of Kenny which he sees as more gender neutral. “There is a mode that [he goes] into when [he does] Mock Trial,” it is “an alternate identity that [he] perform[s] because mock trial is a performance anyway.” Thus, for his image he wanted to embody the masculinity he performs in Mock Trial as an attorney during his closing statement. Meanwhile, for the feminine picture, he stated that he “really like[s] makeup and [he] wanted to put makeup on [that day],” and he
knew the pictures would encapsulate not only the questions I was presenting in my project, but also exemplifies a milestone in his discovery of and journey with cosmetic products and the exterior of his femininity (Moran).

The following are just a few of my favorite and most interesting quotes which were recorded in the interview process. During Nick’s interview he mentioned, “the image of men in movies and magazines have become even more [and] beyond the masculine towards the superhuman, the god. This god-like figure who is perfect and can never be killed; he has a rippling eight pack and beautifully defined muscles. All of the women fawn over him. He seems to know his place in the world. And it’s never existed: you can’t make a king into a god, a man into a deity” (Nañez). I found this to be one of the strongest and most beautifully said ideas in regards to the representations of masculinity in the media and how unrealistic the ideas of what a male body looks like.

Nick, Sean, and Kenny came to similar conclusions in regards to the necessity of the masculine and the feminine to be apart of the same definition: “the essence of masculinity is the same thing as femininity because really men and women are completely the same. It’s just the body through which it projects those characteristics, those feelings are completely different” (Nañez), and “I think that masculine and the feminine they can all exists within the same person” (Pianka). “I’ve come to terms with masculinity but only as a complement of femininity, a sort of yin and yang type of thing” (Moran). These three statements make me wish I had included a question about what each individual thought in regards to the complements of femininity and masculinity. However, I do love the organic nature of the responses and findings for everything said because I specifically did not want to force any types of belief onto my subjects.

The greatest challenge of this project, beyond coordinating schedules, was learning one
cannot force the issue of rethinking masculinity onto everybody. Nonetheless, almost all of my participants cared enough to process and think critically about the concepts I presented and in certain cases even soul search. Fortunately, plenty of my participants did question and present extremely interesting new dialogues that I would love to see furthered into a greater discussion of masculinity as a whole.

I am happy with the way my installation was presented in Q114. Though I would have preferred the larger format (11x17) prints, which truly was disappointing, I think the simplicity of the grid and the addition of my Artist Statement allowed for the viewers to get a clear understanding of my project. Also, the 3-6pm timeslot was perfect because the audience was able to see the installation both in the day and at night from the outside, which was an important to the fluidity of my work. I do recognize that for the possible future of this project, I should think of a way to utilize the entirety of the windows in the space, but for such a young project and short semester, I believe it was successful in demonstrating my goal of questioning masculinity.

Fortunately, most of my subjects have specifically told me that they were happy I created this project and approached them because it allowed them to think more critically about their own identity and masculinity, which is one of my main goals of the project. I believe my audio compilation as well as the presentation of the photographs, together, have created a more collaborative, realistic, inclusive, and disidentified understanding of masculinity that will define the common sense of the Millennial Generation. Thus, I believe the hyper-sexualized, muscular, and aggressive understanding of masculinity that is portrayed in the media, after this project, is precisely what Gramsci understood to be “good sense” because it is binary, “practical, but not necessarily rational” and it is not rational to claim all individuals who identify as male to exist as
this form of masculinity (Hoare 625). Thus, the fluid understanding of “common sense,” in my 
eyes, has been reconfigured by way of disidentification to change from a hegemonic masculinity 
to a disidentified masculinity. I am unsure if my project uncovers what Foucault would call the 
“secret” of masculinity, but I think I gave it a good shot in at least uncovering the non-
conforming characteristics of masculinity that so rarely are given light.
Appendix

Felly, Figures 1 and 2

Nick, Figures 3 and 4
Corry, Figures 5 and 6

Sean, Figures 7 and 8

Dan, Figures 9 and 10
Consulted Sources

*Denotes cited in paper

*Nañez, Nick. Personal Interview. 3 Nov. 2013.
*Pianka, Sean. Personal Interview. 16 Nov. 2013