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Corresponding Author	Family Name	Johnson	
	Particle		
	Given Name	Michael	
	Suffix	Jr	
	Division	Center for Liberal Studies	
	Organization/University	University of Wisconsin Parkside	
	Address	Kenosha, WI, USA	
	Email	mjohnso9@wsu.edu	
Abstract	<p>This chapter offers a critical investigation into how the concept of ugliness manifests as more than an aesthetic interpellation. Rather, this chapter contends that ugliness, in tandem with concepts of racial pulchritude, directly and indirectly influences one’s professional identity and pedagogical efficacy. More than a strict examination of student evaluations, this autho-ethnographic analysis examines how identity categories like race, class, gender, sexuality and ability both contribute to, and circumscribe, how ugliness is socioculturally interpreted within the competitive halls and classrooms of academia. Utilizing a wide variety of sources, such as student evaluation comments, peer reviews and professional commentary, and email, and with first-person accounts, the author conducts a self-reflexive assessment about how the twin discourses of body image and racial attractiveness function within a higher education environment for a gay man of color and his professional life. The intention of this chapter is that readers should develop a more complex understanding of the practical consequences of “teaching while ugly” in addition to grasping a more rudimentary recognition and comprehension of the times, places and reasons why people are rendered “ugly” against contemporary standards of racialized beauty. The chapter draws upon a wealth of rich bibliographic sources across an array of disciplinary traditions, to create a complex picture of what kinds of aesthetic standards proliferate within the halls of academia and the consequences which predictably ensue from strict adherence to those standards for academicians of today.</p>		

AUTHOR QUERIES

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Teaching While Ugly: A Story of Racial Pulchritude, Privilege, and Pedagogy

Michael Johnson Jr

Introduction

One year, at the beginning of the semester, a rather precocious white student interrupted me during a discussion about the homogenization of mixed-race people into dominant phenotypes, asking, “So, what are you?” To which I incredulously asked, “What do you mean?” And he said, “Well I know you said you were adopted which explains your name, but I heard you speaking Spanish, but you don’t look *completely* Spanish, so what *are* you?” Smiling, I asked him what he thought I was, to which he replied, “I don’t know really ... maybe mixed or Caribbean or something.” I shook my head and said, “This is precisely the problem ... we are so heavily invested in examining the details of what people look like, that we conveniently forget how that information is inevitably used to decide how we feel and what we think about others.” Chagrined, he apologized after class, to which I laughingly said, “You don’t have to apologize ... you just had the balls to ask what other people may have been wondering.”

As an academic and a gay man of color, I find myself fascinated by the plethora of research about the politics associated with the gay male body. There are book chapters on body image and muscularity in textbooks on men’s mental health, along with extensive research on the effects of age on gay male bodies and the sociocultural bias associated with male physicality. There

M. Johnson Jr (✉)

Center for Liberal Studies, University of Wisconsin Parkside, Kenosha, WI, USA
e-mail: mjohnso9@wsu.edu

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is an equally compelling literature about the influence of attractiveness within the classroom that conveniently coincides with my pedagogical interests about how both (1) my physiological appearance and (2) my position of authority in the classroom render me visible and knowable to my students. My teaching philosophy is one predicated upon a social justice framework that continually attempts to enfranchise those students on the margins; the silent, the invisible and the underrepresented. Yet, I struggle to balance that dedication to student-centered pedagogical practice with a duty to my own personal welfare which requires a degree of self-respect and attentiveness to my emotional and mental health. Thus, this essay is an investigation into the complex ways in which concepts like attractiveness, ugliness, race, class, ability and sexuality intersect within the confines of the classroom and have implications for my personal and professional lives.

This is a first-person auto-ethnographic analysis about the complexities that are implicated between conceptually valued ideas of racial pulchritude and ugliness versus pedagogical efficacy, and professional image. I argue for a broader assessment of the ways in which these various factors conspire to undermine faculties whose physicality and physiological appearance, sexual identity, age, ability and racial phenotype place them at a disadvantage despite their otherwise exemplary pedagogical skills. This analysis covers the most recent seven years of classroom experience at Washington State University. This contribution capitalizes upon and expands an emerging area of scholarship that investigates the politics associated with non-normative bodies and the acceptance of homo-normative standards of gay male attractiveness. What follows is an analysis of racial pulchritude and ugliness as twin types of sociocultural phenomena to which students and faculty adhere. Next, I proceed to discuss my personal pedagogical experiences as a faculty member in relation to prevailing discourses of beauty and attractiveness in the classroom (as a fashion and bodily conscious gay man). Finally, I conclude with a self-reflexive assessment of the consequences that the twin discourses of body image and racial attractiveness pose for gay male faculty in higher education today in terms of their pedagogical effectiveness and the implications for the profession.

It is my intention and hope that readers will come away with a more nuanced understanding of how ugliness is constructed, defined and reinforced along the lines of race, sexuality, class and ability. It is also my hope that readers will develop an understanding of the ways in which ugliness is created, applied to bodies, and interpreted and that it is a complex issue that implicates all these categories of being. I hope that they will then discover and recognize that the methods by which ugliness is brought into being is fraught

with power relationships that are inextricably attached to structural systems which support the boundaries of who is defined as ugly, at which times and in what places. Readers will hopefully also recognize and understand how racial pulchritude in particular is but a twin to the concept of ugliness as it subtends the boundaries where one concept ends and the other begins.

The phrase racial pulchritude is a linguistic shorthand that describes how attractiveness can, and often is, defined in strictly racial ways where one's beauty is not directly comparable to another's because of a racial difference between both individuals. Asian discourses of beauty are distinctly different (though they may share some similarities, like light skin preference) from those of Caucasian discourses of beauty. Karen W. Tice similarly argues that racial pulchritude became codified in beauty pageants for African American women by strict adherence to

... dominant middle-class gender and class norms for manners, dress, deportment, leisure, and self-presentation – a redemptive strategy to counter damaging racial representations in popular culture and white racist attitudes – has been termed the 'politics of respectability'... such a strategy entails constant body discipline as well as the adoption of class-coded norms for self-presentation to refute structural racism.¹

In much the same way as Tice argues in her work, my contribution brings to light how racial pulchritude makes manifest the methods by which people are rendered ugly in discrete places and times along an influential axis of identity categories (like race and the sexuality–gender continuum) and how that is wedded to a social system of power, privilege and position. Finally, it is my intention that readers will understand how these conceptual ideas are brought to fruition in a material world where academicians' livelihoods, professional reputations and perceptions of self-worth are inexorably tied to public and private perceptions of racial attractiveness or ugliness.

Racial Pulchritude and Ugliness

Attractiveness and beauty are conceptually related to the idea of race in a wide variety of ways. Without going into the lengthy history about how non-Caucasian racial groups have invariably been construed as less than attractive by their Caucasian peers, one can say with a high degree of certainty that American society has struggled to interpret brown and black bodies as anything but unattractive and perpetually in nonconformity to its own (white)

standards of beauty. For the purposes of this research, I utilize the extant literature and scholarly record that represent the knowledge about gay male interpretations of beauty as the scale against which I am measured given my open acknowledgment (and embrace) of that identity category in both my professional and personal lives. However, the use of this scholarship for the purposes of this discussion in no way should infer my acceptance or a tacit approval of its demarcations and inherent limitations. I merely recognize that many others use these discourses to interpellate me against the metrics of beauty and attractiveness. And because beauty and ugliness are two sides of the same coin, thus we are all involved in judging the weights and measurements of social worth.

Nina Athanassoglou-Kallmyer defines ugliness as “an aesthetic category that stands at the opposite of beauty. The two constitute dialectic polarities that form the backbone of Western aesthetic and moral thought.”² In this sense ugliness is the opposite of those characteristics that define beauty, such as “ideal, reason, truth, goodness, perfection ... order, harmony, civilization” and thus aesthetically ugliness constitutes a state of being as much as a set of characteristics which one either possesses or does not possess, because the presence or absence of those characteristics brings with them an interpellation or indelible stamp immediately visible to all. In cases where a disabled person possesses a physical deformity, that physiological difference is immediately construed as “disorder, dissonance, irregularity ... the Other” in much the same way as a racial difference marked by different phenotypical characteristics like brown skin (as is the case for me) or eye shape or hair form. Some phenotypical characteristics that we associate with race also function as a vehicle upon which social value is conferred or negated, as is the case in those circumstances where non-whiteness conveys a social stigma of inferiority or deviation from the ideal. Succinctly summarizing this concept, Victor Hugo once famously wrote that “Beauty has only one type; ugliness has a thousand,”³ thus there are many more opportunities to be defined and interpellated as “ugly” for people of color than there are for white people, where racial phenotype is the primary characteristic at issue. When this concept is applied to the halls of academia and the classroom in particular, the confluences of racial phenotype and the dialectical discourses of power between student and faculty are quickly involved before anyone has spoken a single word.

Decisions about which course to take or drop and expectations about coursework requirements and academic difficulty are all made by students often in consultation with a sometimes implicit set of racialized and gendered criteria about (and under) whom they wish to spend the next four months of their lives while being evaluated, assessed and scrutinized. And as

Athanassoglou-Kallmyer makes clear, these decisions and the criteria used to make them reflect the confluences of pulchritude and power: “Historically the dialectic beauty/ugliness was shaped by issues of hierarchy, value and power ... both beauty and ugliness articulated cultural and political meanings ... Ugliness ... was linked to ... the racially Other (blacks and Jews among others).”⁴ As I argue here, sometimes those measurements of beauty or ugliness also become assessments of professional ability or teaching competency. There is an extensive body of scholarship about how race and beauty are interrelated, and within that body of scholarship one can find no small amount of research that illustrates how brown bodies and faces are consistently interpreted as less attractive than their Caucasian counterparts.⁵

As a multiracial Latino man, in skin tone and facial appearance, I share some features with the famous actor Luis Guzman, although I’m partially bald and uncharacteristically stand at 6ft 1in. My skin color is a very light brown and in my younger years I had straight black hair, though I now have a more Jean-Luc Picard haircut (if you will excuse the pop culture reference). Therefore, my racial phenotype is often misconstrued as alternatively Middle Eastern or an admixture of black/white/Latino, the latter of which is technically true given the history of my Puerto Rican origins. This racial ambiguity in many respects parallels what Athanassoglou-Kallmyer describes as the “grotesque” where my skin color, facial features, hair and eye shape all give rise to a “hybridization or inmixing of binary opposites” leading to a racial “merging of elements usually perceived as incompatible”⁶ which unsettles the readily identifiable and safely categorizable racial categories Western society has established as “beautiful” in their uniform purity. I am moderately overweight despite my height and being in my late thirties I also do not fit the stereotypical age of a “professor” yet I’m also too old to be close in age to the undergraduate students whom I primarily teach.⁷ The cumulative effect is an abject discomfort in many students, who by virtue of their isolated background in the Eastern side of the state, have never seen a man of color like myself, much less having been placed in a position of social inferiority beneath one who holds much power over their academic development and progress. The power relationships between ugly people and beautiful people (or less ugly people, as it comes in gradations) are complex, but they become more so when issues of accountability are involved in social institutions like colleges and universities where students have willingly subjected themselves to the hierarchical nature of those relationships in the faculty top-down structure.

Thus the image that students enrolled in my classes are initially exposed to is one atypical of their usual experience at my institution where non-international faculty of color constitute approximately 10 percent (combined)

of the total 1805 faculty across four campuses as of fall 2014.⁸ Their collective unfamiliarity with faculty of color has a distinct consequence in the classroom, especially when it is paired with a 26 percent (non-international) student of color ratio amongst their own peers sitting next to them. This problem is especially complicated by the fact that fewer faculty of color occupy tenure track positions, which are generally accompanied with written job protections, guaranteeing research and teaching independence. These positions also come with financial incentives that make an academic career rewarding and especially attractive to faculty of color, despite their underrepresentation. A recent study using IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) data from 1993, 2003, and 2013 noted that:

Just as the doors of academe have been opened more widely than heretofore to marginalized groups, the opportunity structure for academic careers has been turned on its head ... The available jobs tend, less and less, to be the conventional 'good' jobs, that is, the tenure-track career-ladder jobs that provide benefits, manageable to quite good salaries, continued professional development opportunities – and, crucially, a viable future for academics ... Underrepresented minority groups held approximately 13 percent of faculty jobs in 2013, up from 9 percent in 1993. Yet they still only hold 10 percent of tenured jobs ...⁹

Moreover, I teach in the Critical Culture, Gender and Race Studies department that teaches comparative ethnic studies, women and gender studies, and American studies courses that satisfy only one or two major curricular requirements across disciplines at the undergraduate level. Thus, it is not uncommon that I encounter students in their senior year,¹⁰ and from other disciplines where their first interaction with a faculty member of color is often in my classroom.

In the Classroom and on Stage

When I walk into the classroom, most students have no idea in advance what I am supposed to look like, given my generic name and its failure to broadcast my ethnicity in advance of my arrival. But despite this lack of warning, when we arrive in our classes on the first day, we faculty are all on stage from that moment forth. Judgments about what we look and sound like are made in a complex assessment that also includes decisions about our choices of clothing, grooming and hair styles. This is especially true for female faculty whose existence in the heterosexist world of academia is even more subject to these cri-

tiques. In many ways, I'm partially insulated from those because I'm hegemonically male, but that same privilege is also undermined by my queer aesthetic choices in clothing and strict adherence to standards of grooming (i.e. I'm clean shaven, regularly keep my hair closely cropped and have manicured hands, etc.) Hamermesh and Parker conclusively determined ten years ago that "... ascriptive characteristics, such as beauty, trigger positive responses by students and lead them to evaluate some teachers more favorably, so that their beauty earns them higher economic returns."¹¹ And given the miserable academic job market, the likelihood of positions opening up for faculty of color are essentially non-existent. Thus, the chances that students will experience an increase in their exposure rates to faculty of color (both at my own institution and across higher education) are highly unlikely. So students are left with what little variety amongst faculty of color exist and proceed to make conclusions about us from this small sample size. Hamermesh and Parker note that "Minority faculty members receive lower teaching evaluations than do majority instructors."¹² They also noted that the "... Good looks generate more of a premium, bad looks more of a penalty for male instructors, just as we demonstrate¹³ for the effects of beauty in wage determination."¹⁴ Hamermesh and Parker also point out that "raters may be unable to distinguish physical attractiveness from good grooming and dress"¹⁵ but ultimately discount this possibility as a significant obstacle to the validity of their findings. Hamermesh and Parker conclude that

The estimates leave little doubt that measures of perceived beauty have a substantial independent positive impact on instructional ratings by undergraduate students ... even if instructional ratings have little or nothing to do with actual teaching productivity, university administrators behave as if they believe that they do, and link economic rewards to them ... the most important issue is what our results tell us about whether students are discriminating against ugly instructors or whether they really do learn less ... for example, what if students simply pay more attention to good-looking instructors and learn more from them?¹⁶

Hamermesh and Parker's research has been corroborated by a number other studies, some of which occurred in other countries, in other employment settings or under altogether different research conditions.¹⁷ Athanassoglou-Kallmyer argues that "both beauty and ugliness were now regarded as contingent, relative and mutable concepts, determined by diverse parameters such as geography, time, climate, culture, race and national and ethnic particularities"¹⁸ and this is particularly true in terms of pedagogical efficacy.

Students are much more receptive to beautiful people than ugly people; thus the opposite is true in cases where ugly people are in positions of power, often spawning subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) resistance or recalcitrance in classroom settings. And in some cases, “ugly” faculty are sometimes intimidated because of students’ overt negative reactions, causing some faculty to overcompensate in terms of disciplinary decisions and punitive grading, as I personally witnessed as a graduate student.

Much of this research, however, has yet to adequately interrogate the issues particular to the plight like my own, specific to gay masculinity. Gay faculty “often face the dilemma of whether or not to be open about their sexual identity in their classrooms, a dilemma predicated on widespread heterosexism.”¹⁹ A decision to be public about one’s identity as a sexual minority carries risks within higher education settings such as the potential for lower teaching evaluations, a phenomenon that women in particular must face within the profession, despite both sexual identity and sex being immutable characteristics over which we have little control.²⁰ The dangers become even more significant when one occupies an untenured, “temporary” position as I currently do, where the primary measure of pedagogical efficacy is quantitatively distilled down to numerical representations derived wholly from student evaluations. The precarity of my employment is an added variable to a complex array of dangerous consequences that accompany my gay visibility and interpretations of professional competence that can accompany that visibility.

According to Clarke and Turner, “gay men are allied to style, fashion, grooming and effeminacy” but students “have a clear image of the (stereo) typical lesbian and gay man.”²¹ For these authors, the “centrality of the visual to lesbian and gay identity is readily apparent in popular culture.”²² To justify this position they point to Gage et al. who contend that “lesbians and gay men have used dress, hairstyling, jewelry, tattoos, piercings and other adornments to signify their sexual identity (or preferences).”²³ Research supports this contention²⁴ which suggests that sexual minorities “use clothing and adornment to create a sense of group identity (separate from the dominant culture) to resist and challenge normative (gendered) expectations, and to signal their sexual identity to the wider world or just to those ‘in the know.’”²⁵ At least in my case, I find myself in agreement with this research. I’m very attentive to the clothing choices that I make, and they (stereo)typically represent that attentiveness in unique ways. Frequently I often find myself more classically dressed than even full Professors in my own department who often wear denim and tennis shoes (both of which I abhor) to campus. I know all too well that this kind of fashion sensibility reflects a conscious decision to reproduce some of the tropes associated with gay masculinity, but I have con-

cluded that my decisions about what to wear are a capitulation to the need to tangibly cultivate an appearance of professionalism despite my “temporary” faculty status. Studies have identified a relationship between sexual minority identity and dress and appearance that conforms to a dominant or prevailing norm.²⁶ And that norm centers on a “... valorization of youth, muscles, masculinity and a variety of ‘gay’ styles for men, and many people feel under pressure to conform to these norms in order to be accepted by other ... gay men.”²⁷

They are not entirely wrong either. Much of the fidelity to the norms that these scholars have identified is by virtue of our marginal status as sexual minorities, whose lives on the periphery of society demand a certain degree of cultural camouflage that manifests itself in dress and appearance. This homophily in appearance can serve as both an indicator of membership in the “out” group as well as a type of group security for many who rely on externally visible, identifiable codes to recognize like-as-like. However, this often has taken on a perverse self-regulatory mechanism whereby some gay men have come to reject the pressures to conform. Holliday’s participants “indicated that the gay scene placed a particular premium on dress, appearance, style and fashion (making judgements about people on the basis of their clothes and appearance).”²⁸ Indeed, Holliday found that “participants often attempted to read off people’s sexuality from their dress and appearance ... some participants were conscious of being read themselves ... but what counted as ‘too gay’ was to some extent context specific – visiting grandparents versus being ‘out on the pull.’”²⁹ Gay masculinity, in a Western context, is often though not exclusively construed as a contradiction. To be a gay man is to be stereotypically feminized and to occupy an inferior position within Western patriarchies; thus, any masculinity performed by gay males is ruthlessly critiqued with skepticism by both straight and other gay men. This is the “normal” state of affairs in Western societies like the US where “straight” hypermasculinity is epitomized. Gay masculinity is popularly construed as an aberrant version of the normative, hegemonic masculinity practiced and performed by most heterosexual men.

Thus, a stigma of ugliness and unattractiveness is attached for the hyperfeminized gay male whose gendered performativity significantly deviates from a heterosexualized masculine norm. Gay norms of dress and appearance are weaponized along a spectrum of performativity where socioeconomic power is indivisible from self-worth, social status and perceptions of class. The stereotype of gay male obsessions with haute couture and labels has, at its core, a kernel of truth to it as Steven M. Kates makes clear: “Gay men’s loyalty to various brands and companies has been noted in scholarly work and enthusiastically touted by the business press [original citations omitted],”³⁰ but that

loyalty stems from the value of social reward as much as it does from the value of egalitarian political activism as Kates suggests. Indeed, the ugly truth is that how gay male bodies are dressed and appear often determine where they lie along the spectrum of palatability within primarily heterosexual spaces, places and geographies. How one dresses and how one appears to conform to a stereotype (or appears in opposition to one) carries with it social value or penalty. That is especially true when one's appearance can be weaponized against one by a majority heterosexual society looking for the slightest indication of sexual deviance, often telegraphed by dress choices by lesbian/queer/bi/trans/queer (LGBTQ) bodies.

Nardi noted that "[i]n addition to a hierarchy of styles organized around class, credit and consumption, some participants subscribed to a hierarchy of masculinity, with straight-acting (and, indeed, straight) men as the most desirable sexual objects and effeminate men the least."³¹ Many gay men like myself face an unenviable catch-22: "faced with the challenge of both conforming to appearance norms (or risking ... invisibility) and of looking distinctive ... some sought to, at times, express their individuality rather than conform to the regulatory discourses of queer."³² Ultimately Skidmore concludes that "it is clear from this and other studies that [dress and appearance] is an important part of the everyday realities of (at least some) ... gay men ... and of the performativity of identity."³³ As an expression of my individuality, I also eschew some of the affectations and conventions that might normally be found amongst some of my gay colleagues in higher education in terms of physical appearance. Solidifying me along the ugly spectrum, I do not have a gym body, as much as it is desirable for many gay men to pursue that highly idealized muscularity so commonly found and valued in gay male culture.³⁴ My ugliness, in many ways, corresponds to the settings in which I find myself. Being a scholar of LGBTQ research, I frequently work with other LGBTQ researchers, most of whom are other gay men. Thus, my physiological body weight and appearance immediately places me along the spectrum of ugliness because of my deviation from the hypermasculinized norm of idealized gay masculinity in contemporary American contexts.

There have been a number of studies that point to an "ideal" body size, some of which include research about "trends over time in the muscularity of male action figures, such as G.I. Joe" where researchers found that "when extrapolated to human size, today's G.I. Joe would be just as unattainable to boys as the Barbie doll is for girls,"³⁵ while other studies have documented that "Playgirl magazine centerfold models have grown increasingly lean and muscular over the decades."³⁶ Indeed, the centrality and cultural indispensability of beauty (as defined by most gay men as lean muscularity, youthfulness, facial

hairlessness and a full head of hair) is such that increasing evidence has accumulated to demonstrate “an increase in body image problems and associated psychopathology among men.”³⁷ Olivardia et al. concluded that when men were asked what their idea body would look like, “the men chose an ideal body with a mean of about 25 pounds more muscle than their actual level of muscularity and about 8 pounds less body fat than their actual levels of fat ... as noted in earlier studies, the striking gulf between men’s actual and desired muscularity may reflect societal and media pressures on modern men to be ever more muscular.”³⁸ And according to at least one author, this drive towards muscularity substantiates that “men strive to stand out above the rest, to be recognized as a ‘supernormal stimulus’ in a culture that praises attractiveness.”³⁹

The consequences for men like myself are grave, since my BMI (or body mass index, which is a measure of one’s bodily composition) of 30.3 is just over the “overweight” category and into the “obese” category for a man of my height of 6ft 1in. To achieve a BMI of 25.1 (which is just barely in the “overweight” category) I would have to lose 30lbs so the estimates found in these studies of 8lbs of less weight are conservative at best. Thus, my body has solidly established my presence along the “ugly” spectrum, rather than along the “beautiful” spectrum because of weight, in conformity with the strict standards of muscularity and physicality commonly defined by the (usually unattainable) gay hypermasculine norms. The consequences of this physiological standard, however, are fraught with personal meaning because of the high scrutiny that accompanies identifying as a gay man. Even heterosexual men describe a body that is “... muscular, lean and tall. Being overweight, flabby ... was judged undesirable.”⁴⁰ And although there is some limited research into nonconformist bodily performance by gay men, all too often these counter-hegemonic examples of resistance to this regulatory system are either trivialized or fetishized, as is the case with the “bear” movement in the gay community.⁴¹ The same punitive and instantaneous categorization of ugliness occurs with nonfunctioning bodies or bodies that have an identifiable disability, even, disappointingly, within the gay male community as Lipton, Sandahl, Thomsen and others expertly describe in their research on the intersections between physiological ability, prejudice and discrimination both within and outside gay community settings.⁴²

Although Kane warns readers that “there is no single monolithic gay body ideal any more than there is a homogenous and easily identifiable gay culture ... body dissatisfaction can range from specific areas of the male body to the traditional global body dysphoria represented by anorexia,”⁴³ the cultural consensus remains intransigently ignorant of these strictly academic conclusions,

especially when one is still a relatively young gay man in American higher education. The consequences of adhering to this system of bodily regulation within an already socially marginalized community are devastating. Those who thoughtlessly adopt and adhere to these discourses only serve to reinscribe their appearance of legitimacy as a means of assessing one's social value; while those who reject the standards of aesthetic beauty to which hegemonic gay men aspire will be found wanting and stigmatized as socially valueless within gay milieus.

Complicating the picture about beauty, ugliness, body image and appearance is an extensive literature about the pathological issues related to eating disorders and gay men. Although I have not suffered from these dangerous psychological problems, they remain a very real threat, despite some assertions to the contrary. Yelland and Tiggeman note that "[a] number of case studies and clinical series suggest that a disproportionate number of men seeking treatment for eating disorders are homosexual."⁴⁴ Moreover, they also observe that "[s]tudies of the general population⁴⁵ have also indicated that gay men may be more vulnerable to the development of body image concerns and eating disorders than heterosexual men."⁴⁶ Many authors point to the belief that body image concerns and disordered eating practices are a result of internal pressures from the gay community to achieve an ideal body.⁴⁷ And in my experience the pressures to conform, especially when I was younger, were particularly potent and had serious consequences for both myself (who was very thin until I reached age 30) and my friends who didn't sufficiently acquiesce to those pressures. Indeed, I have known many friends who suffered severe psychological trauma over body image related issues, while for the longest time I was very self-conscious about my own thinness (which is especially ironic today, but serves to illustrate how those pressures exist at both ends of a spectrum whereby thinness and obesity alike function to regulate gay masculinity). In at least two cases gay men evidenced more "body concern and disordered eating than their heterosexual counterparts"⁴⁸ and they also "scored more highly than heterosexual men on all disordered eating scales and actually scored more highly than women (although not significantly so) on the Drive for Thinness and Bulimia scales."⁴⁹ Most importantly, Yelland and Tiggeman note that

... gay men (like women) believed their physical appearance was more important to others than did heterosexual men and their muscularity in particular, was more important than for either heterosexual men or women. These important measures may provide an indirect measure of the pressures illustrated by Atkins (1998) that gay men experience to be attractive and muscular from

within their own community. While body esteem was related to self-esteem for all three groups, only for gay men were the importance to others measures (appearance, weight, muscularity) related to global feelings of self-worth. Gay men were also found to have significantly lower self-esteem than heterosexual men.⁵⁰

Professional Costs of Doing Business

Given the extensive types of obstacles that faculty of color face in higher education today, we certainly don't need more (especially those of our own making). And yet, I've found myself constrained by the sociocultural forces that dictate what one is supposed to look like, sound like and behave like within the institutional boundaries of my profession. My own physiological appearance and performativity convey a distinctly mediocre ugliness by virtue of my racial otherness, my status as a sexual minority, and most especially my physiologically aged and flabby body. Cumulatively then, these characteristics conspire to make my physical self appear easily expendable within the contexts of a neoliberal university setting that valorizes pulchritude, conformity, regularity and order—all things which I physiologically do not possess.

These social forces also exercise a kind of pressure upon gay men in particular, altogether separate from my social position of prestige in the white-collar profession that I occupy. And added to this calculus is the fact that I am a multiracial man of color, whose ethnic identity already marginalizes me in terms of American social determinations of worth. Cumulatively then, these discourses make my pedagogical performance particularly complex when teaching at an institution populated by an overwhelming majority of white undergraduate students and faculty, the vast majority of whom identify as heterosexual. Long ago I concluded that the racial micro-aggressions and heterosexist stigmas that accompany my presence at this institution is the cost of doing business or being gainfully employed in a fulltime capacity at a Research I institution. However, knowing what we do about how beauty and discourses of attractiveness directly or indirectly influence people's decisions about another's social value, it is undeniably clear that policies and practices towards faculty must also reproduce the same influence since in all cases it is humans—not robots—making decisions about tenure, promotion, contract renewal and a panoply of administrative decisions. Moreover, the student evaluations upon which the neoliberal university administration rely so heavily must constantly be contextualized by the social forces that I have described above that make student opinion of professional competence so problematic. I hope that

higher education administration will be more sensitive to complex ways in which pedagogical skill is assessed and how discourses of beauty and ugliness ultimately influence and predict what professional success means. I am keeping my fingers crossed, but I am not holding my breath.

Notes

1. Karen W. Tice, 2012. *Queens of Academe: Beauty Pageantry, Student Bodies, and College Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 43.
2. Nina Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, 2003. "Ugliness." In *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 281–295. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 281.
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Author Queries

Chapter No.: 18 0003440785

Queries	Details Required	Author's Response
AU1	Please check if inserted affiliation and email id are okay.	
AU2	The phrase “ideal, reason, truth, goodness, perfection ... order, harmony, civilization” looks like a quote, but there is no attribution. Is this still Athanassoglou-Kallmyer?	
AU3	The phrase “disorder, dissonance, irregularity ... the Other” looks like a quote, but there is no attribution. Is this still Athanassoglou-Kallmyer please?	
AU4	in endnotes 35 and 36 you use ‘ibid’ to refer to a source in note 34. However, there are two works referenced in note 34. In this situation, ibid cannot be used. For consistency with the rest of the notes, author name and short title should be used for note 35 (to remove any possibility of doubt about what is being referred to); ibid can then be used in note 36.	
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