

Docusoap Celebrities: Attributes That Lead to Success Beyond Reality Television

by

Jacquelyn Goldman

*A Thesis submitted to the Department of Communication Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honors*

Advisors:

Professor L. Rowell Huesmann, Communication Studies Honors Advisor

Professor Susan J. Douglas, Individual Thesis Advisor

University of Michigan

April 2015

I authorize the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Michigan to make copies of my thesis, in whole or in part. Copying privileges are limited to the Department of Communication Studies or to interested third parties, who will use the material solely for educational purposes.

© Jacquelyn Goldman 2015

To Skylar and Liam Kane
in loving memory of their mother,
Michelle Ann Goldman Kane
(1969-2013)

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Professor Huesmann and Professor Douglas for all of the support, guidance, edits, and suggestions they have provided me throughout this process. To Professor Huesmann, thank you for helping me clarify my ideas and for giving me advice about social science research methods. To Professor Douglas, thank you for teaching about attributed celebrities during your COMM 101 class in the fall 2012. That lecture served as one of the main inspirations for this research. Also, the note you wrote to me congratulating me on winning the G.H. Jenkins Award at the end of that semester has motivated my writing and work for this thesis and beyond.

Thank you to Professor Paddy Scannell for teaching me about the concept of extraordinary ordinariness and how reality is produced on television, which greatly influenced the direction I decided to go in my thesis. Taking a course about the history and construction of Reality TV has helped me combine my career and academic interests.

Thank you to everyone I have worked and interned for at Ryan Seacrest Productions, Octagon Entertainment, and MTV Series Development and Business and Legal Affairs. My experiences working over the summers helped give me perspective on how reality television is actually made, outside of what I learn in class and see on television. Every task given to me, especially those often deemed as ‘menial,’ aided my understanding of how television is produced, influencing this thesis. Thank you for making me get you coffee, organize the craft services area, file documents, listen in on phone class, alphabetize illegible releases, and peel labels off of soda bottles.

I would like to extend a special thanks to Sara Cohen for permitting me to interview you for this project.

Thank you to the New England Literature Program for teaching me how to take risks and allowing me to participate in experiential learning. Thank you for making me write every day, multiple times a day, and for continually challenging me even after leaving the woods.

To Sam, thank you for always being there for me and making me laugh. Thank you for continuing to challenge me intellectually and for helping me push my ideas further. I look forward to making you watch many more television shows that you probably do not want to watch and having many more adventures together.

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents for allowing me to watch any television shows I wanted to while growing up and for demonstrating that there can be a true balance of responsibilities in a loving relationship. Mom, thank you for your insider knowledge of what it is actually like to work for high-maintenance celebrities and for teaching me how to become a better writer through your editing. Dad, thank you for always answering the phone when I call no matter how busy you are and for valuing my opinions.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	1
Section 1: Objectives.....	2
Section 2: Background and Significance.....	4
Attributed Celebrities.....	4
Parasocial Relationships.....	4
Surveillance and Production Practices.....	5
Section 3: Research Questions.....	6
Research Question.....	8
Sub-Question A.....	9
Sub-Question B.....	10
Section 4: Methods.....	10
Overview.....	10
Sample.....	11
Shows.....	12
Procedures.....	13
Qualitative Textual Analyses.....	14
Section 5: Results and Analyses.....	15
Physical Appearance.....	15
Social Class.....	21
Language, Speech, and Behavior.....	26
Fighting, Apologizing, and Drama.....	30
Relationships and Friendships.....	38
Aspirational Nature.....	42
Industry Practices and Press Coverage.....	45
Conclusion.....	49
References.....	53
Appendices.....	58
Appendix A: Episodes Watched for Textual Analyses.....	58
Appendix B: Coding Scheme for Textual Analysis of Docusoaps.....	60
Appendix C: Pictures of Lauren Conrad.....	62
Appendix D: Pictures of Nicole “Snooki” Polizzi.....	66

Docusoap Celebrities: Attributes That Lead to Success Beyond Reality Television

Abstract

Reality television is a growing enterprise, comprising a large amount of what appears on television today. Because of this increased amount of airtime for such programs, the potential implications for such shows to allow everyday people to become famous has become significant. I researched the phenomenon of docusoap reality television participants who have become famous as a result of appearing on such television programs and who have used their fame as a launching pad for migrating into other industries. Docusoaps are reality television shows in which participants are followed around in their ordinary lives by cameras. My research questions examine the process by which the inner workings of the entertainment industry convert ‘ordinary’ people to celebrity status, what attributes make a docusoap participant likely to be chosen by the entertainment industry to become a celebrity, and the interrelation of the two. I performed case studies of two female docusoap participants who have personified this phenomenon: Lauren Conrad and Nicole “Snooki” Polizzi LaValle. These studies included qualitative textual analyses of the television programs on which the participants appeared as well as media research.

Keywords: reality television, docusoaps, MTV, Lauren Conrad, Snooki, celebrity

1. Objectives:

“Reality TV has come to permeate the popular zeitgeist, occupying lucrative time slots across the globe and a prominent place in the cultural imaginary” (Murray & Ouellette, 2004, p. 2). One subgenre of reality television is docusoaps: shows that “[combine] observational documentary techniques with serial narrative techniques of soap opera” by following around ‘normal’ people with cameras (Hill, 2005, p. 23). These shows focus on presenting the lives of ordinary people and impose narratives onto their lives to make it entertaining for viewers to watch. There is no competition that overarches each season of the show nor do the participants possess ostensible special talents causing them to be chosen to participate in such programs. Some examples of this subgenre includes *The Jersey Shore* (2009-2012), *The Real Housewives* (2006-), *The Real World* (1992-), *Keeping Up With The Kardashians* (2007-), *The Osbournes* (2002-2005), *Duck Dynasty* (2012-), *The Hills* (2006-2010), *Laguna Beach: The Real Orange County* (2004-2006), and other shows that tend to take up a large proportion of the programming on cable networks such as MTV, E!, and Bravo. Some of these shows follow people who are already famous or are famous by association (e.g. Kim Kardashian, who was best friends with Paris Hilton), but these are not the shows in which I am interested. Instead, I focused on the shows in which the participants were essentially ‘nobodies’ beforehand.

As a result of appearing on one or more docusoaps, some participants have migrated to other industries, achieving some success in these industries. One example is Lauren Conrad, who originally became known for *Laguna Beach: The Real OC* and *The Hills* on MTV as a teenager and is now CEO of her own lifestyle brand. *Jersey Shore*’s Snooki also embodies this docusoap celebrity migration because she has already authored four books and created her own fashion line, despite *The Jersey Shore* beginning to air only six years ago. How did the entertainment industry

transform Lauren Conrad and Snooki from ‘ordinary’ people to celebrities? What attributes made these women standout participants on the television programs on which they appeared?

My goal is to explore the phenomenon of docusoap participants who have attained subsequent lasting success, fame, and celebrity status; and to try to understand how they have done this. I looked at ordinary people who were not in the spotlight at all until their show aired and who have left a lasting impact.

Jersey Shore was a ratings hit for most of its six seasons, with the fourth episode of the third season viewed by 8.8 million people, “the most-watched series episode in MTV history” at the time (Levine, 2012). *Snooki & JWOWW* finished airing its fourth and final season in February, 2015, as a spinoff of *Shore*. The ratings it achieved were not as high as the ratings of the show from which it spun off, but its series premiere brought in over 2.35 million viewers and it was the number six cable show that evening (Kondolojy, 2012). Similarly, the third season of *The Hills* averaged over 4 million viewers in its first month (Cox & Zeitchik, 2007, p. 1) and its fifth season “peaked at No. 3 among original cable series, and No. 1 on Tuesdays in the adult and female 12-34 demos” (Weisman, 2010). Although no ratings for *Laguna Beach* could be located,¹ MTV.com’s “Laguna Beach: Live After Party,” which aired after the season finale on Wednesday, November 15, 2006, “generated 512,000 streams and reached 179,000 unique users in only 20 minutes” (*The Hollywood Reporter*, 2006). Due to the millions of viewers of these programs, the shows’ potential influence on a large population is immense. Therefore, the impact of the celebritization of these shows’ participants is also potentially very large.

However, not all docusoap participants become lasting celebrities. Some do, and some do not; and it is not very clear why some are successful and others are less successful. In this thesis,

¹ The lack of information about *Laguna Beach*’s ratings is probably due to the fact that the series premiered over a decade ago.

I try to answer the question of what differentiates the participants who become celebrities from those who do not. I investigate the phenomenon of celebritization of docusoap participants by doing two case studies on celebrities who demonstrate this phenomenon.

2. Background and Significance:

Attributed Celebrities:

The phenomenon of “attributed celebrities” is the idea that “one no longer needs to achieve something or possess a special talent to become famous; appearing in the media and simply being famous is thought to be sufficient” (Boorsing, 1992 [1961], as cited in Driessens, 2012, p. 644). It appears as though these celebrities did not have to work very hard or be particularly talented to become celebrities. Instead, it seems that they walked into a reality television show audition, were chosen to participate, acted as themselves in front of the camera, and then people suddenly started treating them almost like successful movie stars who performed instead of just being themselves in front of the camera, demonstrating this “shift from achieved celebrity to attributed celebrity” (Rojeck, 2001, as cited in Driessens, 2012, p. 646). This shift makes celebrity seem more achievable for everyday people because if a Chilean-adoptee from a working class family who self-identifies as a “meatball” (Snooki) can become famous and a millionaire, then anyone else can do it, too.

Parasocial Relationships:

This shift in who becomes a celebrity may also complicate the notion of parasocial relationships. A parasocial relationship is a “seeming face-to-face relationship between spectator and performer” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 215). Such relationships are important because they offer “a continuing relationship” for the viewers as “a regular and dependable event, to be counted on, planned for, and integrated into the routines of daily life” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p.

216). Parasocial relationships are “characteristically...one-sided, nondialectical, controlled by the performer, and not susceptible of mutual development” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 215).

However, this one-sidedness can become complicated when such relationships develop between television viewers and real people who appear on television, not fictional characters. Combined with the Internet and social media, viewers can feel as though they know everything about certain participants, but the participants do not know that these people even exist as individuals. Social media can enhance parasocial relationships by providing a seemingly insider view of a person via their social media profile. Accessed via smartphones, social media accounts further cement parasocial relationships because information about the person with whom someone is having this one-sided relationship with can be accessed everywhere. However, the one-sided nature of a parasocial relationship might break if a fan were to interact with a reality television celebrity’s social media page. Publicists or someone other than the celebrity themselves sometimes curate the celebrity’s account, so viewers who are fans of, for example, Lauren Conrad, may tag her official Twitter account [@LaurenConrad] in a tweet that Lauren’s account then re-tweets or “favorites.” The viewer may misinterpret this online interaction as a true interaction between themselves and Conrad when her publicist or assistant is the one actually in charge of her Twitter account.²

Surveillance and Production Practices:

Although the participants in docusoaps are not “acting” in the same sense as television actors in scripted series, the fact that cameras are filming participants in docusoaps necessarily affects the participants’ actions. “The cameras [add] an important if under-appreciated dimension to the overall scaffolding of the performative context out of which participants [craft] their

² This example is hypothetical, as publicly available information does not disclose whether Lauren Conrad herself curates her own Twitter account or online social media presence.

performances” because the existence of surveillance affects how people act (Grindstaff, 2011, p. 49). The participants are in effect performing themselves to an extraordinary, dramatic degree when their actions will appear on television. Many of these shows merely represent “the outcome of [their] own production process, because [they] [do] not simply take a pre-existing reality and transform or alter it; rather, the various activities, practices, and technologies of production actively construct for real what participants experience” (Grindstaff, 2011, p. 49). The artificiality of only going places that can be filmed for television affects what happens on the shows and what the participants do. Also, “the contexts of production – including normative cultural scripts about gender, race, class, and sexuality – structure the content of performances in key ways, and this structuring is fundamental to the success of self-service television and one of its key outcomes: ordinary celebrity” (Grindstaff, 2011, p. 51). Therefore, aspects of television outside of participants’ control, as well as the expectations of the viewers when watching a show, contribute to the creation of celebrities out of otherwise ordinary people.

3. Research Questions:

Even though the increase in reality television programming may expand the visibility of ‘ordinary’ people on television, it also enlarges the gap “between ordinary and celebrity categories in the first place” (Grindstaff, 2011, p. 45). For the ordinary participants, participating in a television show serves as “an escape from, not an affirmation of, their ordinary status” because they are doing something extraordinary by being followed around by cameras and subsequently appearing on television (Grindstaff, 2011, p. 45). In that sense, just becoming a regular participant on a television program or being followed around by cameras undercuts the ordinariness of such participants. Also, the amount of camera time participants get is often determined by how unordinary they are, with the less ordinary (or rather, less boring)

participants getting more screen time (Grindstaff, 2011, p. 50). They must play “heightened version[s] of themselves” if they want more airtime, which seems almost counterintuitive because they were chosen to portray themselves (Grindstaff, 2011, p. 52).

After appearing on a docusoap, some participants subsequently become celebrities, their monikers becoming brands widely known in American culture. However, it is not without any sort of work that this elevation of status occurs. Celebrities are cultivated, created entities. The entertainment industry frames certain people as celebrities to the exclusion of others.

Stardom “requires the organized collective actions of multiple participants” both on and off camera (McDonald, 2013, p. 14). The agents, managers, lawyers, cinematographers, producers, editors, publicists, and network executives create the star as a commodity who is “a product of industrialized cultural production, the outcome of multiple, highly organized, inputs and actions” (McDonald, 2013, p. 14). This paradoxical idea stems from the idea that “stardom praises the exceptionalness of the individual [and that] the individual is always the product of collective action” (McDonald, 2013, p. 24). The participants of reality shows are chosen for some sort of extraordinary ‘ordinary’ qualities, and these qualities are heightened through the work of others to elevate certain participants to celebrity status. Much of their image can be attributed to the television show of which they are a part. However, this idea is complicated in that for reality television stars the division between star-as-person and the star-as-text, or the private self of the celebrity and the public persona of the celebrity on camera and in other media outlets, is more blurred because they are ostensibly representing themselves on camera through a genre that documents the intimate and inane moments of daily life. “[S]tar[s]...connect with wider systems of belief about human identity” (ideas from Dyer, 1998, as cited in McDonald, 2013, p. 14), perhaps indicating a trend in viewers seeking media figures with whom they can

easily identify and possibly interact due to their apparent ordinariness. These insights lead me to my main overarching Research Question:

Research Question: How do the inner workings of the entertainment industry and a participant's attributes interact to create a celebrity from a docusoap participant?

The participants of reality television shows may appear to be disposable and untalented because they are just ordinary, everyday people. However, this is not the case. Participants are chosen for their ability to perform their ordinariness “in conjunction with a given program’s or format’s perceivably contrived depictions of the real” (Curnutt, 2011, p. 1062). Nonetheless, “the political economy of reality TV is based on the rapid circulation and constant renewal of its participants,” (Turner, 2006, as cited in Driessens, 2012, p. 646). If this is true, then it seems that the idea of the success of reality TV relying on disposable participants is in conflict with the necessity of choosing participants who can perform their ordinariness on television exceedingly well. Perhaps it is only that the participants who perform their ordinariness the best and in the most entertaining fashion succeed and become celebrities, whereas the majority of docusoap participants as “celebrities-in-the-making rarely have a serious opportunity to establish a long lasting (media) career” and disappear into obscurity, forgotten almost immediately after their show stops airing (Turner, 2006, as cited in Driessens, 2012, p. 646).

There are many reasons for the proliferation of young adults as a stable source of reality TV participants. First of all, they are inexpensive because most of these participants are beginners in their careers, if they have careers at all. Furthermore, they present fewer logistical issues of only being able to schedule production around certain work or family schedules. The shows in which these participants appear are also attempting to get the same age demographic to watch because young adults comprise one of the main demographics sought by advertisers.

Only upon a show's success do participants begin to engage in meaningful contract negotiations because they have "transition[ed] into a more durable, and therefore, more valuable labor force" (Curnutt, 2011, p. 1071). *Jersey Shore* would not be the same without Snooki or The Situation, so MTV had to pay up to keep their talent on the air.

The phenomena regarding how the entertainment industry bolsters up 'ordinary' participants to celebrity status lead me to my first sub-question:

Sub-Question A: How does the entertainment industry elevate 'ordinary' people into celebrities and what are the inner workings of this process?

Many docusoap participants were not famous and lacked the connections and funds that could lead them to success prior to appearing on a reality television show. Subsequently, some of them have migrated into other realms of industry, whether it be starting a fashion line, authoring a book, or creating a lifestyle brand. Driessens (2012) defines migration as "the process through which celebrities use both their relative autonomy as public personality and their celebrity status to develop other professional activities either within their original field or to penetrate other social fields" (p. 648). Lauren Conrad appeared as a teenager and young adult on *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills*, later creating her own fashion line and becoming the chief executive officer of her own lifestyle brand. The Lauren Conrad Collection, her first clothing line, appeared at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in Los Angeles in 2007 and 2008. Conrad's other collections include LC Lauren Conrad sold exclusively at Kohl's, a more elegant and expensive collection called Paper Crown, and two eco-collections for the sustainable lifestyle brand BlueAvocado. She also has authored eight books, and her first novel, *L.A. Candy*, debuted at the top of *The New York Times* Best Sellers List for over a month (Laurenconrad.com, n.d.). Conrad demonstrates the successful migration of docusoap celebrity to CEO, appearing in various media for both types of her

successes.

Similarly, Snooki has turned her successes from appearing as a “meatball” on *Jersey Shore* into getting her own spinoff series, *Snooki & JWOWW*. In addition to appearing as a contestant on the seventeenth season of *Dancing With The Stars*, Snooki has also authored four books, the first of which, *A Shore Thing*, appeared on the *New York Times* Best Seller List. Snooki owns a brand that makes clothing with the fashion line SnookiLove, apps, cell phone and tablet accessories, and beauty products (Nicole Polizzi’s Official Site, n.d.). LC and Snooki were somehow chosen by entertainment industry executives to become emblematic of their shows, subsequently turning them into celebrities who migrated into other industries outside of reality television. The seemingly unnamable personality qualities of these ‘ordinary’ people who the entertainment industry executives chose to become celebrities leads me to my second sub-question:

Sub-Question B: What attributes make a docusoap participant more likely to be chosen by the entertainment industry to be elevated to celebrity status outside of the shows on which they appear?

Is a certain type of physical appearance a necessary condition for this category of success? Is high verbosity a necessary condition? What enables a participant to “perform their ordinariness” and still project their unique charisma? What roles do body language and gestures play? How do their stated views, attitudes, and relations with others contribute to their success?

4. Methods

Overview:

To answer these questions, I conducted case studies of two people who demonstrate the phenomenon of interest (Nicole Polizzi [Snooki] and Lauren Conrad [LC]). I performed

qualitative textual analyses of the shows in which they appeared, looking at their performances, behaviors, and language, and how they interacted with other participants with the goal of gaining insight into my research questions. To investigate industry practices, I interviewed Sara Cohen, who was a Manager in the Unscripted Series Development Department at MTV, for information about how and why certain participants are chosen as the stars of certain docusoap programs. My research also included reading early media coverage of the docusoaps and participants of interest in newspapers, magazines, and trade publications to get some hints about audience reception and why particular people stood out from the rest.

Sample:

I studied Lauren Conrad, sometimes known as LC, from the first two seasons of *Laguna Beach: The Real Orange County* (2004-2005) and the first five seasons of *The Hills* (2006-2009). She has become a successful clothing designer, has appeared in and written for various magazines including *Forbes*, and when asked what her favorite position is while being interviewed on a radio program, she wittily and proudly proclaimed “CEO” as head of her own lifestyle brand. I also studied Nicole Polizzi LaValle, commonly known as Snooki, from *The Jersey Shore* (2009-2012) and its spinoff *Snooki & JWOWW* (2012-2015). She originally appeared on an episode of MTV’s *Is She Really Going Out With Him?* in 2009. Snooki has also authored four books, appeared on numerous television talk shows and in magazine articles, and owns her own company. I chose these two women because they both originate from shows on MTV, which is known as an influential force in popular culture and for its programming slate composed predominantly of reality programs, and they have both successfully migrated into other industries outside of television, both in the fashion industry. The scope of my project also does not address the differences between male and female docusoap celebrities and if they are

cultivated in a fundamentally different manner.

Shows:

Laguna Beach: The Real Orange County follows a real life clique of Laguna Beach High School students who spend their time at the beach, gossiping, and partying. The show is “a reality version of a scripted drama,” loosely based on *The O.C.*, which was popular at the time (Tony DiSanto in *NY Post* as cited in Paulsen, 2004). Lauren Conrad, who went by “LC” during the show, provides the voiceover that begins each episode of the first season. *Laguna Beach* is a half-hour format show. This show came with a preexisting cast, “a real-life clique that was willing to share the members’ personal lives with America” (Paulsen, 2004). LC appeared on this show for two out of its three seasons before landing her own spin-off series.

The Hills is Lauren Conrad’s spin-off series following her life when she moves to Los Angeles and breaks into the fashion industry. She remained on this show for four and a half seasons, leaving to be replaced by her ‘frenemy’ from her *Laguna Beach* days, Kristin Calavari. This show is in a half-hour format as well and chronicles Lauren’s love life, relationships with her friends that often become untenable, and internships at *Teen Vogue* and *People’s Revolution*. Lauren left *The Hills* halfway through its fifth season and the show continued to air a sixth season as well.

Both of Lauren’s shows never use confessional cameras or interviews and each episode begins with voiceover, most often that of Lauren herself. The use of voiceover sets up each episode for the viewers from Lauren’s perspective, the viewers privy to her inside thoughts. Voiceover can thus increase identification with Lauren and increase the chances of parasocial relationships developing with her. Her shows lack “reality-show apparatus” such as interview and confessional cameras, so they instead just focus on the people involved without many asides

(Heffernan, 2004).

Jersey Shore placed eight self-proclaimed ‘guidos’ and ‘guidettes,’ including Snooki, in a house in Seaside Heights, New Jersey for the summer. This one-hour format show followed the love lives, sex lives, partying, drinking, pranking, and fighting of the housemates for six seasons, with part of Season 2 filmed in Miami and Season 4 in Italy. The cast members also work part-time at The Shore Store, which sells T-shirts, a gelateria in Miami, and a pizzeria in Italy. *Jersey Shore* is an ensemble show with many storylines and the cast did not know each other prior to the first season. During the sixth season, Snooki moved out of The Shore House to live with her fiancé, Jionni LaValle, because she was pregnant.

Snooki & JWOWW chronicles the lives of best friends Snooki and JWOWW, or Nicole and Jenni as they refer to each other, growing up after *The Shore*. The first season of this show filmed between the filming of Seasons 5 and 6 of *Jersey Shore*. This show aired for four seasons total and culminated with a special for Snooki and Jionni’s Gatsby-themed wedding. The first and third seasons were in half-hour formats whereas the second and fourth seasons were in one-hour formats. There were usually only two main storylines per episode: one for Nicole and one for Jenni, and sometimes ones involving their significant others.

Both of Snooki’s shows utilize camera confessionals and interviews with the camera without any separately recorded voiceover. The scenes are interspersed with commentary by participants on their opinions about what happened, how they felt, or their feelings towards other participants.

Procedures:

I examined the specific people I chose, the television shows in which they were participants, the networks those shows appeared on, books about them or that they have authored,

articles about them, interviews of and about them, and information about their current entrepreneurial or business ventures. I also investigated the media coverage of the participants and shows they appeared on prior to and when they first began airing to try to get at how the participants I chose were promoted and initially received by viewers. I interviewed Sara Cohen, previously a Manager in MTV's Unscripted Series Development Department, for some insider knowledge about how and why some participants of shows may become successful. I did textual analyses of four episodes including the premiering episodes of the first season of *Laguna Beach* and *The Jersey Shore*, three episodes including the first episode of the first season of *The Hills* and *Snooki & JWOWW*, and two episodes of every other season of these shows, using the episode summaries on the Internet Movie Database (imdb.com) to determine how salient the participant of interest is in the drama of the episode. My textual analyses focused on how the participants of interest interact with other participants onscreen, how they differ from the other participants, their physical and behavioral attributes, and how they conform to or diverge from corporate standards of beauty and fashion. The list of the episodes watched can be found in Appendix A.

Qualitative Textual Analysis:

To try to identify characteristics that might make Lauren Conrad and Snooki stand out and subsequently become famous, I conducted a detailed textual analysis of episodes of *Laguna Beach*, *The Hills*, *Jersey Shore*, and *Snooki & JWOWW*. The coding scheme I used in the textual analysis is shown in Appendix B and is intended to provide information about the participant of interest as they appear and interact in each show. I then compared the characteristics of LC and Snooki together, trying to find commonalities between the two very different women, and how they represented their socioeconomic class and gender stereotypes.

5. Results and Analyses

Physical Appearance:

Lauren Conrad is a blonde who conforms to conventional standards of beauty and fashion. She is slim and often seen tanning and gossiping poolside in a bikini and large sunglasses during her tenure on *Laguna Beach*. She ages throughout her six years on television, but otherwise looks pretty much the same, her style only slightly changed. Photos of Lauren Conrad's physical appearance can be found in Appendix C for reference.

Nicole Polizzi LaValle, the self-proclaimed "meatball," is only four-foot nine, but offsets this lack of height with very tall shoes and an over-the-top personality. Her skin is unnaturally tan and often contains a tinge of orange. In her *Jersey Shore* debut, Snooki was a bit pudgy. However, she became progressively thinner, except during her pregnancies, but then bounced back to an almost unnaturally skinny state. Photos of Snooki's physical appearance can be found in Appendix D for reference.

A simple way to compare and contrast these two women would be to say that Lauren is a flatter-chested Barbie and Snooki is an older Bratz doll. Lauren conforms to the conventional standards of beauty and fashion somewhat created and perpetuated by Barbie dolls. She is blond, looks effortless in her outfits, and is a multitalented woman who can afford to live a lavish lifestyle and pursue her hobbies. The original Bratz dolls are dolls of young women with ostentatious and colorful makeup. They often are sold wearing skimpy clothing, akin to what Snooki wears during her days in *The Shore House*. Bratz dolls are also different ethnicities with varying skin tones, similar to Snooki's semi-ambiguous ethnicity. The term "brat" also refers to a poorly behaved child and pluralizing the term with a "z" instead of "s" in a colloquial manner perhaps connotes a lower class. Furthermore, Barbies have been around since 1959 and Bratz

dolls since 2001, so Barbie represents a comparatively more established sense of old money wealth contrasting with the newer Bratz dolls. Also, Lauren Conrad, like Barbie, is mostly sexualized in a way that represents an unachievable ideal for young women in terms of their appearance and careers that is thus perpetuated by corporate mass culture. Snooki, like Bratz dolls, is highly sexualized, but in a way that differs from the idealized sexuality of Barbie and Conrad. There was concern that Bratz dolls were too sexualized for children, much like how Snooki's sexual antics were criticized by the Italian-American community upon *Jersey Shore*'s premiere.

On her shows, Lauren often wears neutral colors, like black and white, and few patterns. Her outfits sometimes accentuate her cleavage, but nothing would really be described as skimpy. The clothing she wears looks expensive and fits the exact way it is designed to due to Lauren's slim, relatively tall stature, but her outfits often also appear imitable. She frequently totes around large purses with correspondingly large sunglasses, unless she is going out for the evening when she generally carries a smaller purse. She also sometimes emphasizes the high-end designer brand of her accessories, mentioning how she has "always wanted a Chanel bag" and if her boyfriend at the time, Jason Wahler, got her one "it would just be a Merry Christmas" (*The Hills*, Season 1, Episode 7). Of course, her boyfriend buys her an incredibly expensive Chanel purse, which she is shown carrying about Los Angeles during her tenure on *The Hills*. This purse signifies that Lauren is part of a wealthy class that can afford such luxurious items and that she chose to date someone who is part of this class as well, since her boyfriend was the one who purchased it for her.

Lauren grew up in a wealthy class position, so she has been trained not to dress ostentatiously. One could argue that because Lauren works in fashion as an intern at *Teen Vogue*,

she needs to keep up with the fashion trends, which are often expensive. Lauren also wears jewelry with most of her outfits, but generally keeps it to one or two thinly chained necklaces, earrings that do not distract too much from her face, a few bracelets, and sometimes a couple of minimal rings.

In contrast to LC, Snooki has an affinity for wearing bright colors, animal patterns, and animal patterns in bright colors. Many of Snooki's outfits include some form of leopard print and often reveal voluptuous cleavage. Her "kooka" (the word Snooki uses for vagina) is also frequently blurred out after a few minutes of drunken dancing when her short skirt inevitably rides up. However, it is also important to note that over the course of appearing on ten seasons of television shows, Snooki's style has drastically evolved, except for her persistent love of leopard print which she wears while giving birth to her son Lorenzo in the second season of *Snooki & JWOWW*. In *Snooki & JWOWW*, Snooki wears more outfits where black is the main color with leopard print as an accent instead of the main fabric. She also generally wears more solid colors. This modification in clothing and clothing style over time appears to parallel Snooki's new success and ascension to a more desirable class position.

Like Lauren, Snooki also often carries a large purse and wears large sunglasses, but in contrast to LC, Snooki does not mention the designer of her purse. This is perhaps due to MTV not endorsing the product, or because the show's producers want to emphasize Snooki's persona as a 'normal,' not ostensibly rich, person.

Snooki almost always wears incredibly large hoop earrings that are "big enough to fit a Red Bull through" (Polizzi, 2011, p. 4). She sometimes pairs these with other large and flashy pieces of jewelry, and later her very shiny engagement ring. In general, Snooki's motto is "More is more. If you can't be spotted ten miles away from a helicopter with a blind pilot, add some

metallic” (Polizzi, 2011, p. 4). Snooki’s “more is more” contrasts with Lauren’s fashion sensibility, which presents a subtler “less is more,” seemingly minimalist appearance created with expensive, high-end brand-named clothing and accessories. The boldness of many of Snooki’s outfit choices, paired with her over-the-top and loud personality, also may indicate that she is attempting to compensate for something. Snooki is under five-feet tall, so it is possible that to draw attention to herself she dresses in this manner.

Snooki often dresses more ostentatiously than Lauren with larger pieces of jewelry and brighter colors with patterns whereas Lauren tends to take a more understated approach to fashion. However, both women express themselves through their clothing and accessory choices, which is important because “fashion is available to people at all social levels, both for creating styles that express their identities and for adopting styles created by clothing firms” (Crane, 2000, p. 6). These women set the example for those who watch them on television illustrating how they can create their own personal styles, perhaps influenced by Snooki or Lauren, wanting to buy clothing from their fashion lines to be more like them.

Lauren has blond or sometimes dirty-blond hair that she often wears in easy-looking hairstyles, such as a simple ponytail or down with some of her wisps on the side pulled back with bobby pins. Sometimes, she accessories with headscarves or thin headbands, but it usually looks effortless, as if she did not spend much time doing her hair even though she is shown spending time on it whilst getting ready. She also gets her hair professionally done for big events, one time having a fancy up-do. Her hair generally goes slightly past her shoulders during her shows, but she has since cut it short into a textured bob.

Snooki is famous for her hair “poof,” which is her “signature” and “makes [her] taller” (Polizzi, 2011, p. 16). This hairstyle involves pulling back the front section of her hair and

teasing it into a very large bump and applying a lot of hairspray. Her hair is usually dark or black and sometimes has some streaks of red or pink, at one point her entire head is a reddish pink. She straightens her hair most of the time before creating her signature poof.

When explaining her poof, Snooki described it as “a Guidette thing, and usually on teen night all the girls did it” (as cited in Horyn, 2010). Snooki decided to continue wearing the hairstyle even though she notes that “Eventually all [her] friends grew out of it” (as cited in Horyn, 2010). Once she becomes pregnant with her first child, Snooki ditches the poof and instead parts her hair on her left side, accenting it with a very large bow or flower clip that is usually a very bright color. She also begins to wear it more messily and not straight more frequently. Her hair length is also very long, sometimes reaching halfway down her short torso. The development of wearing hair more messily may be related to the evolution of the “construction and presentation of self” that Snooki “continually reassess [as] the importance of past and present events and commitments” change (Crane, 2000, p. 10). Once she becomes pregnant and lives with Jionni, Snooki is not going out to clubs anymore. After giving birth to Lorenzo, she probably has less time to devote to layering hairspray in her hair because she has a son to take care of.

Lauren often wears makeup to make it look as if she is not wearing makeup. It is barely visible, except during close-ups of her face. This beauty style makes her appear naturally beautiful and flawless, in line with conventional standards of beauty, like a perfect Barbie. Her skin color is just barely sun-kissed due to her naturally tanning by the pool or on the beach year-round. For evening events, she tends to wear more noticeable eye shadow, but it generally is a neutral color.

On the other hand, Snooki often wears intensely colored eye makeup that is very

noticeable. She wears fake eyelashes almost everywhere she goes and almost every day. Her lips are sometimes intensely colored and her cheeks a different color than the rest of her face. Also, one of Snooki's obsessions is tanning and when asked to describe her ethnicity, she replies "tan" instead of Chilean (representative of where she was born) or Italian (which her adopted family is). Her skin often has orangey tinges to it due to her triple-threat tan of going to tanning beds, getting a spray tan, and going outside and getting tan from the sun (Cast interview with Snooki, *Jersey Shore*, Season 2). Tanning is known to be rather unhealthy and two of the three methods Snooki utilizes are also unnatural. Thus, Snooki dons a more exaggerated, flamboyant, and extreme masquerade of femininity than Lauren.

Conrad's nails are almost always painted a neutral or single color on all nails. Her nails appear to be her actual, real nails and are cut and filed to be short and round. Snooki usually has long acrylic nails that are square-shaped and are painted vibrant colors and patterns. However, she does sometimes just opt for a French manicure on her acrylics.

Generally, Snooki appears gaudier Lauren does. Lauren's outfits often seem understated, as if she wants to look fashionable and presentable, but not in a standout way. This unassuming style relates to how drama affects Conrad: she rarely is the one to cause drama and just lets situations around her bubble up as she responds passive-aggressively. Snooki dresses in very over-exaggerated ways, mostly during her *Jersey Shore* days, making her stand out from others. Snooki "love[s] being the center of attention," as demonstrated by her animal print clothing, drunken antics, and yelling of profanities (*Jersey Shore*, Season 1, Episode 1). But also, "That Snooki is not conventionally attractive...has a lot to do with why she is the breakout member of the cast" (Horyn, 2010).

Lauren Conrad demonstrates a monied appearance, reflecting her elite social class and

conforming to corporate norms of fashion, like a Barbie doll. Snooki's appearance seems flashier than Conrad's in an ostentatious manner similar to that of Bratz dolls. Even though these two women have completely different styles, they are able to capitalize off of their own fashion senses into creating their own fashion lines. Their fashion lines thus permit these women's fans to emulate them, at least in what they wear.

Social Class:

Lauren Conrad is part of the elite upper class as apparent by her parents' huge mansion under construction in the pilot episode of *Laguna Beach*. Her social class is also in evidence due to her Mercedes, Chanel purse, fancy apartment during *The Hills*, and the fact that she interns at a well-respected magazine, *Teen Vogue*, and later at the public relations firm, People's Revolution. She attends black-tie events and works at events with celebrity VIP guests. She rarely uses profanity and usually dresses appropriately, almost never wearing overly revealing clothing. She holds the type of job many young Americans dream of. Also, her social class status remains relatively constant throughout her years on television.

Laguna Beach begins with LC as a senior at Laguna Beach High School, even though no episodes were filmed at the school due to a dispute with the school board; she is never shown doing homework. During the second season of *Laguna Beach*, LC attended the Academy of Art University in San Francisco for one semester, and then decided to transfer to the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising in Los Angeles where she attended during part of *The Hills*, although she never graduates.

While interning at *Teen Vogue* and People's Revolution, Lauren often does not complain about the work she does, but sometimes makes faces indicating her boredom. She seems to do whatever it is her supervisors expect of her because her boss at *Teen Vogue* offers her an

internship in Paris for the summer after the first season of *The Hills*.³ It is unclear whether she is offered the enviable internship due to her actual work ethic or by virtue of her being the star of a television show.

Nicole Polizzi is the “Princess of Poughkeepsie” and not from an upper echelon of society. At the premiere of *Jersey Shore*, ‘guido’ and ‘guidette’ culture was not mainstream. Italian-American groups, such as UNICO, criticized the show for its representation of ‘guidos’ and ‘guidettes’ who they felt did not represent their community well. “The problem is that ‘guido’ – slang for a working class urban Italian-American – is widely perceived by Italian-Americans as a pejorative word...and the stereotype is unflattering,” making the actions of the *Jersey Shore* cast reflect negatively on the Italian-American community (Pilkington, 2010). Andrew DiMino, the president of “Unico National, the largest Italian community organisation [*sic*] in New Jersey,” stated that ‘guido’ is “‘a term used to insult us, implying we are all uneducated people without social graces’” (as cited in Pilkington, 2010). One complicating notion is that Snooki interprets “Being a guidette [or guido] [as] ha[ving] nothing to do with ethnicity...It’s all about how you look and feel. It’s a lifestyle” (Polizzi, 2011, p. xiii). These Italian-American groups “hate it because the cast members...are into...how much gel they can pump into their hair before they make the chicken parm” (Horyn, 2010). MTV claimed that their “‘intention was never to stereotype, discriminate or offend’” (as cited in Pilkington, 2010). SallyAnn Salsano, the creator of the show, emphasized how *Jersey Shore* reflected her own upbringing as an Italian-American in Long Island. “‘All the stereotypes that people accused [the show] of making’” were accurate to the culture in which she grew up (as cited in Horyn, 2010).

On *The Jersey Shore*, Snooki and her roommates have service industry jobs at a T-shirt

³ She declines the offer because of her relationship with a boy.

shop, pizzeria, and gelateria. The places they work are all temporary engagements without much opportunity for upward mobility and are the types of jobs students take over the summer so they can also party. Snooki complains about going to work for almost every shift, despite not even working every day. She sometimes even tries (and succeeds) to get drunk on the job. Snooki often arrives late, leaves early, takes a break to go to a bar, and one time does not show up to work, instead going to get a manicure. Snooki's portrayal reinforces stereotypes of people from lower socioeconomic statuses having a poor work ethic. Also, as an immigrated ethnicity to United States as well as an adoptee from a foreign country, her actions reinforce stereotypes that immigrants do not work hard and are lazy and stupid.

Snooki attended community college to become a veterinary technician before appearing on *The Shore*. Besides mention of this fact, little is indicated about her educational background. However, she has said that she “would like [her] kids to do other things than what mommy does,” wanting “them to do other things like go to college, be a doctor, or a lawyer” (as cited in Longman, 2014).

As Snooki was paid for more television appearances and made more money from capitalizing on her brand, she began to possess more expensive items. She drove a personalized leather-wrapped black Cadillac Escalade EXT with hot pink details, which she sold in 2013 for \$77,510 (Sanchez, 2013). This expensive vehicle, which she drove on the final season of *Jersey Shore* and during part of *Snooki & JWOWW*, indicates that to some degree Snooki has risen in economic class. Snooki's financial wealth, however, is of a different class than the old money of Lauren Conrad's family. Snooki seems to aspire to that same type of wealth, though, because the theme of her and Jionni's wedding was *The Great Gatsby*, based off the ostentation from the 2013 film adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's book about the flash of new money wealth.

One problem that Snooki faces more than Lauren is that she is burdened with representing other people of her socioeconomic class and ethnicity. Because Snooki is of a minority ethnic group and not part of the upper class that is often seen on television, which includes people such as Lauren Conrad, she experiences the “burden of representation” (Shohat & Stam, 1994, as cited in Grindstaff, 2011, p. 48). Snooki’s actions, behaviors, outfits, beauty styles, orangey-tan skin, and alcoholism all become markers of a certain social class as well as ethnicity because “any negative behavior by any member of [a] [minority] community is instantly generalized as typical” of all members of that community (Shohat & Stam, 1994, p. 183).

Jersey Shore’s portrayal of ‘guidos’ and ‘guidettes’ resulted in some criticism from Italian-American groups, similar to the backlash against *The Sopranos* for its depiction of Italian-Americans as mobsters. These groups exercised their “social power to combat and resist” their stereotyped portrayals on *Jersey Shore* (Shohat & Stam, 1994, p. 183). This critique is complicated because Nicole Polizzi is not actually Italian, although raised in an Italian home surrounded by Italian-American culture. She thought she was Chilean because she was adopted from Chile when she was six-months old. However, a DNA test indicated that “Polizzi is part Romani, which is an ethnic tribe from Northern India, gypsy, Iberian American, South Asian, East Asian, Middle Eastern, and Jewish with roots in North Western Croatia, Macedonia, Slovakia, Russia, and Spain” (Ward, 2014). Nonetheless, within the context of *The Jersey Shore* and due to her upbringing, Snooki is often assumed to be Italian. Therefore, her actions become emblematic of a subset of young lower middle class Italian-Americans because “each negative image of an underrepresented group becomes, within the hermeneutics of domination, sorely overcharged with allegorical meaning” (Shohat & Stam, 1994, p. 183).

Lauren Conrad, as a young and wealthy Caucasian woman, does not face the issue of representing her ethnicity and social class to the same degree as Polizzi because “Being white and middle [or upper] class [she is] therefore ‘free’ to represent no one but [herself]” (Grindstaff, 2011, p. 53). “White superiority is not so much asserted as assumed” and Caucasians in American mass media are often portrayed as “the objective ones, the experts, the uncontroversial ones, those who cause no problems, those who judge, [and] those ‘at home’ in the world” (Shohat & Stam, 1994, p. 200). Lauren certainly conforms to this mold of uncontroversial portrayals of Caucasians as the assumed racial majority who can almost seem to do no wrong in a way that would negatively impact her entire race or socioeconomic class. As a member of a “[s]ocially empowered [group],” Lauren “need not be unduly concerned about ‘distortions and stereotypes’” (Shohat & Stam, 1994, p. 183).

This is not to say that Lauren solely represents herself, but that her actions, if viewed negatively by the general public, might also reflect poorly on the group of which she is a part: wealthy white women. However, this group of people with an elevated socioeconomic status is part of a broader group for which corporate mass culture is generated. Therefore, Conrad’s actions might reflect badly on this group, but this group is so large and powerful that almost nothing would come of it. On the other hand, the socioeconomic group of which Snooki is a part would be more damagingly affected by her negatively perceived actions, resulting in broader social consequences due to their subordinated status in culture.

However, these two women seem to act contrary to what this literature suggests: even though Snooki is more heavily burdened with representing people of the same socioeconomic status and perceived ethnicity as she, she seems to act without restraint whereas Lauren, whose actions mainly reflect upon herself and not her race or socioeconomic status, often acts with

considerable restraint and caution. Lauren's actions may incite resentment from viewers who scoff at her lavish lifestyle, contributing to negative stereotypes of wealthy white women. However, the group of which Lauren is a part resides in a privileged socioeconomic position. Lauren also acts as a model of what viewers are supposed to want to be like because she is a privileged, restrained woman demonstrating an upscale femininity. Snooki stands in stark contrast to Lauren because she demonstrates a resistance to the norms and conventions that Lauren upholds. Snooki defies the constraints that most women feel they must conform to in order to get ahead. In a liberating manner, Snooki defies the stereotype of women acquiescing to middle class gender norms and resists feminine behaviors, providing a much different model for success than Lauren. By acting in an almost opposite manner as Conrad, Snooki flips the expectations of women to achieve an alternative form of upward mobility.

Language, Speech, and Behavior:

Lauren infrequently uses profanity. Her speech volume is normal and gets louder only when speaking in places with background noise or for inflection when she is in an argument, but she does not yell. Lauren seems relatively in control of her emotions or is perhaps very aware that she is being filmed and instead opts for more facial expressions, rolling of her eyes, and shoulder shrugs to convey her disgust about other participants, mainly Speidi (Heidi Montag and her boyfriend-turned-fiancé Spencer Pratt) or Kristin Cavallari. Her language in this manner reflects upscale femininity and her generally restrained manner.

Snooki uses profanity a great deal. Most often, whenever Polizzi is mad, she yells and name-calls, usually involving many four-letter words. She almost always seems to be yelling, but her already loud volume increases as she gets excited or upset. She also talks about bodily functions and body parts that are commonly perceived as socially unacceptable to mention, such

as pooping, farting, and her vagina, especially once she is pregnant and shortly after she gives birth. The way Snooki speaks is not stereotypically feminine and reflects stereotypes about the lower middle class.

Lauren comes across as slightly more well mannered, well behaved, and nicer than the others on her shows. She is set up as the “nice girl” and although she is seen holding (probably alcoholic) beverages at parties, she often does not drink from them on camera during her time on *Laguna Beach*. She is also sometimes cryptic in her discussions about her sex life, such as when she finally admits to her best friend Lo that she hooked up with Stephen, leaving out the definition of the vague term “hooking up” (*Laguna Beach*, Season 1, Episode 5). This neutral behavior also reflects the expectations of Lauren’s social class because she approaches most situations in a relatively refined manner.

Snooki is rude, loud, and says whatever she thinks without a filter. She is known for dancing provocatively in public and engaging in many physical altercations. Snooki talks about her sexual relations and those of her peers rather candidly. Jenni (JWOWW) Farley describes Snooki’s behavior rather concisely in the series premiere of *Snooki & JWOWW*:

She doesn’t clean, she doesn’t make her bed, she doesn’t do laundry, she doesn’t cook, she doesn’t clean again; she likes to get drunk, she likes to get wasted, she likes to have a good time, she likes to get drunk, she likes to get wasted.

Jenni’s description of Snooki demonstrates how Snooki does not conform to the stereotypical expectations of women: she is incredibly messy, dirty, does not do any house chores, she likes to drink alcohol, and does not seem to control herself much. Snooki’s behavior thus continues to demonstrate how she defies conventional expectations of women by acting as her authentic self.

Unlike Snooki, “Conrad’s fame is not one built on bitch-slaps and drunken sexcapades”

(Sidell, 2013). It is interesting to note that Snooki is portrayed as lower class, thus needing to rely on physical fights and an interesting sex life to have screen time or appear on a show at all whereas Lauren can retreat behind her money and engage in verbose arguments all while holding a Chanel bag. During her time on *Jersey Shore*, Snooki is shown “smushing” (The Shore House’s term for having sex) and hooking up with various men as well as engaging in many physical altercations. Lauren’s hook ups rarely show any more than brief kissing nor do they allude to anything more. The glamour of her lavish lifestyle as well as her Barbie doll-like looks justify Conrad having her own television show. On the other hand, Snooki would not be guaranteed a television appearance due to her unconventional looks and lower social class.

In *Laguna Beach*, LC plans and attends many parties. These events range from backyard barbeques, to a party in a hotel suite that cost \$700 (*Laguna Beach*, Season 1, Episode 1), to a catered end of summer going away classy poolside party. She does go out to clubs and bars on spring break with her friends in Cabo San Lucas, but is rarely shown sipping from her alcoholic beverages or provocatively dancing: LC makes fun of her enemy Kristin for the way she dances and even tells Stephen to slow down his drinking on one of the nights.

In *The Hills*, Lauren attends high-class events that are often planned by companies or event coordinators and sometimes require black tie attire. She also goes out to some fancy restaurants and bars, but usually for a specific purpose such as celebrating a friend’s birthday. She typically drinks champagne or fancy-looking cocktails out of glassware, but does not seem to drink significantly more or less than any of her peers on *The Hills*. She is shown drinking more frequently after she turns twenty-one years old. When Lauren parties, she seems to follow the rules and almost never is sloppily drunk, only a bit more emotional and touchy with her friends than usual. She is portrayed as remaining mostly in control of her appearance and actions

even though technically slightly impaired by alcohol.

If anything, *Jersey Shore* portrays Snooki as an alcoholic who can barely get through a shift of selling T-shirts without some booze. However, her alcoholism gets put on hold once she becomes pregnant for the first time during the first season of *Snooki & JWOWW* and the final season of *Jersey Shore*, even though she complains about “being the only sober one” at a party “‘cause everyone’s drunk and they’re having such a great time” (*Snooki & JWOWW*, Season 1, Episode 5). She seems to go out most nights while living in The Shore House, mostly to the club Karma where she does backflips and cartwheels into splits between taking shots and drinking out of plastic cups. Of Snooki’s drinking, Jenni once said, “Since I got to The Shore, I can’t remember the last time I’ve seen Nicole sober...it’s been a while” (*Jersey Shore*, Season 3, Episode 3). She sometimes drinks during the day through the evening such as when the group goes to Riccione, Italy and she says that “Team Meatballs can handle anything when it comes to alcohol, so we’re [she and Deena] going to go mad hard all day and then mad hard at the club” (*Jersey Shore*, Season 4, Episode 7). Most of what she drinks appears in shot-form or in red solo cups, sometimes spilled whilst dancing. Snooki also smokes cigarettes prior to her pregnancy. When Snooki drinks, she drinks heavily, which often results in her getting in trouble with her roommates, bouncers at a club, or the police. Her partying behavior portrays Snooki as someone who does not follow the rules of what a lady is supposed to be like in public.

Snooki often refers to herself during *The Jersey Shore* as a “meatball.” This term is simultaneously endearing and self-deprecating. This moniker hints towards Snooki’s body shape when she was a bit pudgy during the beginning of *Jersey Shore* combined with her Italian-American culture. The self-deprecating aspect is that she acknowledges that she seems a bit overweight, but yet it still invites identification. Many of the times Snooki and Deena reference

“meatball,” it is in conjunction with drinking alcohol, partying, dancing provocatively, and going out to clubs. However, it seems that Snooki leaves most of her “meatball” days behind once pregnant. During the first episode of the last season of *The Jersey Shore*, Snooki says:

Pregnancy has changed me. I mean, before I got pregnant, all I wanted to do was live it up and go crazy. I definitely did like a whole 180, I think it's called...I won't be able to do the meatball things like I'm used to doing and I just don't want to be around drinking 'cause it really upsets me 'cause I want to be having fun, too...You know, I still know how to have fun, it's like a different fun for now. (*Jersey Shore*, Season 6, Episode 1)

Snooki realizes that her meatball lifestyle of rolling around from one club to another must come to an end when she can no longer consume excessive alcohol and she is someone's parent. This quotation also demonstrates how much Snooki has grown up and learned over the years, one of the major themes of *Snooki & JWOWW*. However, it also shows how Snooki is refining her manners in some ways due to her elevated economic class.

Fighting, Apologizing, and Drama:

Lauren often does not instigate arguments with others. Most of her fights have to do with friendship betrayals or are with her boyfriend at the time. Her fighting-style tends to be passive-aggressive until someone is so upset with her that they force a conversation about their issues. For example, after her best friend from growing up, Jen Bunney, hooks up with Brody Jenner, the guy Lauren has been interested in for a while, Lauren ignores Jen's calls. Once they finally speak to each other on the phone, Lauren says:

You did a really cutthroat thing and so did Heidi. You guys need to stop like putting it on each other and stop making it seem like I'm making drama and you know what I would expect it from someone I didn't know, but not like my oldest friend...But it's just kind of

like code, Jen, that...you don't hook up with people that your friends like hung out with or dated...No Jen, if you're sorry you don't sit there making excuse after excuse. You say 'I did a really bad thing' and you apologize. (*The Hills*, Season 2, Episode 7)

Lauren then hangs up and throws her cell phone, ignoring when Jen calls again. This scene is a bit overly dramatic, but it demonstrates how she put off dealing with this friendship issue for a few days and how she did not accurately and fully communicate her feelings about Brody to Jen before the two hooked up. Lauren accuses Jen of "breaking code," but does not indicate that they had a prior conversation about this type of friendship betrayal. She also attacks Jen during their conversation, frequently invoking the second person "you" when describing what Jen did. Lauren further demonstrates her expectation of sincere apology if a good friend backstabs her. This instance also shows how Lauren is willing to let one event about a boy completely ruin a childhood friendship. The notion of men ruining female friendships is a stereotype that Lauren perpetuates.

A few episodes later, Lauren permits Jen to come over to her apartment so they can clear the air, which just leads to another argument between the two. During this instance, Lauren says: No, it's about the fact that you did something really shady and you did it behind my back and you were evil and conniving. It wasn't all Brody. It was *you* and it was like I didn't need my best friend to go and make me feel like an idiot, like I've had happen to me before and just sucked that it wasn't some girl I hated. No, it was my best friend who made me feel like such an idiot and made me feel so low. (*The Hills*, Season 2, Episode 10)

After Jen apologizes, Lauren says that she is "starting to learn who [her] true friends are" (Season 2, Episode 10). When Jen asks if there is anything she can do or say to change Lauren's

mind, Lauren responds in the negative asserting that Jen has “done and said enough,” promptly opening the door for her to leave (Season 2, Episode 10). This scene shows that Lauren does not handle betrayal well, citing it as one of the worst things a friend could do to her. She also does not attack the issue head-on at first, instead waiting for Jen’s frequent attempts at getting in touch with her to bubble up until they absolutely needed to be addressed.⁴ Lauren’s passive-aggressiveness also demonstrates a stereotype about women being overly emotional combined with the fact that Lauren is of an elite class which requires a composed behavior from its members. Lauren not lashing out against Jen directly after she found out about the hook up was consistent with acting in line with other women of her social stature, almost pretending like nothing happened until it absolutely had to be addressed.

After her first phone fight with Jen, Lauren then confronts her roommate and other best friend at the time, Heidi Montag, about their friendship and questions why she did not step in to stop the Jen-Brody hook up from occurring when Heidi knew how Lauren felt about him. Lauren says:

Last night was just kind of like the straw that broke the camel’s back. Like, it’s not a secret. You know that things aren’t fine with us. Like, I really don’t feel like you’re the same friend to me as you used to be. (*The Hills*, Season 2, Episode 7)

She also acknowledges that their friendship is unhealthy because “all [they] do is fight or pretend things are fine and just not talk about [their] problems and that’s not how best friends should be at all and ...if [they] just continue...it’s just going to get worse” (*The Hills*, Season 2, Episode 7). Lauren is astute in this way, noticing their friendship failure, but only after a prolonged period of time. This realization also indicates that Lauren is in some way socially intelligent and

⁴ Either that, or their conversation was intentionally postponed so that it would fit within the show’s production schedule.

attempting to get in tune with her personal needs from her friends. She then continues explaining to Heidi, who disagrees with her how much Spencer has changed her and brainwashed her, Lauren expressing that she feels like she is constantly begging for attention from ostensibly her best friend. Their exchanges are quickly spoken and often do not include much profanity and lack physical altercations.

The prolonged strain on Lauren and Heidi's friendship demonstrates how Lauren does not forgive someone for betraying her. Near the end of her run on *The Hills*, during a drunken conversation on a party yacht for Lauren's birthday, Lauren tells Heidi that she was her best friend, "but then [she] started dating [Spencer] who did really mean things to [her] [i.e. Lauren]" and that Lauren wanted to remain friends with her, but she does not like Spencer at all (*The Hills*, Season 1, Episode 5). However, Lauren's negative feelings towards Spencer are somewhat justified because Pratt spread rumors about Lauren having made a sex tape with her ex-boyfriend, Jason Wahler, which impacted Lauren greatly.

A man ruining a female friendship, and being the frequent topic of conversation between the two women, is a common stereotype about women perpetuated in the media. Lauren spends most of her time on *The Hills* without a serious boyfriend, thus asserting independence in her lifestyle as well as career path. It is possible that that mere fact that Heidi had a serious boyfriend strained their friendship, but to the intense degree of not spending any time together for a period of time seems a bit drastic. Nonetheless, their ruined friendship over a man demonstrates one of the ways *The Hills* perpetuates gender stereotypes.

Snooki provokes many of the arguments in which she engages. These fights usually include yelling obscenities. Snooki tends to talk loudly and yell almost everywhere she goes, but when she fights, her volume is taken to a whole other level. One of the most famous scenes from

Jersey Shore, which actually did not air during its original slot although it was used in promos, involves the 'guidette' getting punched in the face at the end of the fourth episode of the series. This occurs after someone identified by cast members as a "frat bro" keeps taking shots that are not for them and Snooki gets into a yelling match with one of them who ends up decking her in the face. Snooki did not necessarily directly create this situation, but if she did not yell at the guy for a few minutes, it is possible that he would not have punched her. This "punch heard around the world" set the tone for the entire show as a series about drunken physical altercations (Friedman, 2011). It also turned Snooki into *The Shore's* mascot. Snooki ended up the victorious one in this situation despite having a puffy face for a few days: she appeared on five more seasons of *Jersey Shore* and got her own spin-off whereas the guy who punched her was fired from his job. Snooki's resilience demonstrates how she defies conventional norms for women. Although she did cry after getting punched in the face, it was an appropriate response to the situation at hand. Nonetheless, she did not let this physical altercation convince her to leave the show.

In fact, Snooki herself also sometimes actively engages in the physical fights. Snooki is shown hitting Mike with an inflatable hammer while calling him an asshole (*Jersey Shore*, Season 1, Episode 6) as well as pushing Ronnie because she is upset at how he treats Sammi (*Jersey Shore*, Season 2, Episode 7). In "One Meatball Stands Alone," Snooki began a friendly food fight with her roommates, but it then became personal and just between her and Mike on the roof (*Jersey Shore*, Season 5, Episode 10). This physical fighting is not conventionally considered feminine and represents another way that Snooki defies stereotypes and expectations of women. Instead of letting people's actions merely upset her, she stands up for herself and her friends to try to achieve her goal, even if through unconventional means of physical fights. This

fighting also reflects on her social class. Instead of engaging in conversations to try to work things out between her and others, Snooki's first response tends to be of the physical variety, not restrained and controlled like Lauren Conrad.

Snooki also characterizes her fighting-style in comparison to her boyfriend and later fiancé and husband's demeanor:

Jionni is like a very like conservative quiet person and he doesn't like to start arguments.

But me, I'm like I don't give a shit, I'm gonna tell you how I feel, like fuck you, get away from me. (*Jersey Shore*, Season 5, Episode 10)

Her pugnacious attributes continue to exist when she lives with Jionni because they begin bickering constantly, especially because she feels her fiancé is devoting too much attention to their newborn instead of paying attention to her, or feels that he is not letting her bond with her son (*Snooki & JWOWW*, Season 2, Episode 6). However, most of Snooki and Jionni's arguments are not very serious and are stereotypical of couples who live together and have children.

Many of Snooki's arguments bloom out of her feeling threatened by someone. She feels threatened that Mike will ruin her relationship with Jionni. She becomes somewhat meddling in Ronnie and Sammi's relationship when she writes an anonymous letter about Ronnie's actions to Sammi, prompting fights between Snooki and Sammi, as well as between Snooki and Ronnie. In this instance, Snooki feels threatened because she feels she is in the right for warning her friend Sammi about what her boyfriend does behind her back.

Snooki seems to always be on guard for someone to offend or threaten her, ready to fight back against any criticism that comes her way. As a woman who gets easily agitated and immediately responds to provoking stimuli, Snooki differs greatly from Lauren who waits and assesses situations in a more controlled manner. Snooki's actions demonstrate a lack of restraint

and control, further distancing her from conventional upscale feminine attributes.

Lauren does not sincerely apologize for anything she does that actually causes harm to somebody. However, she falls victim to saying sorry for minor things and for feeling the way she feels, such as when she ends her pseudo-relationship with Doug because “it’s just not there” between them (*The Hills*, Season 4, Episode 3). Her actions conform to the stereotype of women being made to feel bad for almost everything and subsequently apologizing. Her fights with her friends often seem like she wants apologies from others, but she rarely accepts them and instead decides to move on in her life.

Snooki apologizes frequently, perhaps because she tends to cause a lot of drama and do stupid things, especially when she is drunk. After her first night in The Shore House, Snooki says that she “feel[s] embarrassed...[and] stupid [and that] everyone has this wrong impression of [her]” based off of her drunken antics in the hot tub the evening before (*Jersey Shore*, Season 1, Episode 1). She apologizes to her roommates before family dinner and they appreciate her honesty. When apologizing to Mike’s friend named Unit for something she said while drunk, she acknowledges, “I don’t like to apologize. That’s not me...I have a little bit of anger issues,” demonstrating an acute awareness of some of her faults (*Jersey Shore*, Season 5, Episode 1). Perhaps Snooki has to apologize more than Lauren does because she engages in more actions that upset or offend other people. Snooki also lives with most of the people she fights with during her *Jersey Shore* days, so it is more difficult to avoid the person with whom she is fighting, whereas many of Lauren’s fights occur with people she does not see every day.

Similar to Lauren, Snooki is not one for accepting apologies. Of Mike, who has done various things to upset her over the years, Snooki says that she “need[s] more than a sorry. [She] need[s] like a conversation” for her to actually forgive him (*Jersey Shore*, Season 2, Episode 11).

Both women seem to want to have more explanation about the apologies they receive to deem them worthy of being accepted. This seeking of more information may indicate a desire for more of an emotional connection between Lauren or Snooki and whomever they are hearing an apology from. It may also be a way of expressing a desire for more understanding of the human condition: people do things that upset them and they want a valid reason for the upsetting action, even though such a reason rarely exists.

For Conrad, the drama often happens to those around her, thus affecting her. Most of her drama in the first season of *Laguna Beach* surrounds Kristin and their heightened dislike of each other and their relationships with Stephen. This feud also conforms to the stereotype of women not being able to be friends because of a man. It is framed as though Kristin started the whole situation because LC and Stephen have been friends since childhood. The show's framing also portrays LC as the victim and Kristin as the instigator, thus potentially making the audience feel more sympathetic towards Lauren, enhanced by Lauren providing the voiceover for the first season of the show.

In *The Hills*, most of the drama occurs between Lauren and her best friend and initial Los Angeles roommate Heidi. Lauren dislikes Heidi's boyfriend, Spencer. This situation puts strain on her relationship with Heidi, which often is dealt with passive-aggressively. Whenever they eventually confront each other about issues, they use their words to talk about how they are feeling, not their fists, because that would not be appropriate for women with their socioeconomic status and they want to conform to those expectations. Lauren does not curse frequently because that would be unladylike and unprofessional of her. Heidi and Lauren end their close friendship, but eventually come to terms that they are there for each other if they truly ever need anything.

Snooki is usually directly involved in the drama in the episode, sometimes as the instigator. Snooki tries to stand out by attempting to be the center of attention on the first night in The Shore House. However, her attempts backfire by making the other cast members, who frequently called her “Snickers” at the time, bond over her ridiculousness and sloppy drunkenness. Even though they later accept her apology, she decides she wants to leave and go home because she feels ignored – something that has never happened to her before. Nonetheless, the group convinces her to stay; that stay continued for all six seasons of the show.

Much of the drama that occurs in the show results from Snooki’s antics, such as writing the letter to Sammi about Ronnie’s potentially cheating antics during *Jersey Shore*’s second season. The women in the house argue for many episodes about how Ronnie treats Sammi and Sammi decides to believe her boyfriend instead of the girls. Sammi eventually realizes she is wrong and apologizes, but not until a few episodes later, thus rekindling the friendship between her and Snooki.

As the person who instigates much of the drama in *Jersey Shore*, Snooki conforms to her role as the center of attention. Perhaps due to belonging to an often-subordinated socioeconomic class, Snooki is asserting what power she has while on television to garner attention for herself. However, Snooki is probably not intentionally acting as a spokeswoman of her social class because her actions would predominantly portray them negatively.

Relationships and Friendships:

Both of these women’s confrontations with friends often relate to hooking up and guys. This notion reinforces stereotypes that women are overly emotional and that their favorite topics of discussion often revolve around men. Lauren’s old best friend from childhood, Jen, hurts their friendship because she “breaks code” by hooking up with Lauren’s current interest at the time,

Brody Jenner. This, too, involves Speidi because they encouraged or did not stop the hook up even though they, or at least Heidi, knew how Lauren felt about Brody. This action creates an irreconcilable issue between the friends, akin to the dispute between Mike and Snooki in *Jersey Shore*. The entire Spencer-hates-Lauren aspect in *The Hills* that strains Heidi and Lauren's friendship is also similar to most of the *Shore* cast talking negatively behind Jionni's back, even though they do not express that they do not want to spend time with Snooki as a result of this.

Both women have friendships that get compromised and they express their sentiments towards the other person through the common cliché of “forgive and forget.” In a discussion-argument or near friendship breakup with Heidi, Lauren says:

I appreciate that. It was really hard for you to apologize. I understand that and I really do appreciate it, but the only thing really that there is to do is to forgive and forget. So I really do, **I want to forgive you, and I want to forget you** [emphasis added]. (*The Hills*, Season 3, Episode 14)

This conversation occurs after prolonged passive-aggressiveness towards each other and awkward encounters until Heidi asserts over instant messenger that she wants to talk things over with Lauren. At this point, Lauren just wants Heidi, and especially her boyfriend Spencer, out of her life for good. Lauren seems unwilling to rekindle their friendship, even though they were once very close. One season later, when the two run into each other at a black-tie event that Heidi's company planned, Lauren tells Heidi “that if [she] ever really needed anything, that [she is] [i.e. Lauren] here” for her as a way of clearing the air between them (*The Hills*, Season 4, Episode 20). Lauren handles this situation in a responsible, adult-like, and respectful manner, despite her young age. Realistically, Lauren knows she will eventually run into Heidi, partially because they are both cast members of *The Hills*, but when it inevitably happened, Lauren did

not cause a scene.

In *The Jersey Shore*, Snooki becomes mad at Mike “The Situation” for telling her fiancé Jionni that she cheated on him with Mike while they were dating. She often gives Mike the silent treatment because she just does not want to deal with the situation that negatively affected their friendship and her relationship with Jionni. In the first episode of season six of *Jersey Shore*, Snooki says to the camera:

It’s nice for him to just say ‘I fucked up, I’m sorry’ but I really don’t think we can ever have that bond ever again. **I could forgive Mike, but I could never forget it** [emphasis added].

Snooki acknowledges that they both want to move on, but that she will tread lightly when it comes to matters of trusting Mike with anything. Realistically, she knows it is impossible to forget what happened because of its impact on her relationship with Jionni and how backstabbed she felt because she was once really good friends with Mike. Nonetheless, Snooki expresses acute self-awareness, acknowledging that her friendship with Mike is essentially ruined instead of trying to rekindle it.

Most of Lauren Conrad’s fellow cast members have good things to say about her behind her back. The negative comments mostly come from those who are already framed as her enemies, such as Kristin in *Laguna Beach* and Heidi and Spencer in *The Hills*. Part of this phenomenon occurs because her shows do not include interview or confessional cameras, so the perception by other participants is based solely on conversations that occur as part of the narrative within the episodes.

In *The Jersey Shore*, most of what the other castmates have to say about Snooki is negative. Many of their comments refer to her drinking or drunken antics and sometimes express

worry over her due to her drinking. Mike, Vinny, and Jenni express how extreme Snooki's drinking is and how difficult she is to deal with while drunk:

When Snooks is drunk, it's hard to even talk to her. It's hard to even make sense of the stuff with her 'cause she's like a loose cannon. –Mike “The Situation” Sorrentino (*Jersey Shore*, Season 2, Episode 11)

Snooki's drinking is...it's pretty out of control. From eleven in the morning 'til the wee hours of the night and never stopping. That means you're drunk all day and all night long. –Vinny Guadagnino (*Jersey Shore*, Season 3, Episode 3)

There's no controlling that four-foot nine girl. She is like a 3,000-pound man. She's like a bulldozer. –Jenni “JWOWW” Farley (*Jersey Shore*, Season 3, Episode 3)

Snooki's *Shore* roommates emphasize how difficult it is to control Snooki when she is drunk, which seems to be most of the time the cameras are on her. Snooki's attitude and behavior are over-the-top, which become accentuated when alcohol is added to the equation. These perceptions by other participants demonstrate one of the ways Snooki compensates for her short stature: by drinking. When drunk, Snooki is more pugnacious, is more likely to instigate drama, dances more proactively, and hooks up with people (not just men – she makes out with Deena a few times). Besides merely frustrating her roommates and Jionni, Snooki's drunken antics get her in real trouble. In the season three episode “Where's the Beach,” Snooki was arrested on public intoxication charges, which were later dropped, while being a public nuisance on the beach in Seaside Heights, New Jersey after a bout of ditching work to day-drink. Even though Jenni and Deena attempt to get Snooki off of the beach and back home, they cannot control their friend in her inebriated state.

Snooki is also portrayed as immature in some instances. When upset with Snooki, Mike

says “she acts like she’s ten years old. She’s like twenty-fuckin’-three” (*Jersey Shore*, Season 2, Episode 11). Even Danny, the roommates’ landlord and boss at The Shore Store weighs in on Snooki’s irresponsibility when he finds out that she is pregnant, saying that “A child’s having a child” (*Jersey Shore*, Season 6, Episode 1).

However, Snooki’s *Shore* housemates do have overtly positive things to say about her as well, such as Sammi being “extremely proud of Nicole for sticking up for herself” (Season 4, Episode 9). Deena also expresses sadness when Snooki spends less time with her because of Jionni, frustrated because she “kind of just need[s] [her] meatball” and she is “there for [Snooki] always” and expects her to do the same for her because they are such good friends (Season 5, Episode 10). In *Snooki & JWOWW*, Jenni explains why Snooki is her best friend because “she can lift [Jenni’s] spirit at the drop of a hat” (Season 1, Episode 1). The two are always there for each other, no matter what.

Aspirational Nature:

Both women are aspirational to their viewers. For Lauren, her life seems perfect: her parents live in a gigantic mansion with an incredible view, she spends her free time on the beach, by the pool, and throwing lavish gatherings for her friends, she moves into a dream apartment in Los Angeles with a pool a la *Melrose Place*, lands a dream internship at *Teen Vogue*, and she is slim, blond, and has a great fashion sense in line with conventional corporate standards of fashion and beauty. Many people watch and want her life. They want to live somewhere warm year-round and go to parties with A-listers. And this teenager (and later twenty-something) is living that dream life.

Snooki is aspirational in that she parties all the time and just acts like her crazy self, while picking up a hefty paycheck to do so. Snooki does not censor herself, does not inhibit herself,

and lacks restraint. Lacking strong moral convictions, she is free to act liberally in ways that some people might find offensive, rude, disgusting, or promiscuous. Snooki also appears aware that she would not get screen time if she does not involve herself in drama, so she drinks a lot of alcohol. Some people in their early twenties go out multiple times a week and drink heavily, but most of them do not make thousands of dollars to do so. Some people may want to be Snooki because, well, it seems that she does not have to work very hard to be successful. They too can wear skimpy leopard print outfits, drink, dance provocatively, and get in fights with their roommates.

Snooki's adopted father, Andy Polizzi, once said during an interview that "Everyone basically says they can relate to her. I think Nicole's just a likeable person" (as cited in Horyn, 2010). Snooki's "strange appeal" is nonetheless alluring to some viewers and consumers of culture (Horyn, 2010). Some viewers may have a love-hate relationship with Snooki, but they still watch her shows. Her fashion choices also reflect the notion that "clothing styles are significant to the social groups in which they originate or to whom they are targeted but are often incomprehensible to people outside these social contexts" (Crane, 2000, p. 15). Most viewers of *Jersey Shore* are probably very different than Snooki and come from different cultures than she does. This difference in coming from varying social groups accounts for why many viewers may not understand the necessity of wearing leopard print in every outfit.

Lauren is aspirational because she represents what young women should want. Conrad is beautiful, slim, wealthy, career-oriented, and lives in Southern California, which is often idealized in the mass media. She represents an upper-class femininity, which includes dressing and acting in an understated manner, conforming to conventional corporate stereotypes about elite women. These stereotypes are enhanced by the fact that LC Lauren Conrad's most recent

clothing line for Kohl's is inspired by Disney's Cinderella and her new line, which will be in stores in May 2015, is inspired by Minnie Mouse. Both Disney characters evince innocence and simplicity, which easily fit in with what a major corporation like Kohl's would probably want when selling mass amounts of clothing. Furthermore, the fact that her clothing lines are collaborations with Disney demonstrates how Conrad fits in the world of corporate mass culture.

Snooki is aspirational because she essentially embodies everything that Lauren Conrad is not. Polizzi defies the constrained, class-bound notions of what is acceptable and respectable femininity that Conrad represents. Snooki challenges corporate standards of beauty and middle class norms of decorum to get ahead. However, it is important to note how she has evolved since her first night in *The Shore House*. Snooki now models some of the clothing from her fashion line on her website, and it is not all leopard print mini skirts and clothing made from pink zebra-print fabric. Snooki demonstrates an alternative way of achieving the American Dream than what Lauren Conrad represents: by being on reality television and acting ridiculous, getting rich is achievable. She also embodies the notion of extraordinary ordinariness: Snooki came from a relatively modest ordinary background, was cast on a docusoap in which she acted as herself to an extreme degree, and became financially successful.

The juxtaposition between these two women is evidenced by the fact that Snooki chose to have a *Great Gatsby*-themed wedding. The F. Scott Fitzgerald novel (although her selection was based off of the 2013 film adaptation) takes up the theme of the difference between new money and old money. Snooki represents the nouveau riche, implying going against the refinement of those with family wealth as well as belonging to a lower social class despite being rich. The "Gatsby-style" is very over-the-top, gaudy, and emphasizes the idea that "more is more." Conrad, coming from a wealthy family, represents old money, refinement, and conforming to corporate

expectations of acceptable decorum.

Industry Practices and Press Coverage:

Unsurprisingly, both Lauren Conrad and Snooki fit into industry imperatives about who can become reality television stars. Lauren is wealthy, thus almost automatically making her interesting and worthy enough for a television show without any of her other qualities due to her representation of what viewers are supposed to want. This idea is substantiated by the existence of docusoaps such as *The Real Housewives* (2006-), *Vanderpump Rules* (2013-), and *#RichKids of Beverly Hills* (2014-). Snooki is unusual, outlandish, plays off of stereotypes, and is her authentic self, thus permitting her to be a breakout star on a reality show.

There are guidebooks and coaches that aid ordinary people who want to be cast on reality television shows. The existence of such resources further reinforces the idea that many people who appear on reality shows actively seek out fame. In one of these guidebooks, *So You Want to Be On A Reality Show?*, the reality television show editor TaJuan “TeeJ” Mercer (2013) tells aspiring reality television celebrities to “Turn Up Your Stereo...Type” (p. 59). She warns people entering a casting session for a reality television show that “casting directors need to put you in a category” and that “[t]hey have to be able to sum you up in a few short words to a busy producer” (Mercer, 2013, p. 59). The advice pertaining to this idea is to “[know] where you fit so that you can accentuate that part of your personality in your audition” (p. 59) and “Whoever you are, take that and multiply it times 10! Whatever it is, OWN IT!” (p. 61). Snooki is a prime example of this philosophy, owning her unique qualities while being filmed. She “was her authentic self...[and] was comfortable with who she was [and] [t]here is something appealing about a person being true to who they are” (Mercer, 2013, p. 68). Snooki once described herself as “a nut job,” which she embraces, thus contributing to her “strange appeal” (as cited in Horyn,

2010). “Throughout the ENTIRE process” of both of her shows, Snooki “stay[s] true to who [she] [is],” which is why viewers love her or love to hate her (Mercer, 2013, p. 73).

The idea of being “loud and unique” is also reinforced by Sara Cohen, who previously served as a Manager in the Unscripted Series Development Department at MTV (personal communication, January 28, 2015). In an interview, Cohen (personal communication, January 28, 2015) stressed the importance of being really open and honest during the casting process. Having an interesting story to tell or an interesting perspective also aid in a successful casting interview or tape. Snooki’s openness and honesty are a big part of what made her a breakout star. “She just has like no filter,” Cohen said, and she was not afraid to be herself “as silly as that may have made her look” (personal communication, January 28, 2015). About Lauren Conrad, Cohen said that she thinks people found her relatable, but also living a glamorous lifestyle that people looked up to in an aspirational way (personal communication, January 28, 2015). Likability is also important in casting, because without likeability of the people on the program, the show will probably not get viewers.

Press coverage also picks up on notions similar to the industry perspectives about why these women garnered attention and why viewers like them. Lauren’s almost bland, easygoing yet aspirational attitude is apparent in an article that chronicles how she is “something of a reality-star anomaly...attract[ing] more of the Pinterest kind of crowd” (Sidell, 2013):

Conrad is the button-nosed poster girl for women who dream of dinner parties and white linens. She’s embodied that archetype from the moment she first appeared on *Laguna Beach*, with her perfect blonde [*sic*] ponytails...

But Conrad’s real key to success is her approachability...

The same goes for Conrad’s sense of style, which consistently appears both put-

together, feminine, and relatable—enlisting expensive items (Chanel bags) and well-fitting basics (James Perse tees). It's a fashion sense that women find both approachable and aspirational: her expensive items are often considered investment-worthy, while the others could be easily sourced on a variety of budgets. (Sidell, 2013)

Lauren Conrad seems almost perfect, yet in some ways imitable, adding to her aspirational qualities as well as the potential to enhance the chance of parasocial relationships forming. She is also described as “always [being] much more wary and anxious than a pretty teenager should have any cause to be” (Heffernan, 2006). In a preview story about *Laguna Beach*, LC's appeal is described as being “pretty, smart and rich” (Paulsen, 2004). She is also described in a *New York Times* article as “a well-spoken blonde who lives in the prototypical rich person's dream house: the kind that's never finished, with landscaping composed of concrete and dirt” (Heffernan, 2004).

Press coverage of Snooki is more critical due to her over-the-top nature and lack of restraint. An *Entertainment Weekly* article describes how she “get[s] trashed the first night in the house and dip[s] into the hot tub in her thong and bra...rubbed up on every single guy and made about a million phone calls on the house's quacking duck phone while half-drunk” (Stransky, 2009). Snooki even compared *The Jersey Shore* to *The Hills* telling usmagazine.com that ““We are better than *The Hills* [because] [i]t is all real,”” implying that *The Hills* is fake (as cited in USWeekly Staff, 2009a). Lauren Conrad even expressed that she watched *Jersey Shore* during its first season, stating that a double-episode of the show ““was the highlight of [her] week. It was awesome”” (as cited in USWeekly Staff, 2010).

Descriptions of Snooki also include “[flake], cow, loser, slut, idiot, airhead, trash, penguin, creep, moron, midget, freak, [and] Oompa-Loompa” (Horyn, 2010). She received

criticism for how she portrayed Italian-American culture by “UNICO, the Italian-American organization that first claimed the show perpetuates negative stereotypes” (USWeekly Staff, 2009b). UNICO said that Snooki ““is not [only] an embarrassment to Italian Americans -- she is actually an embarrassment to the entire human race!!!!”” (as cited in USWeekly Staff, 2009b). However, Snooki’s father, Andy Polizzi, claims that how she appears on *Jersey Shore* is ““not an act she’s putting on...It’s just the way she is,”” further emphasizing how her outspokenness and loudness is an honest portrayal of herself (as cited in Horyn, 2010). Even though “she doesn’t exhibit normal levels of self-control for a woman her age,” Snooki seems savvy enough to understand that acting outlandishly and being loud and drunk would get her more airtime (Horyn, 2010).

Qualities of these two women as well as mechanisms of the shows themselves help viewers cultivate and enhance parasocial relationships with them. For Lauren Conrad, during *The Hills*, MTV created a “Virtual Hills” to “replicate the Hollywood world that ‘Hills’ cast members inhabit while allowing viewers to create their own virtual reality, meet other fans and associate with the cast, which for the first time will be involved in curating the experience online” (Mayberry, 2007). This virtual reality included the cast members, who were “represented as their own avatars” and “guide[d] fans in creating their ‘in-world’ story arcs and virtual experiences” (Mayberry, 2007). A similar virtual reality community, “Virtual Laguna Beach,” existed for *Laguna Beach*, with “350,000 registered users, but more importantly, a high level of engagement” (Mayberry, 2007). Social media was less prevalent when Conrad’s shows began airing. However, she now has 3.42 million followers of her verified Twitter account [@LaurenConrad] since joining six years ago.

Snooki, who coincidentally joined Twitter the same month and year as Conrad, has 6.99

million followers of her verified Twitter account [@snooki]. During *The Jersey Shore* and *Snooki & JWOWW*'s runs, mtv.com posted various articles and blogs about the show to keep fans engaged. They also sometimes included bonus clips that did not air during the episodes. *The Jersey Shore* and *Snooki & JWOWW* also have Facebook pages that posted reminders to watch the shows, sometimes with teasers, as well as links to the mtv.com articles. The social media pages also continue to post articles about the current happenings of members of the casts even though neither show is currently airing new episodes.

Conclusion:

The cultivation of celebrity is a complicated matter. Lauren Conrad and Nicole “Snooki” Polizzi demonstrate this shift in culture towards attributed celebrities. Their very different aspirational qualities keep viewers watching their shows, buying their products, and following them on social media. Thus, these celebrities’ continual online and on television presence has the potential of increasing the chances of people forming parasocial relationships with them. The engagements that fans may have with them through social media may also present complications to the traditional definition of parasocial relationships. These relationships can also be strengthened by watching these women’s shows virtually anywhere because most of the series in which they appear are accessible online, and thus via smartphone as well. Fans can also emulate Conrad and Polizzi by purchasing their products from their brands, thus keeping these women in the culture’s consciousness even after their shows have been cancelled.

Reality television producers seem to be looking for ‘ordinary’ participants who can fit in with a given stereotype, but know when it is appropriate to do something unexpected. Lauren embodies the attributes of a stereotypical rich white girl from Southern California whereas Snooki exemplifies a stereotypical over-the-top and outlandish party girl from a lower social

class. Both women mostly act in accordance to the expectations of the groups they represent, but divert from these expectations every once in a while. Contrary to how most rich white blond women are stereotypically presented, Conrad does not seem to seek out drama. Instead, drama just so happens to follow Lauren, framing her as the victim of situations. This victimization is enhanced through the voiceover at the beginning of episodes that makes the viewers feel as though everything they watch is from Lauren's perspective. However, she still demonstrates materialism, spending time on her appearance, and generally living a lavish lifestyle. Snooki demonstrates more sensitivity than her loud personality and partying behavior might suggest. Polizzi seems to genuinely care about her good friends and gets very upset when she feels betrayed. She demonstrates that it is possible to grow up from going out to clubs every night to being a mother of two in a relatively short period of time. Both of these women conform to expectations imposed on them by the stereotypes they embody, yet their surprising divergences from such stereotypes are what keeps them exciting.

However, it is important to note that both women tend to conform to gendered stereotypes, but Lauren more so than Snooki. Both women have friendships ruined because of a man, which becomes a frequent topic of conversation. They both also focus on their appearance, noted by the fact that they both have published guides to emulating their style and beauty looks (*Lauren Conrad Style*, *Lauren Conrad Beauty*, and *Confessions of a Guidette*). Nonetheless, as demonstrated by her behaviors on *Jersey Shore* and *Snooki & JWOWW*, Snooki breaks away from the restrained upscale femininity that Conrad represents by acting in characteristically unladylike ways, such as exposing her "kooka," dressing gaudily, and talking about bodily functions.

These women became successful docusoap celebrities because they are both aspirational.

Their attributes of fitting within their given stereotypes while knowing when to diverge from them play into how they represent aspirational ideals with which viewers may identify. The entertainment industry and the shows on which they appeared play a large role in the idealization of both Lauren Conrad and Snooki's lives. For Lauren, her life is easily idolized because it conforms to the corporate expectations of what living a good, successful life is by looking like Barbie, having money, and living in the seemingly perfect Southern California. *Laguna Beach* and *The Hills* emphasize her glamorous lifestyle with many external shots of the beach and other gorgeous views of Laguna Beach and Los Angeles. These shows filmed in beautiful locations and expensive restaurants and bars, exaggerating some aspects of what life in Southern California is like for many people who actually live there. For Snooki, coming from a relatively modest background, appearing on television gave people from a lower socioeconomic status a voice and a chance to see someone perhaps similar to themselves on television. She was able to negotiate her stay on *Jersey Shore* so that she was paid more, thus able to rise in financial wealth and purchase items similar those that Conrad possesses. As a result of her gained notoriety and affluence, Snooki migrated into the fashion industry, which she probably would not have been able to do without the exposure of being a famous reality television persona.

Both women were framed as the center of attention on their shows, which contributed to them being victimized and thus potentially causing viewers to side with Conrad or Snooki. In *Laguna Beach* and her spinoff, *The Hills*, Conrad provided voiceover, framing everything that occurred as coming from her perspective. Also, the main story arcs throughout the seasons tended to revolve around her in the first season of *Laguna* and throughout her stay on *The Hills*. Conrad made viewers dislike Spencer Pratt because of the rumors he started about her and how he treated her based off of the show's portrayal with Conrad as the center of attention. Drama

happened to and around Lauren, so viewers were expected to feel bad for her due to the situations in which she was put. Before the fourth episode of *Jersey Shore* aired, video of Snooki getting punched in the face became viral. Even though the actual punch was not shown when the episode was fully aired, Snooki's victimization due to getting punched at a bar framed her as the center of attention for most of what happened in *Jersey Shore*. Whenever Snooki feels threatened, she is often portrayed as a victim and justified in her feelings that usually cause her to engage in yelling matches and physical altercations.

To answer my main overarching Research Question, the entertainment industry selects docusoap participants who may be aspirational to viewers, creating celebrities in the process (Sub-Question A). The attributes of the successful docusoap celebrities that make them aspirational to viewers outside of the shows on which they appear are that they are relatable, authentic, play into stereotypes, and that viewers want to be like them in some way (Sub-Question B). Lauren Conrad and Nicole Polizzi are successful within and outside of their television shows because they are aspirational. Both women appear relatable, play into their respective class stereotypes as well as gender stereotypes while simultaneously breaking them at strategic moments. Whether it is living a lavish lifestyle like Lauren Conrad or being able to say and do whatever you want without any consequences like Snooki, these women's aspirational qualities are what led them to lasting success. However, there is no clear, conclusive path for every docusoap participant who desires to migrate successfully into other industries. This thesis instead focuses on only two examples of such success, without looking at docusoap participants who have failed to migrate successfully or address other differences in participants.

References

- Auerbach, J. & DiSanto, J. (Executive Producers). (2004-2006). *Laguna Beach: The real Orange County* [Television series]. Los Angeles, CA: MTV.
- Conrad, L. [@LaurenConrad]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/LaurenConrad>
- Cox, G., & Zeitchik, S. (2007, September 11). MTV's 'blonde' bomshell. *Daily Variety*, 1.
- Crane, D. (2000). *Fashion and its social agendas: Class, gender, and identity in clothing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Curnutt, H. (2011). Durable participants: A generational approach to reality TV's 'ordinary' labor pool. *Media, Culture & Society*, 33(7), 1061-1076. doi:10.1177/0163443711415746
- DiSanto, T., DiVello, A., & Gateley, L. (Executive Producers). (2006-2010). *The Hills* [Television series]. Los Angeles, CA: MTV.
- Driessens, O. (2012). The celebritization of society and culture: Understanding the structural dynamics of celebrity culture. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, doi:10.1177/1367877912459140
- French, J., Jeffress, S., & Salsano, S.A. (Executive Producers). (2009-2012). *Jersey Shore* [Television series]. Los Angeles, CA: MTV.
- French, J., LaLima, P., & Salsano, S.A. (Executive Producers). (2012-2015). *Snooki & JWOWW* [Television series]. Los Angeles, CA: MTV.

- Friedman, M. (2011, April 7). Jersey Shore: Snooki gets punched. *Time*. Retrieved from <http://entertainment.time.com/2011/04/08/32-epic-moments-in-reality-tv-history/>
- Grindstaff, L. (2011). Just be yourself – only more so: Ordinary celebrity in the era of self-service television. In M. M. Kraidy, & K. Sender (Eds.), *The politics of reality television: Global perspectives* (pp. 44-57). London ; New York: Routledge.
- Heffernan, V. (2004, September 28). Surfing on a wave of adolescent angst. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/28/arts/television/28heff.html>
- Heffernan, V. (2006, May 31). ‘The Hills,’ a follow-up to ‘Laguna Beach,’ makes its premiere on MTV. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/31/arts/television/31heff.html>
- Hill, A. (2005). The rise of reality TV. *Reality TV: Audiences and popular factual television* (pp. 14-40). London; New York: Routledge.
- Horton, D., & Richard Wohl, R. (1956). Mass communication and para-social interaction: Observations on intimacy at a distance. *Psychiatry*, 19(3), 215-229.
- Horyn, C. (2010, July 23). Snooki’s time. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/25/fashion/25Snooki.html>
- Kondolojy, A. (2012, June 22). *Thursday cable ratings: ‘Swamp People’ + ‘Suits’, ‘Burn Notice’, ‘Snooki & JWOWW’, ‘Mountain Men’, ‘Men at Work’, & more*. Retrieved from <http://tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/2012/06/22/thursday-cable-ratings-swamp-people-burn-notice-snooki-jwoww-mountain-men-men-at-work-more/139010/>

Laurenconrad.com. (n.d.). *About laurenconrad.com*. Retrieved from

<http://laurenconrad.com/about/>

Levine, S. (2012, August 31). MTV takes leave of 'shore'. *Daily Variety*, 2.

Longman, H. (2014, November 5). OK! Exclusive: Snooki & Jwoww reveal if they'll ever let their kids be on a show like Jersey Shore. *OK!*. Retrieved from

<http://okmagazine.com/meet-the-stars/exclusives-meet-the-stars/snooki-jwoww-season-4-interview-mtv/>

Mayberry, C. (2007, January 16). MTV's 'Hills' has virtual eyes. *The Hollywood Reporter*.

Retrieved from <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/mtvs-hills-has-virtual-eyes-127973>

McDonald, P. (2013). *Hollywood stardom*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Mercer, T. (2013). *So you want to be on a reality show? Insider tips to make the cut*. Sherman Oaks, CA: WanHawk Media.

Murray, S., & Ouellette, L. (2004). *Reality TV: Remaking television culture*. New York: New York University Press.

Nicole "Snooki" Polizzi's Official Site. (n.d.) *Bio*. Retrieved from <http://snookinicole.com/bio/>

Paulsen, W. (2004, September 28). MTV's 'Laguna Beach: The Real Orange County' "reality soap" launching Tuesday, September 28. *Reality TV World*. Retrieved from

<http://www.realitytvworld.com/news/mtv-laguna-beach-real-orange-county-reality-soap-launching-tuesday-september-28-2941.php>

Pilkington, E. (2010, January 2). Italian-Americans hit back at Jersey Shore's use of the word 'guido.' *The Guardian*. Retrieved from

<http://www.theguardian.com/media/2010/jan/03/mtv-jersey-shore-guidos-italian>

Polizzi, N. [@snooki]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/snooki>

Polizzi, N. S. (2011). *Confessions of a Guidette*. New York, New York: Gallery Books.

Sanchez, E. (2013, February 26). Snooki's 2011 Cadillac Escalade EXT sells on ebay: Leather-wrapped, autographed SUV fetches \$77,510. *Truck Trend*. Retrieved from

http://www.trucktrend.com/features/news/2013/163_news130226_snooki_2011_cadillac_escalade_ext/

Sidell, M.W. (2013, June 17). Lauren Conrad is the world's most successful reality-TV defector. *The Daily Beast*. Retrieved from

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/06/17/lauren-conrad-is-the-world-s-most-successful-reality-tv-defector.html>

Stransky, T. (2009, December 4). 'Jersey Shore' on MTV: Furthering guido stereotypes or just harmless fun?. *Entertainment Weekly*. Retrieved from

<http://www.ew.com/article/2009/12/04/jersey-shore-mtv>

The Hollywood Reporter. (2006, November 20). Big web audience for MTV's 'Laguna.' *The Hollywood Reporter*. Retrieved from <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/big-web-audience-mtvs-laguna-143735>

Turner, G. (2006). The mass production of celebrity: 'Celetoids', reality TV and the 'demotic turn'. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 9(2), 153-165.

doi:10.1177/1367877906064028

USWeekly Staff. (2009a, December 14). Jersey Shore's Snooki: "We are better than The Hills."

US Weekly. Retrieved from [http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/jersey-](http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/jersey-shores-snooki-we-are-better-than-the-hills-20091412)

[shores-snooki-we-are-better-than-the-hills-20091412](http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/jersey-shores-snooki-we-are-better-than-the-hills-20091412)

USWeekly Staff. (2009b, December 30). Jersey Shore's Snooki to boycotters: "F***you!". *US*

Weekly. Retrieved from [http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/jersey-shores-](http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/jersey-shores-snooki-to-boycotters-f-you-20093012)

[snooki-to-boycotters-f-you-20093012](http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/jersey-shores-snooki-to-boycotters-f-you-20093012)

USWeekly Staff. (2010, January 18). Lauren Conrad on the Jersey Shore: "I love it!". *US*

Weekly. Retrieved from [http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/lc-and-snooki-](http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/lc-and-snooki-2010181)

[2010181](http://www.usmagazine.com/entertainment/news/lc-and-snooki-2010181)

Ward, A. (2014, January 10). Snooki DNA testing bring out the gypsy in 'Jersey Shore' star.

Newsmax. Retrieved from [http://www.newsmax.com/TheWire/snooki-dna-testing-](http://www.newsmax.com/TheWire/snooki-dna-testing-gypsy/2014/01/10/id/546421/)

[gypsy/2014/01/10/id/546421/](http://www.newsmax.com/TheWire/snooki-dna-testing-gypsy/2014/01/10/id/546421/)

Weisman, J. (2010, March 26). MTV to be over 'the hills'. *Daily Variety*, 13.

Appendix A: Episodes Watched For Textual Analyses

Show	Season	Episode Number	Title
Laguna Beach	1	1	A Black And White Affair
Laguna Beach	1	5	What Happens in Cabo
Laguna Beach	1	6	The Best Part of Breaking Up
Laguna Beach	1	9	Graduation Day
Laguna Beach	2	13	Boyfriends Are Like Purses
Laguna Beach	2	16	Nothing More To Say
The Hills	1	1	New City, New Drama
The Hills	1	7	Somebody Always Has To Cry
The Hills	1	10	Timing Is Everything
The Hills	2	7	With Friends Like These...
The Hills	2	10	Apology Not Accepted
The Hills	3	7	They Meet Again
The Hills	3	14	Forgive and Forget
The Hills	4	3	Better Off As Friends
The Hills	4	20	I Heidi Take Thee Spencer...
The Hills	5	1	Don't Cry On Your Birthday
The Hills	5	10	Something Old, Something New...
The Jersey Shore ⁵	1	1	A New Family
The Jersey Shore	1	4	Fade To Black
The Jersey Shore	1	5	Just Another Day at the Shore
The Jersey Shore	1	6	Boardwalk Blowups
The Jersey Shore	2	7	Sleeping with the Enemy
The Jersey Shore	2	11	Girls Like That
The Jersey Shore	3	3	Where's The Beach?
The Jersey Shore	3	10	A Cheesy Situation
The Jersey Shore	4	7	Meatball Mashup
The Jersey Shore	4	9	Three Men and a Snooki
The Jersey Shore	5	1	Hurricane Situation
The Jersey Shore	5	10	One Meatball Stands Alone
The Jersey Shore	6	1	Once More Unto The Beach
The Jersey Shore	6	9	Make It Unofficial
Snooki & JWOWW	1	1	Sorry Neighbors, Cause These Bitches Are Moving In
Snooki & JWOWW	1	5	Sober Party of One
Snooki & JWOWW	1	11	My Baby is Boring!
Snooki & JWOWW	2	3	Last Call at Club Uterus

⁵ All episodes of *The Jersey Shore* were analyzed in their uncensored versions.

Snooki & JWOWW	2	6	The Honeymoon is Over
Snooki & JWOWW	3	2	Movin on Up!
Snooki & JWOWW	3	6	Let the Planning Begin!
Snooki & JWOWW	4	5	Got Gatsby?
Snooki & JWOWW	4	12	I Do. Now What?

Appendix B: Coding Scheme for Textual Analysis of Docusoaps

Show
Season
Episode
Run Time
Appearance & Apparel
Hair Color
Height
Weight
Wears Revealing/Tight Clothing
Conforms to Conventional Corporate Standards of Beauty
Conforms to Conventional Corporate Standards of Fashion
Refers to Own Personal Appearance
Others Refer to Her Personal Appearance
Refers to Others' Personal Appearance(s)
Spends Time Getting Ready (showering, applying makeup, doing hair, etc.)
Shopping
Language
Uses Profanity
Sexual References About Self
Sexual References About Other
Address to Camera
Pan/Tilt
Close-up
Extreme Close-up
Voiceover
Attitude
Talks to camera/confessional about other participant(s) positively
Talks to camera/confessional about other participant(s) negatively
Talks to other participants about other participants positively
Talks to other participants about other participants negatively (talking behind their back)
Complains
Other
Sexual Behavior & Romantic Interests
Removes Most/All Articles of Clothing
Hooks up
Talks about Hooking Up: Themselves & (potential) Hook Up
Talks about Hooking Up: Other People
Talks about their Romantic Interest to Camera
Talks about their Romantic Interest to Friend/Other participant

Talks about their Romantic Interest to the Romantic Interest (e.g. talking about their feelings towards each other or relationship)
Pugnacious Behavior
Engages in Fight
Instigates Fight
Indirectly Instigates Fight (e.g. says something that causes some else to instigate fight)
Fight is Physical
Fight is Verbal
Who is the fight with? (e.g. friend, significant other, housemate, stranger, etc.)
Apologies
Apologizes to Person
Instigates Apology
Apology Instigated by Someone Else
Refuses to Apologize
Partying Behavior
Drinks Alcohol
Takes a Shot
Consumes other Form of Alcohol
Goes to a bar or party
Instigates plans for "going out" event of episode
Outing Seems Fake/Scripted
Dances Provocatively
Perception by Other Participants
Other participants talk about them positively to camera/confessional
Other participants talk about them negatively to camera/confessional
Other participant talks about them positively to another participant
Other participant talks about them negatively to another participant (talking behind their back)
Notes During Episode

Appendix C: Pictures of Lauren Conrad

Figure 1. A screenshot of LC from *Laguna Beach* “A Black And White Affair.” This photo shows LC’s natural tan, dirty-blond hair in a messy ponytail, light accessorizing with jewelry, large sunglasses, and wearing of a simple black tank top.

Taken from: Plamondon, G. (Director). (2004). A black and white affair [Television series episode]. In J. Auerbach & T. DiSanto. (Executive Producers). *Laguna Beach: The real Orange County*. Los Angeles, CA: MTV.



Figure 2. A screenshot from *Laguna Beach*'s "Boyfriends Are Like Purses." This picture shows LC tanning outside by her pool while wearing a bikini and large sunglasses with her hair in a ponytail.

Taken from: Sands, J. (Director). (2005). Boyfriends are like purses [Television series episode].

In J. Auerbach & T. DiSanto. (Executive Producers). *Laguna Beach: The real Orange County*. Los Angeles, CA: MTV.

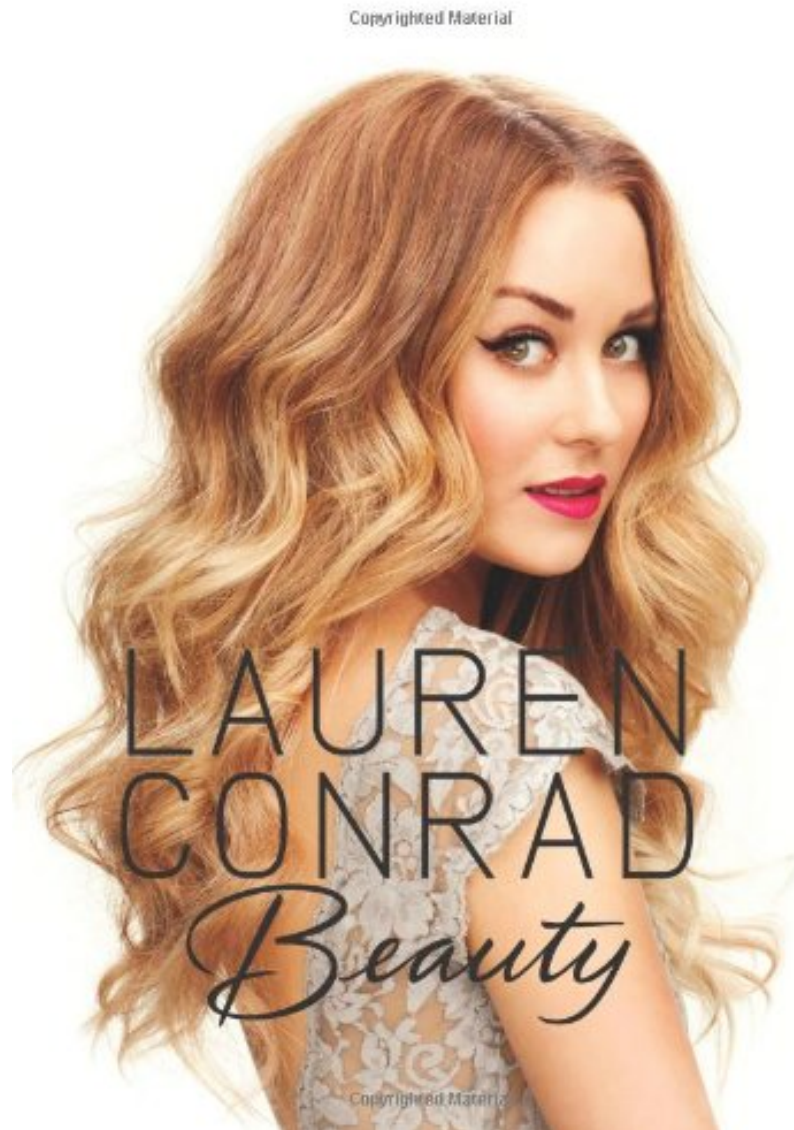


Figure 3. The cover of Lauren Conrad's book *Lauren Conrad Beauty*. This picture demonstrates Lauren's easygoing and simple yet sophisticated style.

Taken from: Conrad, L., & Loehnen, E. (2012). *Lauren Conrad beauty*. New York: HarperCollins.



Figure 4. A picture of Lauren Conrad modeling LC Lauren Conrad's Disney Cinderella Collection for Kohl's. This picture includes Lauren wearing a subtly patterned skirt as well as light colors. The fabrics used also appear very lightweight and upscale. This picture also shows her hair cut into a textured bob.

Photo courtesy of Kohl's retrieved from: <http://www.usmagazine.com/celebrity-style/news/lauren-conrad-disney-cinderella-fashion-collection-photos-201542>



Figure 5. A picture of Lauren Conrad wearing a simple, yet conventionally fashionable outfit. Notice the one necklace and few small bracelets. The Chanel purse her ex-boyfriend purchased her, pictured here, became a staple of her wardrobe.

Retrieved from: <http://www.teenvogue.com/blog/teen-vogue-daily/2009/02/lauren-conrads-blue-crush.html>

Appendix D: Pictures of Nicole “Snooki” Polizzi LaValle

Figure 1. A screenshot from the opening credits of *Jersey Shore*. Notice Snooki’s unnatural tan, small top adorned with metallic beads, large jewelry, pink acrylic nails, and dancing.

Taken from: French, J., Jeffress, S., & Salsano, S.A. (Executive Producers). (2009-2012). *Jersey Shore* [Television series]. Los Angeles, CA: MTV.



Figure 2. A picture from the *Snooki & JWOWW* promotions. Notice that as Snooki became richer, her style includes more solid colors, but she still wears ostentatious and large accessories and jewelry.

Retrieved from:

http://www.imdb.com/media/rm3552553472/nm3725472?ref_=nm_mi_all_sf_9



Figure 3. Snooki modeling clothing from her fashion line SnookiLove. Notice how the outfit is neutral colors, but she still shows her personality with red hair and a patterned hat.

Retrieved from: <http://thesnookishop.com/collections/snookilove-collection/products/long-sleeve-pullover-top>



Figure 4. Snooki on the bar at Karma, exposing her “kooka.” Notice her hot pink cheetah print top, high-heeled boots, and hair accessory.

Retrieved from: <http://www.bsideblog.com/tag/snooki/>



Figure 5. Snooki wearing a shiny, short dress that accentuates her cleavage. The dress also accentuates her cleavage. Notice her unnaturally orangey skin and hair in her signature “poof.”

Retrieved from: http://beautystylelove.blogspot.com/2011_10_01_archive.html