

MLA STYLE

Consider the ideologies and structures of identity suggested in the media (films and TV shows) that we have just watched, *Paris is Burning* (1990) or *Kiki* (2016), or *Pose* (2018). Focus mostly on *Pose* for this essay. Examining the representations offered in any of these cultural documents, your argument will be grounded in the ideas and readings we've been exploring in our class. The articles we have read should provide you with a theoretical lens to approach your analysis, and to develop your discussion.

Make a reference to two articles. Ultimately, though, **you want to craft a compelling argument about how configurations of identity, be them notions of biological sex, gender, and sexuality and informed by intersections with constructions of race, ethnicity, class, etc., might be understood in these cultural products.** In order to flesh out your argument, you might want to contemplate the following:

- What hegemonic ideas about identity are forwarded in the space of the ballroom? What ideologies undergird these conventions and performances?
- What subversive ideas about identity are offered in the space of the ballroom? What ideologies undergird this performances of identity?
- How do the organizational structures of the ballroom scene serve the participants? How does the embodiment on the floor serve the participants? What does it suggest about the enactments of identity rehearsed here?
 - How does the staging position the audience? How does this influence or complicate the ideas of performance of identity you are exploring?
 - How does the practice of voguing reinforce or complicate hegemonic ideas about embodiment and identity?
How does it offer alternative ideas about embodiment and/or identity?

You need not answer each and every question in your essay, but allow these to further develop initial assessments and press your analysis beyond a surface reading. Your resulting paper should then offer a theorized, sociocultural analysis of the ideas embedded in what you watched.

References must be made to the following articles that are highlighted/bold Not all should be used but those that help the argument:

- Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender" (1994)
- Jordan-Young, *Brain Storm* selections (2010)
- Connell & Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept" (2005)
- Halberstam, Intro to *Female Masculinity* (1998)
- **Pascoe, "Dude, You're A Fag..."**
- Stryker, "An Intro to Transgender Terms and Concepts" (2008)
- Butler, Intro to *Undoing Gender* (2004)

- Selections from *Foucault: A Graphic Guide* (p123-130)
- **Katz, "The Invention of Heterosexuality" (1990)**
- **Bailey, Selection from *Butch Queens Up In Pumps***

This is a good way to begin to some extent perhaps:

For this week I decided to watch *Pose*. I watched the first five episodes and immediately became intrigued to understand the dynamics this film showcases ballroom culture. House of Abundance compared to the House of Evangelista hold different standards, but at the end of the day they both show love and a home. In House of Evangelista it is noted that Blanca really does try to live up to her role as their mother. This reminded me of the passage we read where it brings u this idea of family and kinship in the community of Ballroom culture. They might not be biologically related but they are family due to the identities they hold and love/care they can provide one another. This idea of community is very present in the show as they are one community and although things do get tense it all stems in the power of love and care. I am intrigued to hear them start off by the category `` live as that is something that they are all trying to do, what we all are trying to do. It is also interesting noting that this is around the HIV/AIDS epidemic and Blanca was diagnosed with it. It further shows how these people rely on the structure to help them through these difficult times.

As the text mentioned a large portion of people in ballroom culture are Latinx/Black people and that is what you see on this show. Moreso, you see the ability for them to foster community and see how the categories go. I think it is interesting to note though how expressive and performative they all are. It seems that they have reached a level of confidence to be who they are and that is something very important. In this community you will be loved how you are and are able to be your authentic self. The ballroom culture also seems to have a hierarchy but nonetheless offers a support system for those who need it the most. Although, in the beginning people were upset and the people were mean you can still see that people are empowered by one another. The first part of the father calling him a sissy is what makes many LGBTQ teens feel scared and leave home. It was very painful to see that part, and see a piece of the reality that people in our community face. This was particularly painful due to the protest that happened here recently and witnessing what the mother and father said to Damon.

All in all, this show gives us another perspective and shows us the opportunity of what it means to be part of a House that has the power to save someone from the hardships they can face in life. As mentioned in *Disclosure* 80% of people do not know a trans people and a House

gives people to be the way they want to be. Additionally, it provides them with the power to feel welcomed and loved.

Feedback I've gotten:

1. Your post identifies a number of important ideas, and begins to work toward a compelling argument for understanding the Ballroom scene as a necessary outlet/home for marginalized LGBTQIA+ folks. Keep thinking about both how the kinship structures serve the community--to both replicate and challenge heteronormative family units--and how the performance/policing of gender might allow for safety as well. I'm curious to see how you might conceptualize the "authentic self" amid what we've been reading; how do you understand that vis-a-vis gender as constructed and all that Butler offers? **Let's keep pushing your analysis here, and bringing it in direct conversation with the theorists/articles we are encountering... (Butch Up Queens offers good)**