Examination Book

CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Powerful Futures Start Here

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Table of Contents

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ENL161

Working At Home

Waking up thirty minutes before class, sitting in pajamas to work, and not having to step foot on campus to attend school all seems like it would be a dream for most. Right? For some individuals it is, but for those who want to be in a classroom right now, it is a living nightmare. Completing work at home for both school and certain careers is the new norm. Cape Cod Community College (4Cs) first sent out an alert to faculty and students on March 12th that classes would switch to an online format.

Some individuals have already explored this new territory through online classes. Despite that, it doesn't mean it's easier for any individuals who have done so. Being forced to take all classes online versus voluntarily signing up for them is different. Students may have only taken specific classes that they wanted to complete online, rather than on campus. Some students may also do better with face to face classes, and now they don't even have the option to do so. "One main reason why I'm taking classroom classes is because I'm not good with online courses," said Erica Polite, a student at 4Cs. "I fuss every time I need a required class that is only offered online."

One day we woke up to attend our regularly scheduled classes on campus, and that same exact day, we were told that we won't be seeing our professors, classmates or any faculty for at least a month, if not longer. For both students and professors who had never done any online classes before, this sounded scary. It could take some time to adjust to this new way of learning, and many might still be adjusting. "At first, it was extremely difficult due to the short notice that was given to students," said Jeffrey Britt, a student. "I wasn't mentally prepared for the transition to online format. Also, during that transition, the hype in the media surrounding COVID-19 made it difficult for me to study."

There was a rush for a lot of individuals to answer the simple question, "What am I going to do and how can I do it?" When the news broke that individuals would have to switch to online, professors had to modify lectures and assignments that they had planned for a whole semester in just one or two weeks. "I believe that I will reflect on this time as the most challenging in my life, both personally and professionally," said Kate Callender, Ph.D., Professor

of Biology at 4Cs. "The immediate necessity to convert all of my courses to an online format has created a mountain of work that seems overwhelming at times."

Not only is it possible for someone to struggle with the actual class and homework, but it might be even more of a struggle for individuals that don't have the right technology or tools. Despite the difficulties people are experiencing working from home, they are still trying their best to cooperate with others and complete coursework to the best of their ability. "At first, I was flustered, almost to the point of giving up on some classes seeing all I had was my dad's old laptop and lousy internet service via my AT&T hotspot," said Britt. "But then I realized I needed to invest in my education and acquire a new PC, desk, printer, office chair and Comcast internet. Secondly, I set up an office in my spare bedroom."

For some, their daily routine has been completely changed, and they may find it difficult to stay motivated. It may be especially difficult under the current circumstances of COVID-19 when students can't go to someone in person and ask for help. "I keep telling myself the semester is almost over; try not to throw in the towel," said Polite. Going on walks and emailing professors is also a way Polite tries to keep motivated and focused.

Being quarantined in the house all the time is not something most people are familiar with. So, individuals have been doing different things to cope, destress, and get their mind off things. This could be in the form of cooking or reading a favorite book. "I am looking to my friends as well as my hobbies for relief," said Callender. "I am a board gamer and my Cape group has been meeting several nights a week for synchronous gaming online. I've also splurged on some fancy yarn and started a sweater knit-along with my friends in New York."

When working from home, everyone has a way of staying on task and being successful. Some individuals may even be figuring out how, if they've never done a lot of work at home before. There are many things you can try to implement to see what works best, and this might be a process of trial and error. "Purchase a very large PC monitor! 24" at minimum. You can have your online class material on one half of the screen, and your work on the other," said Britt. "For those who cannot afford a large monitor, make an office. It will keep you more organized and has more of a school setting."

Although there is somewhat more of a routine for individuals that have meetings on Zoom, those that do not have virtual meetings might have trouble getting into the groove of things. Online classes offer a lot more freedom and self-discipline. "My advice to anyone who

is struggling to maintain focus during this time is to create a schedule and to stick to it," said Callender. "Be sure to include art, music, decompression and/or exercise to your schedule and to reward yourself when you're staying on track."

Depending on the person, having to work from home could be the best or worst thing that has happened to them. Either way, we are all in this together. No matter how difficult it might be, we have other students and faculty to lean on.

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Keeshanna Webster

ENL108
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Free the Internet (Again): The Struggle for Net Neutrality

Tim Berners-Lee said, "When I invented the Web, I didn't have to ask anyone's permission. Now, hundreds of millions of people are using it freely. I am worried that that is going end in the USA" (qtd. in Resnikoff). The Web was created to be free. It was designed as a tool for people to learn, to share, to connect. Net neutrality is a principle that ensures that the internet remains free. Net neutrality means that "ISPs [Internet service providers] should not be allowed to interfere with how your Internet connection works in order to influence what you access on the Internet, or how you access it" (Pahwa). In 2015, the FCC (Federal Communication Commission) classified ISPs as Title II Common Carriers under the Telecommunications Act of 1934. Essentially, this classification means that ISPs were to be treated like other utilities and prevented from blocking certain websites, throttling Internet speed, or charging premiums for access to some content (Sydell). In 2017, this regulation was repealed (United States), but state net neutrality laws have since been protected by a federal court (Fung). Net neutrality is an important measure to support, as it ensures that there is no content censorship, encourages competition on the Internet, and pushes ISPs to provide good service at an affordable price for all their customers.

A world without net neutrality is essentially a censored world in which ISPs become gatekeepers of what information the public receives. If ISPs could determine which website or application someone can access or even how fast they can access certain information, this is censorship. However, ISPs are not interested in political motives like in traditional censorship, but instead in monetary motives. ISPs argue that they are not interested in censorship by "blocking or slowing down websites" (Fung). However, in 2011, Comcast merged with NBC

becoming not only an ISP, but also a content provider. This merger meant that Comcast began competing with other content providers such as *Hulu* and various live cable channels. As expected, Comcast interfered with *Hulu's* management and prioritized its live content over that of *Hulu*. Due to the net neutrality regulations, Comcast was fined by the FCC for $800,000 (Higgins and Regan). ISPs cannot be trusted to maintain a free Internet because they will always act in the best interest of their company, even if it means censoring the competition to ensure monetary gains.

What about ISPs that aren't also content providers? Do they have the incentive to block, slow down, or charge more for access to certain websites and applications? Simply put, yes. Without net neutrality, ISP are essentially free to offer the most accessibility at the fastest speeds to the highest-paying companies and the highest-paying consumers. Brian Fung reports for CNN that ISPs "have lobbied for the freedom to strike deals with websites to provide premium service, possibly in exchange for extra fees." ISPs intend to accept extra payment from content providers in exchange for prioritizing those companies over others that cannot afford the extra payments. This is beneficial for ISPs and some large companies but will push smaller companies into obscurity and probable extinction. The overall effect of ISPs prioritizing richer companies is less competition and thus a monopoly of large corporations. Net neutrality has the opposite effect; it creates an equal opportunity for small companies and large companies, as Nikhil Pahwa explains in his article "Think the Fight for Net Neutrality in the US Is Over? It's Just Beginning." As Pahwa writes, "net neutrality provides a level playing field for everyone who puts content on the Web or uses the Web to see content, regardless of how much money we have in our pockets." Thus, net neutrality ensures a free market between companies offering similar services. Net neutrality is good because it allows for competition.

The fight for net neutrality isn't simply between ISPs and content providers, or even ISPs and large and small businesses; it extends to consumers as well. Without net neutrality, not only is the data consumers have access to censored, but payment methods and the quality of service are also affected, according to Melissa Higgins and Michael Regan, authors of *Net Neutrality*. Higgins and Regan state, "due to a lack of competition, ISPs charge high prices and provide poor service." The most robust evidence for this argument is the case of Chattanooga, Tennessee—a city that is home to a broadband service created and provided by the local government. Since 2016, Chattanooga has offered 1GB-per-second service for $70 a month or a cheaper plan of

100MB per second for $58 a month (Moscowitz). To put that into perspective, in 2018, two years after Chattanooga homes had the 1GB plan for $70, Comcast began offering homes in its U.S. coverage areas 1GB service for $100-$160 a month (Pressman). When an ISP like Comcast has no competition, it doesn't have the motivation to spend money on upgrading its infrastructure to allow for faster speeds for customers; instead, it increases prices knowing that customers have no other options.

One of the main arguments against net neutrality is not against the idea of net neutrality, but against government overreaching its role by securing net neutrality. Entrepreneur Josh Steimle puts forth the argument that we should not trust the government to run the Internet. Not only is the government ineffective, according to Steimle, it also has already invaded the privacy of American people on multiple occasions, so it should not have more power. Steimle makes a compelling argument. People should fear the federal government's control over the Internet, but ISPs controlling the Internet is just as bad, if not worse. However, ensuring net neutrality is maintained isn't giving control of the Internet to the government. By regulating net neutrality, the government is not controlling what content someone can access or how fast they can access it—ISPs are. The government is simply stating that ISPs need to stop. Does anyone really trust ISPs with this control, especially when many of the top ISPs in the U.S. have been involved in illegal practices? For instance, Comcast illegally blocked users on its network from sharing files in 2007; in 2009, AT&T illegally stopped users from accessing *Skype* and *Facetime* (Meinrath and Foditsch). MetroPCS blocked *Netflix* and other video content, except for *YouTub*e (Meinrath and Foditsch). In 2012, Verizon blocked customers from apps that allowed them to access mobile data services (Meinrath and Foditsch). Under net neutrality, the government does not attempt to control the Internet, but rather protects users of the Internet from those who do want to control it—ISPs.

It is important that people are aware of the struggle for net neutrality happening right now in the U.S., because net neutrality affects everyone. Net neutrality is an important issue and is often overshadowed by other issues or overlooked by the masses. The Internet, for the most part, has always been free in the U.S. and due to that the population can't imagine a world where customers who have a certain ISP can only use certain websites for free and have to pay a premium to use others, like in Guatemala (Glaser). People can't imagine living in a country where websites must be bought in a bundle—where a customer must pay separately for a bundle

of social media sites and a bundle of music sites, as they do in Portugal (Hiltzik). In a country that has mostly maintained net neutrality, it's easy to say any government regulation of any aspect of the Internet is scary, but the real fear should be of ISPs, which aren't transparent about their policies. Net neutrality is one of the most important issues to be discussed because it affects every person in the U.S. Net neutrality stops censorship, increases competition, and allows customers to have quality service at lower prices.

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Katelyn Shea

ENL101

Escaping the Digital Rabbit Hole

A few years ago, for various unrelated reasons, I decided to deactivate my social media accounts. A short time later, on a trip to Disneyworld with my family, I had an epiphany. It was only once I had detached from social media that I could grasp its effect on my life. Instead of being present for the sights and sounds around me, I found myself experiencing an involuntary

reaction. Almost as if it were muscle memory, I instinctively pulled out my smartphone to take pictures for social media. I quickly remembered that I had deactivated my accounts and put my phone away. Later, reflecting on my day, I realized that I had been watching my life pass by through a camera lens. Although grateful for my realization, I worry that the impact of smartphones and social media, for the "iGen," will be far more difficult to overcome. I was born in 1988, seven years before the start of the "iGen" population (1995 and 2012) that Jean M. Twenge writes about in her article "Have Smart Phones Destroyed a Generation?" Twenge explores the disturbing correlations between smartphones/social media and the record-breaking rise in physical/mental health problems facing these teens. In addition to focusing on these immediate areas of concern, Twenge also looks forward to what the future may hold for adolescents. Coupled with my own anecdotal experience, I have noticed the signs that smartphones and social media are leading this generation down a rabbit hole of despair, begging the question, "Will they be able to find their way back out?"

The "iGen" adolescents are facing unprecedented repercussions, unique to their age group, such as growing up more slowly, as well as experiencing a drastic increase in mental health issues. Twenge recounts the devastating side effects imposed on these teens, such as extreme isolation, loneliness, depression, and suicide. Twenge asserts there is a strong correlation between the deterioration of teens' mental health and the rise of the smartphone and social media. In addition to the immediate dangers facing the "iGen" population, Twenge suggests there will be future ramifications as well. There is a heightened chance for episodes of depression in adulthood when such episodes were experienced in adolescence (Twenge). Also, while these teens may have plenty of virtual connections, they lack the face-to-face interactions needed to aid social development and consequently will be left unequipped to navigate the real world (Twenge).

Isolation, being the common denominator between many of the issues facing this generation, is perhaps the most detrimental to their mental and social maturation. Twenge writes, "...The portrait of iGen teens emerging from the data is one of a lonely, dislocated generation (…) Teens' feelings of loneliness spiked in 2013 and have remained high since." Due to this lack of social connection there has been a fundamental change in how quickly this generation reaches typical milestones of social maturation such as dating, sex, working, and driving. Typically seen as a rite of passage, driving has lost its intrigue with iGen teens; by the end of high school, only a

quarter of them have their licenses. This is unlike members of Boomer generation who almost all had their licenses by the end of high school (Twenge). Twenge questions this phenomenon, as she writes, "Why are today's teens waiting longer to take both the responsibilities and the pleasures of adulthood?" Again, the "why" comes down to the common denominator of isolation. Twenge writes, "So what are they doing with all that time [not spent dating, working, or driving]? They are on their phone, in their room, alone and often distressed." Intertwined with the hindered social development is their declining mental health. Twenge demonstrates social media's role in depression and suicide among the adolescent population. The risk of depression increased almost 30% with prolonged periods of social media use and caused a 35% rise in their likelihood for suicidal ideations (Twenge).

Twenge's rhetorical questioning of this dilemma had me asking similar questions. The most thought-provoking and discouraging question I was left asking myself was, "Well, what can we do about it now?" I am terrified to learn of the statistics and the debilitating challenges facing this generation. To think of the struggles these adolescents will face as they enter adulthood, already having lived through more pain than people twice their age, is heart wrenching. As Twenge mentions, they will already be ill equipped to navigate adulthood, due to their lack of social interactions, and on top of that, they are more susceptible to recurrent mental health episodes. This thought leads me back to my original question, "What can we do now?" Is the damage done, or can we help them? There seems to be little hope in changing the culture around smartphones and social media, as the allure and addictive nature seem impossible to combat. I wonder if there is, and hope for, a compromise that works.

Twenge asserts that drastic measures, such as parents imposing harsh restrictions on teens' smartphone use, have a high improbability of success. She does however propose more realistic actions that parents could take to avoid the pitfalls of extensive smartphone/social media use. Twenge writes, "...More seems to be at stake in urging teens to use their phone responsibly, and there are benefits to be gained even if all we instill in our children is the importance of moderation." Twenge goes on to suggest that parents can avoid these adverse effects with some moderate guideline implementation. In her article, "Teenage Cell Phone Addiction: Are You Worried About Your Child?" Katie Hurley, LCSW, lists practical solutions that parents can use to avoid the effects Twenge writes about. Parenting practices such as open communication, education on possible hazards, the use of parental control options, and guidelines such as screen-

time limits and "no phone zones" could prove to be helpful (Hurley). Hurley recommends individual therapy and using Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) techniques in instances when children can't stop their unhealthy phone habits. Hurley also writes of the importance of parents modeling healthy behaviors for their children and sticking to the same boundaries that they themselves have set.

Though the fight against the gravitational force of smartphones/social media and the destruction inflicted on this generation seem to be too great a battle to win, there is hope when it comes to answering my original question: "Will they be able to find their way back out?" The alarming statistics in Twenge's article left me feeling as though the fate of this generation had been sealed. My hope was restored, however, when I was reminded of my own epiphany. This occurred when I read Twenge's statement, "...I saw hopeful signs that kids themselves are beginning to link some of their troubles to their ever-present phone." One of the "hopeful signs" Twenge identifies arose from Twenge's interview with an iGen teen; the teen described the hurt caused by the lack of eye contact and active listening she experienced when hanging out with friends. Twenge suggests that such realizations among teens demonstrate an awareness of the negative implications on social interactions and connections that smartphones have and a recognition that something may need to change. The iGen teens' recognition of a correlation between their phones and their social isolation is a hopeful sign that they are beginning to accept overuse of social media as a problem to be solved. The acceptance of the issue is imperative before any solution can be found. I had underestimated the self-awareness that these teens hold and their ability to connect the dots. While this generation does face unique challenges far different from my own, we can share the same realization. My hope that teens of this generation won't have to watch their lives pass by through a camera lens, and that they can indeed find their way back out.

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Sarah Seaberg

ENL102

Modern Feminism Needs a History Lesson

      Women everywhere have been dealing with the pressures of society throughout recorded time. The same goes for women of color. Racist ideology has been passed down from generation to generation. The stereotypes surrounding women and people of color have been passed down from century to century. Sexist and racist behavior and language have been taught and imposed upon society, perhaps on purpose, throughout history. While there has been much progress and advancement in equality, social injustices persist, marginalizing both women and people of color. Looking deeper into the issues, there is another problem. Those who fall into more than one of these marginalized categories face even more societal barriers. Women of color can be subjected to sexist and racial prejudices. In particular, African American women face hypersexualization and objectification fueled by racial stereotyping that can be identified throughout history. The past is where one can find the roots of the oppression and gender roles pushed upon women of color, and it is evident that ancient ideologies about these women are still present in modern society. In this research essay, the roles of women of color in colonial times will be discussed in order to understand why women of color today are disproportionately affected by these societal issues.

      Understanding the history behind the stereotypes society still uses to describe black women is key to eradicating these societal issues. Exploring the treatment of African American slave women in colonial times provides insight as to why the present-day prejudices against

women of color are more sinister than one may realize. In the times of slavery, more than half of enslaved women were assaulted by their white masters (West 2). Women of color were dehumanized and seen as animals. Assaulting these women was seen not only as completely justified, but also as a means of creating more free labor for slave-owners to exploit. Battalora, in *Birth of a White Nation*, describing the exploitation of these women, writes, "Black women were transformed into a machinery of capitalist production. The law permitted and encouraged the sexual violation of black women as a means of increasing plantation" (10). African American women had no protection from this assault as it benefited those in power. These women were sold and bought as a means of both labor and reproduction. White men did not have to worry about any repercussions from the wrongs they did, because they did not see the women they were assaulting as human—they saw them as animals created for their own amusement. The law protected them. People of color were outlawed from testifying in court, so the women who were sexually abused had no chance to gain justice (Battalora). These women were hypersexualized and abused due to their powerless state. "Gender and Slavery" from the *Oxford Handbook of Slavery in America* by Kristin E. Wood explains how "Edward Baptist observes that enslaved women in the antebellum South were 'desirable purchases because they could be raped,' and they were exquisitely 'vulnerable to sexual assault…because they could be sold'" (Wood 518). These women were objectified and used. They were seen as powerless and that was taken advantage of by those in power. Black women were hypersexualized to the point of becoming nothing more than a toy for white men to buy and sell.

While slavery has been abolished, modern day media still promote the oversexualization of black women. While there are many films that refuse to depict black women in this way, the practice is still prominent within the industry. One stereotype for African American women that is continually perpetuated throughout Hollywood is their portrayal as overly sexual and voluptuous. This is commonly known as the "Jezebel" stereotype. The types of characters that women of color often portray are not varied. Such on-screen portrayals influence public opinion of women of color, which is often negative and inaccurate. In her essay on the over-sexualization of African American women, Annalycia D. Matthews explains:

> Black women in the media are portrayed as sexual objects and this is not on accident.
> Hollywood works hard at perpetuating dehumanizing stereotypes of people of color, and
> Black women often take the target hit for this. In this era, we know that the media is a

powerful outlet to the world, not just the nation, and has a significant impact on molding the general public to think a certain way. In the media, we see black women are often shown as 'sexually willing characters often inviting of sexual objectification.' (4)

Society is heavily influenced by what is seen on the screen, so when the only representation of black women is this harmful "Jezebel" stereotype, people come to believe in and hold these prejudices against women of color. The stereotypes of black women are vastly different from those of white women. In an article by David Pilgrim regarding the Jezebel stereotype, he states "Historically, white women, as a category, were portrayed as models of self-respect, self-control, and modesty - even sexual purity, but black women were often portrayed as innately promiscuous, even predatory" (Pilgrim). White women tend to have a more positive representation when it comes to the media. Even the term "whiteness" is associated with angelic qualities. Not only is their image more positive, but white women also have more representation in general. The representation of African American women is vastly different and its effect overall can be negative and harmful. These stereotypes influence prejudiced behavior towards black women.

While distant in time, the modern day media portrayals of black women have striking connections to the views of enslaved women in colonial times. These connections prove that the racist ideologies have been passed down and become learned behavior in society. By recognizing this, one can begin to mend the profiling that African American women face. By exploring the roles of enslaved women in colonial times and comparing them with how the media portrays women of color today, it is evident that black women are still hypersexualized and objectified at a disproportionate rate. In the dehumanized view of enslaved women lie the roots of today's racial stereotyping of black women. Enslaved women were treated as sexual machines which translated into the stereotype of promiscuity that plagues black women today. Stereotypes such as the Jezebel stereotype today are evidence that society's view of women of color has changed little. Dr. C. Chic Smith, in her article about the objectification of black women today, notes that "The gender and race stereotypes assigned to African American women today originated from the slave-master dynamic.[6] Collins (1990) notes that for Black women the role of sex object is viewed as un-human, akin to animal behavior, or savage" (Smith). The "slave-master dynamic" has been perpetuated throughout time in various forms of media, thereby cementing society's bias against women of color. Black women are portrayed in the media today as always willing to

perform sexually—this perpetuates the slavery-era idea that black women are created for the satisfaction of man, that black women are supposed to be erotic creatures only intended for sex. The behavior and language used in the past to describe black women is directly connected to the language society uses today. The more people maintain these ideas surrounding women of color, the longer this message, fueled by racist and sexist ideology, will be ingrained in society. Stopping this rhetoric is vital to bringing about positive and accurate representation to a society determined to bring women of color down.

The hypersexualization and objectification of black women throughout time has had destructive and dangerous consequences. Many women of color still face violence due to their race and gender. Such views of women have resulted in a toxic society that believes that women owe them something, especially something sexual. According to the National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women, "In adulthood, approximately 1 in 5 African American women reported that they had been raped at some point in their lifetime" (West 3). These numbers are astronomical. These numbers cannot be blamed on black women. The reason this number is so high is because society refuses to teach respect but promotes the objectification of women throughout media, leadership, and other platforms. As soon as people can recognize the root cause of these devastating tragedies to be a sexist, racist society, then we can start to undo centuries of damage.

Along with awful violence, women of color are subjected to harmful microaggressions that reinforce gender and racial stereotypes. These microaggressions can still be traced back to colonial times and negative perceptions of black women. There is a contrast between how black and white women are perceived, resulting in a double standard, and this double standard is influenced by wrongfully established societal norms. In colonial times, white women were seen as delicate and pure. They were to be mothers and were symbols of how a true woman should look and act. Black women, as previously stated, were reduced to animals and hypersexualized. The double standard between white and black women has been illustrated throughout time, one example being the treatment of Serena Williams in the 2002 US World Open. Legendary tennis player Serena Williams is an athlete renowned for her strength and athleticism, but despite this, she is constantly demeaned by racial and gender stereotyping. In the 2002 US World Open, she chose to wear a form-fitting black catsuit. By doing so, she was able to move about freely, which is necessary for an all-star athlete. The media however, could not stop itself from objectifying

Williams. They commented on her backside, calling it "formidable," saying that she should not wear such tight clothing. The media commented on her body as if it had anything to do with her tennis match. Once again, the hypersexualization of black women continues to plague the media. On the other hand, when describing the white tennis player Anna Kournikova they use terms such as "sensational" (Schultz). One problem is that these reporters were even writing about the butts of female tennis players at all, and the another is the difference in the reactions to each player. Why is Kournikova praised while Williams is shamed? Author Jaime Schultz provides an answer: "The commentary on Williams's backside sexualizes her in a way that is inconsistent with discussions of the white women on the professional tennis circuit, constructing and highlighting a racialized corporeal difference between females" (Schultz 350). Most women have been objectified at some point, but there is a double standard between white and black women that gives white women an advantage. White women tend to be praised for the same things that black women are reproached for. Serena Williams has been harassed by the media time and time again with body-shaming and racism. According to the Washington Post, Williams "is reportedly the subject of 'random' drug testing more than twice as frequently as any other player" (Howard). It is not coincidence, it is racial profiling from people who are intimidated by women of color's success. She is treated differently than any other white man or woman in her sport due to her race. It is imperative to recognize these differences between perceptions of white women and women of color in order to address and mend them.

With microaggressions, bias, and even violence disproportionately affecting women of color, it is vital we recognize that the society we live in today is still faced with a racial divide. Those who belong to more than one marginalized category face all the challenges that come along with those categories. It is imperative to address the issues of female objectification with an awareness that women of color are facing not only the factors of female systematic oppression but also the prejudices and stereotypes that come with being a person of color. Modern feminism often forgets this. Ignoring the multiple barriers that women of color face is not only ignorant, but also calamitous to the progress of society. In an article in *Time Magazine* by Arica L. Coleman, she explains that "...feminism was also in dire need of diversity, as it was based on the cultural and historical experiences of middle- and upper-class heterosexual white women. Consequently, issues of race, class, sexuality and ableism were ignored" (Coleman). Feminism is not feminism unless it includes all women, and neither will it help anyone if important issues like

this are excluded. We will never reach a place of true understanding if we continue to provide blanket answers to societal problems that exclude people who do not fit within these small solutions. Feminism must learn to include issues of race within issues of gender because for many, the two intersect. Wood states:

> In the twentieth century, many African-American women identified more with the civil rights struggle than the women's rights movement. This reflects both the historic racism of American feminism and the judgment that standing with black men against racism was the first and the greater call. (522)

Feminism is supposed to be something that everyone should be a part of, that benefits those who are most in need, but it is obvious that it has failed so many. Excluding women of color from feminism goes against what feminism is supposed to be. This being said, modern feminism must look to the past of women in all circumstances in order to fix the future. Intersectionality is vital to modern feminism.

Women of color have been attacked for far too long. Enslaved women were abused and raped because they were seen as sexual objects and animals. Representations of Black women in the media as the Jezebel stereotype contribute to the prejudice they face. The similarities between the historical and modern perception of Black women are not an accident. Their roots in slavery have proved just how damaging these representations of women of color are to society. The objectification of black women throughout history has infested society and reappears in ways that may not seem sinister at first, but their historical roots in oppression say otherwise. The bias that has been ingrained in society generation after generation has survived through the promotion of racial stereotyping. African American women have been hypersexualized by society, and this has resulted in violence against them. Failure to recognize the difference in treatment that women of color face in comparison to white women is ignorant and provides no real solutions to very real problems. Modern feminism often fails to be inclusive of everyone, especially marginalized groups that need it the most. With the inclusion of everyone in modern feminism, society can accomplish what is most important—justice for everyone. Through learning about past oppression, people can recognize destructive behavior and speak out against it. The sins of our fathers and mothers that came before must not be repeated, which is why we need to reject ignorance and exclusion. Marginalization of women led to the feminist movement, but the intersectional nature of marginalization in society means that some, like Black women,

have suffered it more than others. A movement that fails to understand this may fail to remedy it. Modern feminism needs a history lesson lest it fail to include the people who need the most help and accomplish what it set out to accomplish in the first place.

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Erin Olding

ENL102 Honors

"If I Were a Man:" A Justifiable Desire in an Unequal World

Longing to "be a man" is a sentiment many cisgender women throughout history have expressed. This one wish peels back the pristine layers of American society to address the harsh reality of our culture's gender inequality. Many women faced double standards, pressures, and disrespect in the early 1900's. Their destinies were to be mothers and housewives, stripping them of freedom and respect. As much as we have progressed, women still feel it would be easier if they were men. Women today still face pressures women did back then but in different forms. The stereotypical duty to service the house has evolved into servicing other people with food or cleaning and little pay. In earlier generations, women were forbidden from being as successful as men; now, if they are, they are viewed as hostile. The fact remains that inequality is still prevalent during fourth-wave feminism—that is over one hundred years of the feminist movement. Feminists of the past and present have similar pieces of evidence for claiming it is better to be a man, that men in American society have more freedom and respect than their female counterparts. For decades in America, men have been given more opportunities, and their success is celebrated rather than criticized.

Women state that if they were men, they would have more freedom. In his short story "The Chrysanthemums," prolific early 20th century author John Steinbeck homes in on this wish with the protagonist Elisa. Elisa was a "strong" woman, a word used to describe her ten times throughout the text (Steinbeck 1-2, 8). With her strong will, Elisa felt trapped in her little farming town. A "high grey-flannel fog … sat like a lid on the mountains" of the town and "made of the great valley a closed pot" (Steinbeck 1). She is therefore forced to tend a flower garden in order to feel the satisfaction of "man's" work. When her husband Henry comments she

has a gift for gardening and suggests she should "work out in the orchard," Elisa's "eyes sharpen" and she retorts smugly that she "could do it, too" (Steinbeck 2). Elisa could tend to the orchard, but the rules of the patriarchy forbid her to. Hard labor with the strong trees would not be fit for a woman, and so she has to work with a symbol of delicacy and femininity. Elisa is aware of this limitation forced upon her as she gives Henry a look and agrees with him in a passive-aggressive manner. This one option is extremely restricting for Elisa, an ambitious woman closed in a pot of a town. Throughout the story she makes it known how she longs for more freedom. Upon meeting a traveling salesman, she comments that his nomadic lifestyle "sounds like a nice kind of way to live" (Steinbeck 4). She also says she "[wishes] women could do such things" (Steinbeck 6). The salesman gets to move about freely, and at the end of the day he can leave the closed-in valley. He gets to go, but Elisa, a woman who longs for more out of life, is forced to stay in her garden. After hearing her wishes, the salesman replies that "it ain't the right kind of life for a woman" (Steinbeck 6). Travel and exploration were for men only. He had bought into the patriarchal view of keeping women "safe" at home, limiting their freedom. Elisa questions him about why this is the case, and the salesman responds he does not know why (Steinbeck 6). The man is aware of the ridiculous rules of the patriarchy, or at least knows there is no good reason for them, and yet he still upholds those rules. Once the man has left, Elisa begins to whisper to herself about her desire to be free. Suddenly, she "shook herself free and looked about to see whether anyone had been listening" (Steinbeck 7). After expressing her feelings, she becomes overwhelmed with embarrassment and paranoia. Women were not allowed to want anything more out of life, even if only in daydreaming whispers; they were to stay in the confines of their homes. Elisa still feels self-conscious about her wishes, because the patriarchy has made her feel this way. Freedom was not an option for women of her time, and unfortunately is something women in current times fail to receive as well.

Women have more choices and chances for labor outside the house in current times; however, many women have traded the imprisoning housework of their own home for low-paying service industry jobs. As feminist writer Silvia Federici explains, "women have exchanged housework in the home with housework in restaurants, hospitals, [and] cafeterias, in addition to providing the work-force for call centers and data entry firms" (188). Instead of upward mobility, women have experienced horizontal mobility in the workforce, greatly limiting their options for work—and freedom. In some extreme cases, they have become subject to more

imprisoning work in sweatshops. It is in these awful places that "generations of young women have wasted their bodies and minds … earning a pittance while subject to prison-like regimes" (Federici 188). Even if work at home has become less gender-associated, the fact remains that many women feel just as much lack of freedom in low-wage (or even illegal, non-paying) service jobs. Some women are still expected to do the brunt of the housework whilst having one or more jobs. This leaves them "saddled with a tremendously lengthened workweek [with] no time for anything but work" (Federici 190). Be it familial housework or paid work, throughout American history women's time has been devoted to nothing else. Their schedules are either focused on full-time family care or wage work, and thus they have no freedom. This was true at the time "The Chrysanthemums" was written, and while women have made much progress, they are still stuck in gendered occupations or thoroughly overworked in the modern era.

  Women are also longing to receive the same amount of respect as men. In the early 1900's, women were nothing more than pretty "objects" that were won over by a man's hard work, and an object cannot gain freedom or respect. Even so, while women had performed countless feats and accomplished innumerable successes, they were still treated as prized possessions. Charlotte Perkins Gilman explores this in her short story "If I Were a Man." The protagonist, Mollie, is suddenly transformed into her partner Gerald and experiences life as a man for a day. Before her transformation, Mollie is described as "a true woman" (Gilman 161). Her personality is "whimsical, capricious, and charming;" a thing of entertainment for a man (Gilman 161). Her physical stature is considered conventionally attractive, as "no true woman could possibly be plain" (Gilman 161). Mollie meets the standards of an ideal partner in a patriarchal society. She is pretty, and her personality is lively in order to be entertaining. She is sought after not based on who she is as a person, but by these manufactured charms and quirks that make her desirable in a vapid sense. Once Mollie becomes Gerald, she notes she feels "the right size" and that her legs move "by an unrecognizable impulse" after a streetcar (Gilman 161). The objects around her are built for a man's proportions. Physically, Mollie's new male body feels "right" resting "snugly against the seat-back" of the car (Gilman 161). She is also able to exert more confidence in a male body, moving by "impulse" to catch the car, whereas a woman might have meekly and anxiously got on. As her day goes on, Mollie finds herself being more judgmental towards women. Their hats are "attractive and foolish," and in turn so are they (Gilman 162). One "foolish … but pretty and sweet-looking" woman's hat accidentally touches

Gerald, and he "felt a sense of pleasure at the intimate tickling touch," while the woman "felt …

a wave of shame" (Gilman 162). This exemplifies a huge double standard. While Mollie, as

Gerald, judges the women for their fashion, she still finds a woman's indirect touch pleasurable.

It could have been her hat or her hand; Gerald's reaction would still have been pleasure and the

woman's shame. To be touched by a woman is an exciting thing, emotionally or sexually, yet for

a woman to touch someone is scandalous and unchaste. Women are not treated with respect but

seen as toys for pleasure. Once more, women cannot participate in this pleasure even if they want

to; after all, they are only objects, and only givers. Gerald disrespects women by both judging

their clothing and enjoying a one-sided pleasure. The dark underbelly of men's "appreciation"

for women is exposed even further into the story. Mollie is exposed to the "stories told at men's

dinners … base traditions, coarse epithets, [and] gross experiences" about women (Gilman 163).

This "new knowledge" is disturbing for Mollie, who now sees the world "as it was—man's

world" (Gilman 163). By experiencing life through a man's point of view, Mollie feels crushed

and weakened as a woman. Men gossip freely about the women in their life and think nothing of

it. A woman's degradation is viewed as entertainment. Mollie wishes she were a man, and so she

becomes one through and through, including partaking in disrespecting women. Throughout

Gilman's story, the ways in which women are not given respect are showcased with brutal

honesty. Sadly, some of those behaviors are true to this day.

Respect is something that women deserve but seldom receive in modern times. A woman

can now own her own business, decide whether to have a family, and have many other freedoms

of choice. Even so, a confident, successful woman is often faced with belittlement. As acclaimed

feminist writer Rebecca Solnit puts it, "what is confidence in a man is too often viewed as

competitiveness in a woman" (Solnit). All the positive qualities that come with success are

attributed to men, while the negatives are attributed to women. In this way, the woman is not

perceived as deserving respect. If a man is with a female partner who is more successful than he

is, the rhetoric between them includes asking if he is "OK with, dealing with, cool with [it] …

[all], reminders that female success can be regarded as some kind of intrusion or inappropriate

behavior" (Solnit). Women, according to the patriarchy, are supposed to be mothers or

caregivers, and never outpace the men in their lives. A woman must apologize for her success as

if it were a bad thing. She must ask permission to be more successful. Something so taboo cannot

be respected. Unfortunately, many women have also faced disrespect in more disturbing ways.

Women can be harmed and harassed for no reason at all. While anyone can be a predator, "women … engage in sexual assault … in numbers that are minute compared to those of men" (Solnit). Even if a woman has never been assaulted or harassed, many are "always checking to see whether [they are] being followed or bracing [themselves] in case the person passing grabs [them]" (Solnit). There is a huge level of fear in being alone, walking at night, or being on public transportation because so many men have harassed women in these ways. While men may also be assaulted in these ways, it is disproportionately less common for them, and as a result they do not experience the same kind of fear women do. Such assaults occur because there is a lack of respect toward women; if women are not respected, only seen as sexual objects, then some men believe they can get away with hurting them. Even in current times, women are treated with a threadbare level of respect.

Women deserve more as they also fight for more during fourth-wave feminism. Freedom and respect are two crucial aspects to life that men frequently enjoy more than women. Since the dawn of American history, men have had the upper hand in this regard. To this day women are fighting for freedom and respect in both America and the rest of the world. These issues have been represented in numerous works of fiction—such as Steinbeck and Gilman's short stories— and nonfiction, like the works of feminists Federici and Solnit. We must keep the discussion of women's rights going in order to gain even more progress. Much progress has been made, but women still follow behind men. Women used to be forced into laborious housework with no compensation and many are now forced into minimum wage service jobs that can barely help support them or their families. They are also treated like objects or seen as confrontational if they try to achieve success. Even women who have found success in many fields once reserved for men are often not paid equally well and disparaged rather than applauded for their success. We must attack these issues head on in order to achieve gender equality. It can be hoped that in our lifetimes there will come a day when not one cisgender woman thinks life would be easier if she had been a man.

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Kiersten Wiley

ENL102

How Technology Affects The LGBTQ+ Community

The LGBTQ+ community has grown so much in the past twenty years. More and more people are coming out, and more people are showing support. There are many pros and cons associated with this. One important development that has brought the community closer together are the advancements of technology in the past few years. For my research topic I chose to research "How have the advancements of technology helped and hurt the LGBTQ+ community?" This topic relates closely to my life as I am part of the LGBTQ+ community and use social media every day. This important topic needs to be talked about more because too few people know about the positive and negative impacts of technology on the LGBTQ+ community.

New advancements in technology have brought many good things, like social media. Social media has made it easier for queer people to find each other, increased awareness of the community, and provided great role models for young queer kids who are trying to find themselves. According to the Washington Post article, "The Importance of Social Media When It Comes to LGBTQ+ Kids Feeling Seen" by Amber Leventry, "Tweens and teens take to YouTube, TikTok, Tumblr, Instagram, and other platforms to find friends and community." Younger kids do this because they need a sense of security, that they are valid, and that there are other people just like them. When I was first discovering my sexuality, things like Instagram and YouTube were very helpful. I would find people online who made videos or posts about coming out and their experiences with figuring out their sexuality. This was very helpful because it showed that being LGBTQ+ is a normal thing for many people though uncommon and not addressed positively, or at all, in every household. I think more people should talk about it in order to normalize it. There are no good reasons for kids to grow up without the knowledge of the LGBTQ+ community.

Due to the amount of hatred and unsupportiveness from people in the world, the LGBTQ+ community is targeted very easily, and though advancements in technology have been beneficial, they have also introduced harmful elements; like catfishing, hate comments targeting a specific person or community, bringing to light the people that openly do not support the LGBTQ+ community. Social media has made it easier for these things to happen to members of the community. There are also many people in the public eye (like the President and Vice President) who do not support the LGBTQ+ community, which brings out more people that also do not support it. According to the article "Growing Up LGBT in America" by The Human Rights Campaign, "92% of LGBT youth say they hear negative messages about being LGBT. The top sources are school, the Internet, and their peers." Negative comments and hate speech towards the community on the Internet bring down all LGBT people and make them think that there is something wrong with them just because they openly love the people that they want to love and make their lives lives they want to live. Mean comments happen to most people in the community at least once a day, whether it is from a family member, a YouTube video, a TikTok, or a mean comment on an Instagram post. This negative input is a daily occurrence, but most people in the community ignore it because they are so used to seeing and hearing it.

Before social media, queer people met in different, often secretive, ways. Now there are dating apps, and other social media platforms where they can talk to others without even knowing them first. Before this technology, people had to meet at bars, through friends, or in school, and it was much harder to find someone. Today, through dating apps, it is much easier to know if someone is queer. There is still the possibility of catfishing or fake profiles, but it is easier than going up to someone in a public place, and if someone pops up on the app, he or she is most likely queer. In real life, there is always a possibility of going up to people and asking them out only to be rejected because they are not gay, and sometimes people get offended that they were asked out and the encounter could end in violence. Technology has made it much safer for many people and lowered the risk of violence.

There are many ways through social media that young people and adults can find role models and someone like them who has the same or similar experience or shares common interests. Through social media apps, like Instagram, YouTube, and Tiktok and even streaming apps like Netflix, Spotify, and Hulu, there are many ways to find an LGBTQ+ creator, singer, or actor to admire. It is possible to find YouTubers who talk about their sexuality and their experience with coming out, watch men who do makeup or are drag queens, or favorite queer TikTokers dance and express themselves. It is possible to like pictures of one's favorite queer actors, musicians, or artists on Instagram to show them support, and watch your favorite queer movie and support the filmmakers and actors. There are many queer films on Netflix and Hulu, films that relate to one's life. On Spotify, there are hundreds of LGBTQ+ artists who all produce awesome queer music that is great to listen to. There is so much representation through social media it's crazy. There is a place for all to find something they enjoy. According to Dr. Eliza Byard in an article "Out Online: The Experiences of LGBT Youth on the Internet," "The Internet can be a valuable source of information and support when they have no one or nowhere else left to turn to." To queer youth, the Internet and social media are ways for them to find a place for them when they don't have anyone else to support them. If they have lost their family's or friends' support when they came out, they can find a new place for themselves and make new friends through social media. While I personally have not made any friends through social media, I follow plenty of queer-run meme pages where they interact with their followers and become friends with them. This is an important thing to many kids who can't make friends in

real life and turn to social media. These kids also find more kids their age who are like them and they can relate to.

Through social media platforms, like Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and dating apps, there are more and more people who are a part of the LGBTQ+ community meeting each other. In fact, I met my current girlfriend through an app. We met and started talking through the app, then exchanged Snapchat information. After about a week of talking on Snapchat, we started texting, and then about a week after that, she asked me out. Now, we have been dating for almost three months, and I couldn't be happier. The only downside for us is that we live about 100 miles apart, and now with a global pandemic I am not allowed to see her for another month, which is very sad. To many people, it is weird or taboo to start dating someone through an app, but it is so common with the younger generations, and it is even more common in the LGBTQ+ community. According to the article "How Online Dating Changed the LGBT Community," "[Seventy percent] of LGBTQ+ couples meet through some form of dating app." The use of dating apps is becoming more and more normal with the younger generations. There is an array of different dating apps for every person in the LGBTQ+ community. Through dating apps, it is easier to find people with common interests. These apps are mainly for convenience, but they work. Many people find love through them, especially in the queer community.

Apps like Tiktok, Instagram, and YouTube provide a wide array of different role models. All of these people show that it is okay to be oneself, and if one's family or friends are not accepting, one can always make a family that is. One of the main ways kids find out who they are is through social media, which provide a sense of community and safety. There are thousands of people in the community who are in the public eye. Many kids find enjoyment through watching their favorite LGBTQ+ creator on YouTube, watching their favorite queer movie or TV show, or scrolling through their favorite queer Instagram accounts. Creators like James Charles, Ryland Adams, Cammie Scott, and Amy Ordman show that it is okay to be oneself, that one will find a community to be a part of that will provide support, a community in which to thrive. All these role models provide queer content to millions of people and show them they are valid. James Charles was the first male ambassador for Covergirl, a makeup company that is usually targeted towards women. He brought awareness that men can also wear and enjoy makeup. Amber Leventry of the Washington Post points out that "They (queer teens) are looking for advice and encouragement in judgment-free zones." These kids can find this through social

media. There are countless accounts on Instagram and Tiktok that are LGBTQ+. There is an account for everyone and if there isn't, it is possible to create one. These kids need a place where they can find the acceptance they often do not get within their households, and some suffer from internalized homophobia. They need a place where they can be themselves and express themselves in any way they want without being judged and told that they are wrong.

Although social media benefits the LGBTQ+ community in many ways , it is also now easier for anti-LGBTQ+ people to target people in the community. There are many people who do not support LGBTQ+ people and show it through hate. They can catfish someone, leave hate comments, and bully people until they remove the post or delete their account. They will also post mean comments, out people to their friends and family, report accounts to get them taken down, and some even make death threats. Many people also show their hatred through posts online. According to the website NoHomophobes.com, which tracks the number of queer slurs on Twitter, there have been over 80 million slurs used on Twitter in the past eight years. That is about 10 million slurs a year. This happens way more often than it should. According to Elida Høeg of Sciencenorway, "[One] in [four] LGBTQ+ people experience hate speech." All of this hate is about sexual orientation or gender identity. This is an individual matter. People should not care what other people are doing behind closed doors or who they are doing it with; it is none of their business. The frequency with which the LGBTQ+ community receives hate speech and comments makes members of the community not want to come out and show who they are. As stated earlier, many people suffer from internalized homophobia, which is when they truly believe that all of the hate and mean comments people have made about queer people in front of them or about them are true; things like "you are going to hell for being gay" or "you're not actually gay, you just haven't met the right girl/guy" or "you're too pretty to be gay" or "I can turn you straight." All these comments are very common in the life of a queer person, and they are all used to bring hate to this person and invalidate them.

Although there are people in the public eye that show support for the LGBTQ+ community, there are just as many people in the public eye that hate and do not support the community. The words and actions of non-supportive people in the public eye pushes non-famous people to show their hate for queer people. Today there is one very famous person who is in the news and media every day who does not support the LGBTQ+ community, and that person is Donald Trump, the President of the United States. Along with not supporting the queer

community he does not support immigrants, women, people of color, or poor people. Basically, he does not support anyone who is other than a middle-class white man. As president of an entire country, his outright refusal to support the LGBTQ+ community encourages his supporters and other people who do not support the community. According to the Human Rights Campaign article, "[Sixty-eight percent] of LGBT youth say they hear negative messages about being LGBT from elected leaders." In the time of his presidency, Trump has done many things against the LGBTQ+ community. He has made a decision with the Department of Health and Human Services that they can deny healthcare to a queer person if it conflicts with the doctor's personal beliefs. He wants to reinstate a ban on transgender people in the military. These are just two of the many other things he has done or proposed that discriminate against the queer community. Trump is the leader of one of the top countries in the world, and for him to be so openly against the LGBTQ+ community is bad. It shows other countries that it is okay to be openly against the community and causes more hatred and discrimination. Every day on TikTok I see a queer creator duet react to a Trump supporter's video in which the speaker says he or she thinks being gay is wrong. During the summer of 2019, there was a Tiktok trend on the gay side of TikTok to joke about how the Vice President of the United States, Mike Pence, would send all of the gays to a "summer camp," basically a conversion camp, if he became president after Trump's impeachment. It is sad that in 2019 people still don't support gay people when it doesn't even affect them personally. If someone is straight, gay people don't comment on their posts and spread hate, say that they should be sent away, and they definitely don't commit hate crimes against them.

People who are in the community like to post things and express themselves on social media. One of the worst things that happens to gay people on social media is when strangers e-mail or somehow send one of their posts showing that they are gay to the gay person's family. This is called being outed. I've seen probably five to ten TikToks of someone crying and saying how it is not okay to out people to their families just because one doesn't agree with their being gay. One of the hardest things for people to do is come out and to have that taken away from them is horrible. The reason that coming out on one's own is so important is that one needs to make sure one's in a safe space with people one trusts, who will not be physically violent. Many people don't even come out until later in life because of how they think some people will react. I personally have only come out to the people that live in my house and my friends. I don't really

care if strangers know because I will never see them again, but I will always worry about telling other people in my family because I have no idea how they will react. I've known that I was gay since sixth grade, for about six years, and only four of my family members know. My biggest fear about coming out to them is that they will stop loving me. It seems like many other people in the LGBTQ+ community have this fear too, according to the Human Rights Campaign article, "[Twenty-six percent] of LGBT youth say their biggest problems are not feeling accepted by their family, bullying, and a fear to be out." Family obviously care about their gay members, and their gender identity should not matter to them. All throughout childhood people are taught acceptance and unconditional love, and then when their gay children show them who they truly are and want to be, they don't accept them and in some cases harm them, kick them out of the house, or disown them. People who have families who don't care how they identify are very lucky. Many children are not so lucky, and that is why a lot of kids wait until they are in college or have moved out to come out to their family. If a family cannot support their gay child, then they should not be in the child's life.

There are many good and bad things that social media brings to the LGBTQ+ community, but in the end, it helps the community more than it hurts it. Through social media apps more and more people have met. There are now communities for everyone, and there are new ways for people to express themselves. Advancements of technology have definitely helped bring the LGBTQ+ community closer together. Whether it is through TikTok, Instagram, or YouTube, there is a place for all to find someone like them, who has had the same feelings experiences as they have. No doubt there is hate towards the LGBTQ+ community, but the people that bring hate can always be blocked and reported. Talking about the community should be more normalized and there should be less hate.

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Ivelina Georgieva

ENL101

What Does Stress Do to Your Body?

     Every person has a basic knowledge of biology, math, and literature, along with the other subjects studied in school, but how many people are "emotionally intelligent?" Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand your emotions and the emotions of other people. Each day, people experience different emotions like joy, fear, and anger, but they do not really try to understand why they feel that way. In many cases, when people feel sad, angry, disappointed, and anxious they do not realize that stress may be the reason. This paper presents research about the effects of stress on the human body and the advice stress management specialists share. I became interested in this topic because I am a very emotional person, and I am interested in learning how to understand my emotions and control them. This topic, the effects of stress, is worth investigating because more and more people experience stress daily, but they do not know how to cope with it.

     The purpose of this paper is to give information about the effects of stress and to raise awareness of this problem. Stress is one of the main reasons people develop anxiety disorders

and other mental health issues. A large percentage of stress complaints are work-related. Statistics from 2019 show that "…83% of US workers suffer from work-related stress. Stress causes around one million workers to miss work every day. Work-related stress causes 120,000 deaths and results in $190 billion in healthcare costs yearly and 54% of workers report that stress from work affects their life at home" (Milenkovic).

1. **Stress and Disease**

Many people think that stress has something to do with mental health and that it is a type of illness. Stress is just a term; it is not an illness. However, it is one of the main factors of mental illness and many diseases. Stress can be defined as the body's response to outside factors and changes that we experience (Tripathy et al.). The impact that stress has on the human body is alarming, and many diseases are caused by chronic stress. In general, individuals who experience stress frequently are more likely to have cardiac illnesses, stroke, diabetes, obesity, sleep disorders, depressive disorders, and substance abuse disorders. Substance abuse is one of the most common and extremely self-harming ways that people deal with stress. People think that they can find a solution to stress in the form of alcohol or drug use, but they are just doing more damage to themselves. The psychological effects that stress can cause are Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), psychosis, bipolar affective disorder, and sleep disorder (Tripathy et al.).

2. **Physiological and Psychological Stress**

The human body responds to stress in two ways: physiological and psychological. The psychological effects of stress cause anxiety and nervousness, both can affect a person's mental health. The physiological effects that stress causes are disruptions in skin temperature, muscle tension, changes in the cardiorespiratory function and shortness of breath (Tripathy et al.). Furthermore, stress can be separated generally in two categories: predictable and unpredictable. The difference between predictable and unpredictable stress is that the former can be controlled, and the latter cannot. Unfortunately, sometimes, people get caught up in situations of "unpredictable stress," with negative results. Dr. Kerry Ressler is a professor of psychiatry that teaches at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Ressler says that stress can be scary and that it can make people feel uncomfortable. Dr. Ressler says, "If you are stressed about a presentation at work or an upcoming exam, the stress you are experiencing has an endpoint when you know you will get

relief. If the stress has no endpoint — for example, you are chronically stressed about finances — it may be more challenging to cope with" ("Protect Your Brain").

3. Stress and the Digestive System

The impact that stress has on the body is different from person to person. For some people, it can cause a headache, but for others, the impact of stress can be traced to the changes that happen in the digestive system. Ken Goodman is a therapist that treats patients with anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders. Goodman writes, "When you are anxious, some of the hormones and chemicals released by your body enter your digestive tract, where they interfere with digestion. They have a negative effect on your gut flora (microorganisms that live in the digestive tract and aid digestion) and decrease antibody production. The resulting chemical imbalance can cause several gastrointestinal conditions" (Goodman). The conditions that are related to the impact of stress on the digestive system include stomach cramps, loss of appetite, nausea, indigestion, and Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) (Goodman).

4. Stress and the Brain

Chronic stress can also affect brain function. When a person is stressed, the body produces more cortisol than it can release properly. When the cortisol levels are high, it causes disruptions in brain function. Stress can damage synapse regulation, which results in the avoidance of contact with other people. Another bad influence of stress is that it kills brain cells and reduces the capacity of the brain, targeting the zone in which memory and learning are developed (Bernstein). In addition, stress has some serious effects on sleep. If we experience stress during the day, it is likely we will have a disturbed sleep. One of the hormones that support the body's response to stress is cortisol. Cortisol is also the hormone that gives us energy in the morning. Cortisol levels elevate during the day. For example, in the morning cortisol gives us energy, but in the afternoon, the body starts do produce less cortisol, which makes us slowly feel the need to go to sleep. At night, cortisol levels became low, so we can have a restful sleep. However, if cortisol levels are disrupted because of stress, this immediately causes sleep problems, such as insomnia. As a result of not getting restful sleep, we do not receive the needed boost of energy that cortisol gives in the morning, and our mood changes. We can be sleepy, nervous and have trouble focusing and doing tasks (Adam).

5. Stress and Attitude

Stress can be separated into two categories: eustress and distress. Eustress is a type of stress that is positive to the human body and distress can be explained as the negative stress we experience. Every person experiences eustress in their life at least once. The American Institute of Stress describes eustress as a boost of adrenaline that causes your heart to pound from excitement. Examples of eustress can be the start of a new job, bungee jumping, new hobbies, traveling, meeting new people, and the birth of a child. All of these are examples of moments in our lives that make us feel excited, happy, or full of energy. Eustress helps us achieve and do our best; it also motivates us to try new things without fear ("The Good Stress").

6. Recommendations and Solutions

Harvard Professor of Psychiatry, Dr. Kerry Ressler says that stress can be managed by developing a routine. He explains that creating a routine is one way to control stress by predicting when you can expect it. He also recommends staying organized and making lists of tasks to complete during the day. This approach will remove the feeling that makes people feel rushed. Dr. Ressler suggests, "Making a list also gives you a clear endpoint so you know when you are done. Laying tasks out like this helps reduce the feeling that the brain is being bombarded… It can also help you predict when you are likely to be stressed" ("Protect Your Brain"). Stress can be an obstacle in people's daily life only if they let it be. It is not "mission impossible" to learn how to properly develop healthy habits that can help reduce levels of stress. There are ways that scientists have found that can help with stress management. One way is socializing with close friends and family. Sharing problems and talking about them with family and friends make it easier to deal with stress and overcome difficulties. This is also called a support system. Another way to deal with stress is proper time management. Many people experience stress because they do not know how to manage their schedules. Creating a "to do" list can help alleviate the feeling of being in a rush. Another way of dealing with stress is regular exercise. A study shows that people who exercise regularly feel much calmer and less stressed. Another physical activity that promotes relaxation is yoga (Barnes).

Stress is not a disease, and people should stop stigmatizing it as such. Instead, people should learn how to manage it and how to understand their emotions. Emotional intelligence can help to reduce levels of stress, and it can also help people who have anxiety disorders. In our busy schedules, we should learn how to find time to detox from the negative emotions and stress

that we experience during the day and learn how to appreciate the good things that happen, which in many cases we forget about.

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Ethan Hansen

ENL101

Social Distancing

Is social distancing actually bringing people closer together? I would argue it is, at least it is beginning to. And not in the physical sense, but rather the spirit. How often do you talk with your neighbor? How often do you converse with your aunt/cousin/sibling who resides in a different state? Maybe all the time. Maybe you're a social butterfly that constantly stays connected with everyone. Or maybe not. Maybe you never talk to your neighbor, and the only interaction you have is when you wave to them in the morning when you both happen to be leaving for work at the same time. Maybe you rarely speak with your relatives, only catching up with them at holidays, and in between the only interaction you have is on social media.

Personally, this has been my story. I know many others share the same story. We get lost in the whirlpool of our fast-paced society. Constantly surrounded by others, but constantly distracted. Work. School. Bills. Traffic. Coffee. Go. Go. Go. Then at the end of the day fly home, throw on some Netflix and melt into the couch, just to wake up tomorrow and do it all again. We spend the whole day surrounded by people, and we can't wait to get back home. And after dealing with those assholes at work all day, the last thing we're going to do is strike up a conversation with that guy living next door. We have been living in this house for five years now and we still don't know anything about him. Why start now?

Six a.m., alarm goes off then back at it. Go. Go. Go. Back to work. Back to dealing with those assholes we can't wait to later avoid in the comfort of our decorated four walls and a door. How long has it been since we have even thought about that cousin we have been meaning to catch up with? Weeks? Months? We'll give them a try some other time, right now we have work to do. Go. Go. Go. We just want a break. A break from work. A break from people. A break from life.

Slow…….. the…..fuck………………down… ....COVID-19.

When COVID-19 first hit a few weeks ago, things changed quickly. That fast-paced lifestyle came to a screeching halt, with absolutely no slowing down. It was like a light switch. Go. Go. Go. Stop. I went from being a full time college student getting ready for midterms to not leaving my house. To give some perspective, I am one of the people I was describing in the first paragraph. I never talk to my neighbors. I have a huge family that I have a hard time keeping in touch with, and sometimes I'll go an extended period of time without hearing from them as well. I am one of those introverted individuals famous for constantly uttering the phrase, "I hate people."

Suddenly, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Now, I find myself so eager at the thought of even being able to speak to another person. I see this with others as well. Since this whole thing started, Zoom has become the new hottest platform for online communication. It is being used for business, school, and personal calls. In the past couple weeks, I have been a part of at least four Zoom meetings with family members. A lot of these relatives fall in that category of people I have a hard time keeping in touch with. Since social distancing started my family has been making an effort to get on a Zoom call and check in with everyone at least once a week. Now on a weekly basis I'm connecting with family members that I otherwise might go months without even sending a text message to. I am aware of others that have been doing this as well.

The other aspect that I have noticed is the relationship with neighbors. A combination of warmer spring weather mixed with the anxiety of being cooped up in a house all day means that people have been out walking their dogs, going for jogs and doing yard work (while keeping a safe distance of course). It's amazing how happy I am to see these people pass by, and how happy they are to see me. Instead of just the courteous head nod I usually get while passing by I have been receiving (and delivering) a genuine smile and a wave with a "How are you doing today?" People are happy to see each other, which isn't always the case.

Just today while doing some yard work I went over and had a conversation with my neighbors (again, while keeping a healthy distance) who I hadn't talked to in at least four or five years. It's a beautiful thing. It's like Joni Mitchell said, "You don't know what you got till it's gone." Right now what's gone for all of us is that human interaction. Something we always had and something that a lot of us (myself included) complained about. Something that we are now all craving. There are lessons to be learned in this crisis. This is just one of them; the importance

of others. Not taking things for granted is an extremely difficult task, especially while living in our entitled society. But we must remember this time, as dark as it is.

When we come out of the other side of COVID-19 and feel tempted to swiftly return back to that GoGoGo mentality we must remember how it was. How it is now. How important our interactions and relationships with others are. If we can do this successfully, imagine how beautiful a world we could potentially live in. One where we care about each other as opposed to avoiding each other. This is a real possibility.

Virginia Johnston
ENL163

My Final Semester at CCCC

On my first ever visit to Cape Cod Community College, I felt lost, confused, and unsure about my decisions. Since then, I have discovered energy drinks, dyed my hair pink, and mastered trigonometry. Now as I enter my last semester, I still feel a bit lost, confused, and unsure, but I have found myself. I know now that I made the right choice to come here and I have taken full advantage of this experience.

At 16 years old, I was looking to join the dual enrollment program that my high school offered. If I attended 4Cs for my junior and senior years, then I could graduate high school and get my Associate Degree at the same time. Seems like a no brainer, right? Well, to me, it meant moving on from high school and stepping into the life of an adult with responsibilities and schedules. It was a big decision that I felt would ultimately benefit me in the long run. And so far, I think I was right.

During the fall semester of 2018, I was required to take a College Experience course taught by Professor Alison Frisbie. The objective was to make the college transition a bit easier and to prepare us for the future. A journal of our hopes and dreams was a requirement. There was one exercise we did that involved writing down our optimal future, a foresight into a proud life. As students shared their answers, we got the typical mix. A pro athlete, a doctor, a lawyer, that kind of stuff. When it was my turn, my cheeks flushed red as I answered, "I'd like to be a beekeeper." My dreams didn't seem as ambitious as the rest.

Then again, it was my first semester and I didn't know much. I started that class by sitting with my only friend, and I left it knowing everybody's story. I still wave to those classmates in the hall. Since then, Kylie Power has been in two of my other courses and we have gotten to know each other. She is also a dual enrollment student who started in College Experience.

"My first semester was full of uncertainty. All I knew about my future as a 16-year-old was that I would attend college until I was satisfied. Now after branching out into different fields with an assortment of classes, I've finally been able to determine my field of study," Kylie shared with me. She is excited to transfer to UMass Boston next semester as an Economics and Political Science dual major.

My prime goal here has always been to explore. I never had a dream major or career that drove my decisions. I took Plant and Soil Science in my second semester because I wanted to improve my garden. I took Yoga to create some routine. I now stretch before gardening. I appreciate the trees when I drive down the highway. I think this is the best way to enjoy life. I took Journalism 1 my second semester which forced me to connect with the school. It was at this point that I really joined the 4Cs community. I had to know the ins and outs of the school and be confident striking up conversations with strangers. I found that writing isn't limited to five-paragraph essays.

I also took Intro to Philosophy. If I thought I knew anything before, I was wrong. I walked out of that class every Monday and Wednesday questioning my place in the world. By the end of the course, both nothing and everything made sense. I am now enrolled in Existentialism and I don't know why I exist, but maybe we'll get to that by the end of the semester.

For a lot of students, community college is just a steppingstone to a four-year school. Most of my peers have started this process with college visits and applications. My friend Sohrob Nyman has been on this journey with me since middle school. He made the decision to join the same dual enrollment program at 16, and now he's getting ready to move on.

"When I transfer to a four-year college to pursue physical therapy, I will have some credits under my belt and have a head start," he told me. To him, attending 4Cs meant that he finished some prerequisites. I thought that was my path for a while, but application season has

come and gone, and I never applied anywhere. For Sohrob and Kylie, their passions await them at four-year schools. For me, I will be fine after 4Cs.

So we look to the future. I am going on the Belize study abroad trip this spring. Then I have no plans, and I am so excited. Maybe I'll get some bees.