

G.T.L.

Genre Transforming Lifestyle

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Jersey Shore, perhaps unintentionally, created an intriguing societal Situation. It's cultural impact exceeded all foreseeable expectations. At the White House Correspondents Dinner, the Leader of the Free World [joked](#) that a tax on tanning would exclude Snooki, JWOWW, and the Situation. Along with Barack Obama, Sarah Palin, and John Boehner, Time Magazine named [The Jersey Shore Cast](#) among the people who mattered the most in 2010. Syndicated columnist [Dave Barry](#) quipped that 2010 was one of the worst years ever, in no small part because society was first exposed to Jersey Shore.

2010 was the year of Jersey Shore. But why has Jersey Shore, ostensibly run-of-the-mill reality show trash, generated such a profound impact on American culture? The cast of Jersey Shore—the salacious Snooki, the complicated Situation, the belligerent JWoww, the accommodating DJ Pauly D, the evolving Vinny, the choleric Angelina, and the violently-in-love Sammi and Ronnie—represent certain literary archetypes that appeal to society as a whole.



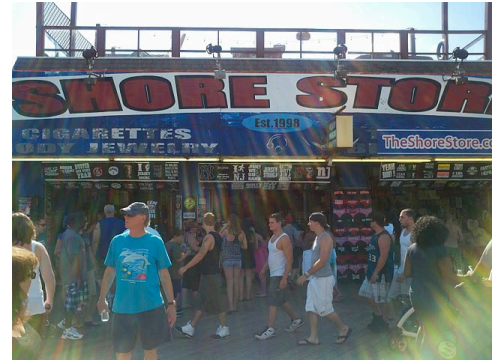
In this research proposal, supplemented by an [anthropological visit](#) to the Shore House, where we observed the subjects in their natural orange-tinted habitat, we aim to analyze the travails of Jersey Shore through three lenses—legal, literary, and sociological.



First, from a legal and political perspective, the often-pugnacious relationship between Sammi and Ronni reveals keen insights into the tragedies of domestic violence and how society tolerates it (no one ever called the police during their outbreaks), and how our legal system often ignores these problems? Broader issues of gender equality in the workplace are realized in the Shore Store and the Gelatto Shop, where cast members of both sexes use their physical assets to procure sales.

Finally, the orange-tinted Snooki, and her affinity for self-tanning, has even taken a central place in the constitutional debate over the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, with the oft-derided “Snooki Tax.”

Second, from a literary perspective, the Jersey Shore serves as a modern representation of what Mikhail Bakhtin refers to as the “carnavalesque” in *Rabelais and His World*. The no-strings-attached lifestyle at the Jersey Shore (miss) represents a “carnavalesque”—the grotesque realism which is defined and used in Bakhtin’s work. In this sense, the shore represents an open space that allows people to live a debauched lifestyle that would not normally be accepted in the *civitas*, the urban center. The life at the shore, over the course of now-three seasons, is perceived as a constant, or a summer-long carnival—equipped with rides, games, alcohol, and scantily clad proclivities for promiscuity—represent the junction between the debauchery generally associated with the medieval carnivals and the “Guido” lifestyle at the shore.



Third, exploring Bakhtin’s exposition of the interaction between the social and the literary theories, Jersey Shore’s glorification of GTL (“Gym, Tan, and Laundry,” the holy trinity of shore life) illustrates the meaning of the corporal body. Whereas in medieval times, revellers would hide their identities behind costumes at the Carnival, at the shore, the “guidos” and “guidettes” expose their physiques (as a representation of the importance of glorifying the body), complexion (stressing the importance of regularly tanning; indeed, tan has become a new race), and wardrobes (necessitating clean laundry to look “fresh to death”) to flaunt GTL.



Jersey Shore’s critical impact on our society, and perhaps most importantly, its prominence in our cultural zeitgeist makes it an ideal scholarly vehicle to explore these important theoretical doctrines. We aim to explore these issues in this article.

This agenda has been developed by Josh Blackman and Miliza Machuca Franco. Our work is dedicated to Amerigo Vespucci, the “original” Italian-American. Additional photographs are available at <http://joshblackman.com/blog/?p=7533>.

