

REVERSING NORMALIZED CORPOREITY IN FILM

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Abstract

This essay looks at the following movies through the lens of normalized corporeity and myth: *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Doll's House*, *Fatal Attraction*, *Thelma and Louise*, *Friends With Money*, *The Single Mom's Club*, *How to Be Single*, *The Suffragettes*, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, and *Bend It Like Beckham*. By so doing, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Which films perpetuate normalized corporeity? In what ways do they perpetuate myth?
2. Which films avoid normalized corporeity? How do they reverse stereotypes of women?

Normalized corporeity is mass representation of the female body as a constructed gender ideology in the form of a patriarchal definition of the ideal female image and behavior. Constructions of women are based on a normative canon that idealizes behavior revolving around women's sexuality and focuses on whiteness. Rhetoric centers around marriage, and "women are especially victimized when they possess one or more of these non-conditions, i.e., non-male, non-heterosexual, non-white, non-middle-class (and non-thin) etc." (Ponterotto, 2016, p. 134). In other words, constructions of images and gender roles in media and film center around an 'either/or' binary framework as related to body, race and class; broadcasters in 1984 spoke more about first vice-presidential female candidate Geraldine Ferraro as 'a size 6' than about her actual accomplishments; and Television news channels, such as Fox, still debate the existence of Sara Palin's breast implants.

This is to say that because media and film portray normative ideologies instead of women's realities¹, the value placed on women's looks and sexuality has permeated society; and myths and gender norms have resulted in a 'symbolic annihilation' in society (Miss Representation, 2011). That is how normalized corporeity in media and film actively discourages women from individual independence; and that is the reason societal trends such as cosmetic surgeries and eating disorders have become accepted, if not expected, norms².

Keywords: feminism, women, mass representation, film, normalized corporeity, myths, stereotypes

INTRODUCTION

Wide-spread objectification of women is even more apparent in Hollywood film than it is in media. Story-lines are almost always about men; and movies made for women reiterate the value placed on patriarchy's

1 Dutt, Reema. 2014. Behind the curtain: women's representations in contemporary Hollywood. Media@LSE: London.

2 Fox-Kales, Emily. 2011. *Body Shots: Hollywood and the Culture of Eating Disorders*. State University of New York Press: Albany.

normalization of women's sexuality. In addition, the film industry stereotypes women of all backgrounds. This is seen in the exotification and hyper-sexualization of other, 'Eastern' women, where depictions are tailored to the male gaze³. Rarely does film reflect women in any positive light that falls outside the canon of normalized corporeity and patriarchal myths contributing to the social conditioning of people (Miss Representation, 2011).

Susan Faludi expands on this problem in her book *Backlash: the Undeclared War Against American Women*. In Faludi's opinion, misogynistic backlashes in the form of myths blocking and hindering women's progress always happen just as women are about to achieve something major in terms of women's rights. In the 1970s, when women began to question the social and economic inequalities of marriage, the media refused to support the women's movement and labeled feminism a 'bra-burning trend'.

In the 1980s, women withdrew from the workforce as a statement on sexism in the workplace. Their dissatisfaction with politics and society was labeled a mental depression. Media and film convinced viewers to believe that women's freedom of choice causes depression. "These are the fundamental arguments that have supported the backlash against women's quest for equality. They have one thing in common: they aren't true. A 'devastating' plunge in economic status afflicting women who divorce; an 'infertility epidemic' striking professional women who postpone childbearing; and a 'great emotional depression' and 'burnout' attacking, respectively, single and career women." (Faludi, 2006, p. 20).

THE GLASS MENAGERIE⁴

In 1941, Tennessee Williams wrote a short story called *Portrait of a Girl in a Glass*. In 1943, the story was changed into another one by the name of *A Gentleman Caller*. The final version of the play, *The Glass Menagerie* was finally completed in 1944. It is about a male poet, Tom. Tom is short for Thomas Lanier Williams III, which is Tennessee William's real name.

The Glass Menagerie is set in 1937. The playwright, whose story is based on his own life, says that "... being a memory play, it is dimly lighted, it is sentimental, it is not realistic."⁵. Tom's mother, Amanda, is portrayed as a single mom who is trying to make ends meet; and his sister, Laura, is portrayed as a mentally ill and physically disabled collector of glass figurines. The title of the play is based on this collection. At the end of the story, the male protagonist leaves his family. But before that, he and his mother try to marry the mentally ill sister off.

The Glass Menagerie, the play, has been popular since 1945⁶ and won the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award⁷. The first movie was produced in 1950, and its ending is different from the play's. Apparently, Tennessee William was influenced by Chekhov⁸. Therefore, the main criticism of the 1950s film version is that it is happier than expected⁹. The 1973 and 1987 versions that keep the same ending as the original play have received positive reviews.

3 Tania Kamal Eldin's 1999 documentary *Hollywood Harems* expands on Jack Shaheen's *Reel Bad Arabs* and looks at representations of Arab women in Hollywood movies up to the 1980s.

4 *The Glass Menagerie*; 1950; directed by Irving Rapper.

The Glass Menagerie; 1973; directed by Anthony Harvey.

The Glass Menagerie; 1987; directed by Paul Newman.

5 Puchko, Kristy. 2017. 15 Facts About Tennessee Williams's The Glass Menagerie. Retrieved from <http://mentalfloss.com/article/510382/15-facts-about-tennessee-williamss-glass-menagerie>

6 Gottlieb, Robert. 2013. The Greatest "Menagerie". *The New York Times*.

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https://www11.dict.cc/wp_examples.php?lp_id=1&lang=en&s=The%20Glass%20Menagerie

8 Puchko, Kristy. 2017. 15 Facts About Tennessee Williams's The Glass Menagerie. Retrieved from <http://mentalfloss.com/article/510382/15-facts-about-tennessee-williamss-glass-menagerie>

9 Maslin, Janet. 1987. Film: Paul Newman Directs 'Glass Menagerie'. *The New York Times*.

In my opinion, because the main story-line is of the mother trying to make ends meet and the single sister as mentally ill, all versions of *The Glass Menagerie* perpetuate the myths of poverty and insanity for divorced and/or unwed women. Normalized corporeity and myth in the 1987 version should come as no surprise since there was little support for feminism in film in the '80s. Nevertheless, considering the women's movement in the '70s, it is unfortunate that the 1973 version of *The Glass Menagerie* doesn't reflect more feminism (Faludi, 2006).

A DOLL'S HOUSE¹⁰

A Doll's House is an 1879 Henrik Ibsen three-act play that was first made into film in 1973. Although set in Norway, the film has been re-packaged for Indian and Iranian audiences, *Akale* (2004)¹¹ and *Here Without Me* (2011)¹². The names and actors are modified to reflect the changes in settings and cultures, but the original story remains the same.

Victorian housewife Nora wants independence. However, because she depends on her husband financially, she plays the role of 'good wife'. Borrowing money without her husband's permission, she finds herself getting blackmailed by a Krogstad, the person who lent her the money. Nora's husband has a negative reaction when he discovers her loan. Luckily, Ibsen believed that "women had equal rights with men to develop as individuals and become complete human beings."¹³ The story ends with Nora saying goodbye to her marriage and to the label of 'doll' that came with it.

A Doll's House perpetuates normalized corporeity through sexuality and class because the story-line revolves around marriage and money. *A Doll's House* also counters normalized corporeity because Nora leaves her marriage for financial and individual independence. The 2012 version of the film extends this image of Nora into that of "... an overstretched modern mother, her life a nightmare of spilled porridge, missed appointments and hurriedly applied makeup"¹⁴. "This is to say that although the change in depiction of Nora went from financially dependent to financially independent, she risks 'depression and burnout attacking, respectively, single and career women' (Faludi, 2006).

While *A Doll's House* modernizes Nora into a more financially independent woman, the 2012 version of the film perpetuates the myth that women can't have it all, a myth that slows women down in their careers (Miss Representation, 2011). Because she is struggling instead of juggling, the audience is given the message that the outcome of financial freedom for career women is not worth it. Through this lens, the more contemporary remake of *A Doll's House* contradicts the feminist message of the play.

FATAL ATTRACTION¹⁵ AND THELMA AND LOUISE¹⁶

Fatal Attraction is a 1987 James Dearden psychological thriller that was remade in 2017. To re-iterate, '80s film perpetuated myths of man shortages, poverty for divorced women, depression, mental illness and hysteria for unmarried ones, and sterility for career women. Also, the value placed on women's sexuality highlighted marriage and vilified the independent, single woman (Faludi, 2006).

In *Fatal Attraction*, the female actresses are all white and middle-class (Ponterotto, 2016). The single woman is vilified and the married one is idealized. Moreover, female sexuality is portrayed as a mental

10 *A Doll's House*; 1973; directed by Patrick Garland.

A Doll's House; 1992; directed by David Thacker.

A Doll's House; 2012; directed by Carrie Cracknell.

11 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akale>

12 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Here_Without_Me

13 O'Connor, John. 1992. TV Weekend: An Ideological Nora In a BBC 'Doll's House'. *The New York Times*.

14 Rustin, Susanna. 2013. Why A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen is more relevant than ever. *The Guardian*.

15 *Fatal Attraction*; 1987; directed by Adrian Lyne.

Fatal Attraction; 2017 TV series; https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2912216/fullcredits?ref_=tt_q1_1

16 *Thelma and Louise*; 1991; directed by Riddley Scott.

illness (Faludi, 2006). The male around whom the story of *Fatal Attraction* revolves is a married lawyer who commits adultery with Alexandra Forrest, a single career woman.

It is worth noting that the original message of the movie is a feminist one. "The Other Woman shouldn't be getting all the blame; let the adulterous man take the fall for a change." (Faludi, 2006, p. 131). Nevertheless, the writer was told to modify the story because "... it was felt, and it was a feeling I didn't particularly agree with, that the audiences would not be sympathetic to such a man because he was an adulterer. So some of the onus for the weekend was taken off his shoulders and placed on the girl's." (Faludi, 2006, p. 131).

Hence, Alex is depicted as a suicidal, homicidal psychopath. She stalks, she spies, and she threatens. She cuts her wrists. She even kills the wife's pet rabbit, driving the white middle-class family to move from one part of the city to another. As seen with *The Glass Menagerie*, *Fatal Attraction* also associates women's sexuality with mental illness.

In keeping with the '80s trend, the film does a good job of pitching women against each other through its depiction of 'good wife' and vilified single. By putting the blame on the single woman, the myth of 'good women' as housewives is thus strengthened; and when the 'good wife' in 1987 *Fatal Attraction* shoots the single career woman, she is not perceived to be a criminal.

According to Faludi, the movie's popularity led to the 'Fatal Attraction phenomenon' trend in society that encourages monogamy and marriage as well as to a trend in film genre, where women 'are divided into two groups—for reward or punishment' and 'are mutilated mysteriously'. The rhetoric of backlashes against the women's movement usually blames feminism for crime (Faludi, 2006).

For this reason, in 1991, *Thelma and Louise* drive their Ford Thunderbird off of a cliff. They would rather die than go to jail. A 1991 film by Callie Khouri, *Thelma and Louise* is considered to be a 'landmark of feminist film'¹⁷. *Thelma*, is a housewife with an abusive husband. *Louise* is a single waitress. The women go on a trip. During their trip, a stranger tries to rape *Thelma*. *Louise* gets him to back off by threatening him with a gun.

The rapist lets *Thelma* go but keeps insulting *Louise*. *Louise* then shoots and kills him. The two women decide not to call the police. They, as fugitives in Hollywood movies usually do, plan to go to Mexico instead. On the way, *Thelma* meets someone who steals *Louise*'s life savings. To make up for the mishap, *Thelma* robs a convenience store. Meanwhile, the cops are still chasing after the two women.

In 1934, censorship regulations banned premarital sex in film but allowed rape scenes. While the ban was overturned in the late 1950s, the trend of sexism wasn't (Faludi, 2006). *Thelma and Louise* thereby "... didn't believe there was the possibility of justice for them ... they didn't believe that anyone would ever see their side of it enough to know why they had done what they had done"¹⁸. In this way, *Thelma and Louise* counters sexism; and, unlike *Fatal Attraction*, it doesn't pitch married and single women against each other (Faludi, 2006).

However, instead of driving to Mexico, *Thelma and Louise* drive their car off a cliff. "It's as if Khouri is trying to paint feminists as given to hysterical overreaction"¹⁹. As such, the film perpetuates the myth of women as 'hysterical' and 'emotional' (Miss Representation, 2011). The ending of *Thelma and Louise* is not very realistic. The women were in a life or death situation, and the crime they committed was in self-defense. Therefore, even if they had gotten locked up, their jail sentence would have been light.

The film was criticized by media for being 'degrading to men'. Similarly, *Fatal Attraction* "was the subject of intense debate about whether its message was offensively sexist"²⁰; and critics have asked why the film 'remains such a significant part of our pop culture memory'²¹. The media also didn't acknowledge the female

17 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thelma_%26_Louise

18 NPR. 2011. Looking Back On 'Thelma & Louise' 20 Years Later. <https://www.npr.org/2011/05/20/136462014/looking-back-on-thelma-louise-20-years-later>

19 Smith, Kyle. 2016. As a Feminist Film, 'Thelma and Louise' fails miserably. *New York Post*.

20 Zeidner, Lisa. 2012. The Tempted Husband, the Crazy Bitch, and the Rabbit. *Slate*.

21 Patrick, Sean. 2017. Classic Movie Review: Fatal Attraction. Retrieved from <https://geeks.media/classic-movie-review-fatal-attraction>

characters in *Thelma and Louise* as sticking up for themselves²². This perpetuates the myth that “Only for domestic reasons—for the sake of family and motherhood —can a woman shout and still come out a heroine.” (Faludi, p.129, 2006).

NORMALIZED CORPOREITY: REVERSING NONCONDITIONS

His section demonstrates how the films *How to Be Single*, *The Suffragettes*, and *The Single Mom's Club* counter non-conditions of normalized corporeity through race, class, and/or female behavior.

HOW TO BE SINGLE²³

In *How to Be Single*, everyone is single. Alice moves to New York to work as a paralegal. Alice's older sister is a gynocologist. Lucy is always on dating sites. And Robin is a party animal. The film ends with some female characters as single and with some as married.

The film is about women's love lives. Yet, it does not hyper-sexualize the female characters (Miss Representation, 2011). One of them remains single, one gets into a relationship, and one gets married. As such, the film highlights women's individualities and counters the non-condition of non-marriage (Ponterotto, 2016) by offering different endings for single women (Faludi, 2006). In this way, the film bends normalized corporeity and normalizes the existence of single career women. Drawing on topics such as self-reliance, motherhood, emotions, and sex, and unlike *The Glass Menagerie* and *Fatal Attraction*, *How to Be Single* doesn't vilify. Whereas the non-condition of being single in *The Glass Menagerie* and *Fatal Attraction* is associated with myths of mental illness and psychopathy, *How to Be Single* depicts single career women as sane. In this sense, the film counters the myth connecting single women's sexuality to mental illness (Faludi, 2006). The romantic comedy has received mixed reviews. It has been criticized for depicting only one black woman²⁴, but it has also been described as 'satisfyingly nonjudgmental'²⁵.

THE SUFFRAGETTES²⁶

“I'd rather be a rebel than a slave.” Released one year before *How to Be Single*, *The Suffragettes* is written by Abi Morgan and directed by Sarah Gavron. A 2015 historical drama on women's right to vote, the story takes place in 1912 Britain. The film is about class, women's rights, and worker's rights. The main character is Maud Watts, a laundry worker in the Glasshouse Laundry in the East End of London. The film brilliantly counters normalized corporeity through class, sexuality, and female behavior by focusing on feminism and by portraying women of various economic backgrounds as juggling their activism with work and with marriage and motherhood. In this way, the film counters the myth that women can't have it all (Miss Representation, 2011).

A truly feminist film reflecting women's unity and quest for equality and justice at the time, *The Suffragettes* portrays women of different economic backgrounds as fighting for their rights. By emphasizing the class divide, imprisonment, unemployment, and poverty, the film is a reminder of how to navigate 'violent and non-violent opposition to create civil disobedience'²⁷. The inequalities of class are made even more clear when the women get locked up, and the one married to a rich man is the only one who is immediately bailed out.

The Suffragettes speaks for itself, and the only way in which it doesn't counter normalized corporeity is through race. All characters are white. Sarah Gavron justifies this choice: “In America, you had a very different ethnic makeup. In Britain, you had immigrants, but you didn't really have women of color at that stage—apart from two very prominent women. Later in the movement, you got the diversity that reflects the

22 Lipsitz, Raina. 2011. 'Thelma & Louise': The Last Great Film About Women. *The Atlantic*.

23 *How to Be Single*; 2016; directed by Christian Ditter.

24 Myers, Kimber. 2016. Review: 'How to Be Single' Starring Dakota Johnson, Rebel Wilson, Leslie Mann, Alison Brie and Anders Holm. *Indie Wire*.

25 Jenkins, David. 2016. How to be Single weview: what's love got to do withit? *The Observer*.

26 *The Suffragettes*; 2015; directed by Sarah Gavron.

27 Bradshaw, Peter. 2015. 'Suffragette review – a valuable, vital film about how human rights are won'. *The Guardian*.

wonderful diversity we have in Britain today. But you did have a range of classes.”²⁸

THE SINGLE MOM'S CLUB²⁹

There are five single moms in *The Single Mom's Club*. Hillary is currently going through a divorce from a lawyer husband. Jan is juggling being a single mother with working. May is raising a son who is affected by his parent's divorce. Esperanza is living under threats of an ex-husband. Lytia has two children in jail and is working as a waitress to feed the other three. All five women have the same non-condition of normalized corporeity, that of being single. *The Single Mom's Club* hence reverses the meaning of the non-condition of being single from vilification to normatization (Faludi, 2006).

Reflecting different races and classes, the female characters are white, black and Hispanic, and they come from different economic backgrounds. In this way, by including non-white, non-middle class women, the Tyler Perry comedy counters the race and class aspect of normalized corporeity (Ponterotto, 2016). Insight into different lives of single moms counters the '90s film trend on single dads that sympathizes with men and diverts the audience's attention from the rights of women (Faludi, 2016).

Refreshingly, and as seen in *The Suffragettes*, the female characters are portrayed as a functional team instead of as rivals. *The Single Mom's Club* consists of women who unite over their children's education. They get to know each other while planning a fundraiser. As they go about their lives, working and raising their kids, May meets someone; and Hillary develops an interest in her neighbor. Esperanza gets involved with a bartender, and Jan has a relationship with May's colleague.

The Single Mom's Club has been criticized for its male characters, described as “almost uniformly sexist pigs, addicts and criminals, or else sensitive metrosexual helpmeets”.³⁰ Nonetheless, the female characters are not hyper-sexualized or vilified (Faludi, 2006); and while they do face challenges as single parents, they manage to juggle their various responsibilities and interests quite well (Miss Representation, 2011).

FRIENDS WITH MONEY³¹

While *How to Be Single*, *The Suffragettes*, and *The Single Mom's Club* reverse normalized corporeity, Nicole Holofcener's *Friends with Money* is reminiscent of *A Doll's House* from the start. It begins with images of a design of a house. A white middle-class married couple is about to buy a house. Olivia is the only woman in a white group of middle-class friends who is working as a maid and who isn't married. While her female friends are married to rich men and talking about donating millions of dollars to a school, Olivia is cleaning toilets.

Unfortunately, in *Friends with Money*, the working female is not appreciated for her financial and individual independence. Olivia is constantly criticized by an entourage that believes in marriage in exchange for money, and the rhetoric centered around marriage makes the role sound like the only one there is for women (Faludi, 2006). Hence, by putting emphasis on money, the film perpetuates normalized corporeity as related to class (Ponterotto, 2016).

A large part of the dialogue revolves around what someone has bought or plans on buying; and the majority of the characters are 'all living large in Los Angeles'³². The film also depicts women as sex objects and spotlights women's appearance. For example, one of Olivia's friends tries to set her up with a man. His first question is 'How big are her tits?' And during a conversation between a married couple, the man says, “You're eating a lot of shit lately.” “So what?” asks the woman. “I see it in your ass,” he responds.

The film ends with one of Olivia's friend's marriages breaking up and with Olivia landing 'an unemployed loser'³³. The ending is in keeping with modals of normalized corporeity that sell, and not with feminism. And

28 Oluo, Ijeoma. 2015. Reviewer Refuses to Write a Review of Suffragette. <https://www.thestranger.com/film/feature/2015/11/04/3117815/why-our-reviewer-refuses-to-write-a-review-of-suffragette>

29 *The Single Mom's Club*; 2016; directed by Tyler Perry.

30 Scott, Foundas. 2014. Film Review: 'Tyler Perry's The Single Mom's Club'. *Variety*.

31 *Friends With Money*; 2006; directed by Nichole Holofcener.

32 Travers, Peter. 2006. 'Friends With Money'. *Rolling Stones*.

33 Bradshaw, Peter. 2006. 'Friends With Money'. *The Guardian*.

so, "I felt like flinging my nachos at the screen."³⁴ This is to say that I would have liked to see an ending where Olivia landed a better career. Nonetheless, the film has also been praised because it reflects 'shifting dynamics among real women' and highlights that the 'threat to female closeness is money'³⁵.

MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING³⁶

Popular culture stereotypes women of all backgrounds. Categories of normative corporeity and their ethnic variations are homogenized; and constructions of gender roles and the body remain lacking. This is seen in ethnic variations of Barbie dolls. Indian and African-American dolls are made 'tall and slim, with pointed noses and thin lips' (Ponterotto, 2016). Toula, the Greek female protagonist in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* actually looks Greek. As such, the film reverses ethnic homogenization. Initially a 1997 one-woman play written by Nia Vardalos, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* was made in 2002. Fotoula Portokalos is a 30-year-old whose Greek family thinks should get married. A woman with the non-condition of being single, she is taking computer classes and working at her family's restaurant instead.

Toula is portrayed as awkward; and this counters the trend hyper-sexualizing women (Miss Representation, 2011). Nevertheless, the film perpetuates normalized corporeity when it links education and career to 'looks' (Ponterotto, 2016). During the course of her computer classes, Toula's style and appearance change. She begins to wear make-up, and this results in a new job at a travel agency. The link between her look and career is disturbing because it is reflective of women's complaints as related to sexist workplaces in the '80s (Faludi, 2006).

Although revolving around middle-class marriage, the story ends in an inter-racial one. In this way, the film also reverses normalized corporeity as related to race. This is to say that *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* moves between modals and non-conditions of normalized corporeity, drawing on some and countering others. The film is a hit and so is its 2016 sequel, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2*.

BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM³⁷

"Who'd want a girl who plays football all day but can't make chapattis?" In *Bend It Like Beckham*, the Punjabi parents have escaped Uganda to become a middle-class family in London. Their daughter Jesminder's dream is to be a soccer player as good as David Beckham. The 'Bend It' in the title is in reference to a kicking technique where the ball curves.

However, Jesminder's parents, who are not born and raised in London as she is, are concerned. Her father has previously experienced racism and exclusion from a cricket team because of his Indian background; and her mother is convinced that her daughter's priorities should be cooking and finding a husband.

Bend It Like Beckham first bends the rules of normalized corporeity by featuring an Indian who looks Indian. Playing soccer against her traditional Sikh family's wishes, the teen in Gurinder Chadha's 2002 film does not conform to behavioral gender norms (Ponterotto, 2016). "There's a reason why Sporty Spice is the only one without a fella," says the 18-year-old's mother.

Jesminder's elder sister's marriage is arranged; but Jesminder has other plans. She prefers to 'bend it' like Beckham. She gets a scholarship to the US and the support of her family to play soccer. Throwing the audience a curve ball, *Bend It Like Beckham*, despite depicting the middle-class only, thus scores another goal against normalized corporeity by offering new possibilities for young women (Faludi, 2016). By not prioritizing marriage, the female character in the film reverses non-conditions of normalized corporeity to symbolize the diverse individualities of girls and women.

In sum, the film counters a univocal model of female corporeity as related to looks, race, female behavior, and sexuality. It also reverses the popular, trendy meaning of 'body fitness' from thinness back to its original meaning. Normalized corporeity in sports began with the middle class in the 1980s and 1990s; and what began as a concern with physical health became a 'fitness boom' in the form of a trend of thinness assisted by media images and rhetoric on 'body fitness' (Ponterotto, 2016). Nonetheless, the female protagonist in *Bend It Like Beckham* is portrayed as healthy, indulging in Indian food, and playing soccer.

34 Bradshaw, Peter. 2006. 'Friends With Money'. *The Guardian*.

35 Travers, Peter. 2006. 'Friends With Money'. *Rolling Stones*.

36 *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*; 2002; directed by Joel Zwick.

37 *Bend It Like Beckham*; 2002; directed by Gurinder Chadha.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, changes in normalized corporeity of women in the films examined in this essay have not been linear. *The Glass Menagerie* and *A Doll's House* coincide with the 1970s women's movement; yet, while one perpetuates myth, the other reverses it. And the myths in the 1980s versions of *The Glass Menagerie* and in *Fatal Attraction* come as no surprise because that was when the backlash against feminism in the US took place.

Then, in 2002, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* and *Bend It Like Beckham* countered normalized corporeity through race and sports while still using the popular topic of marriage (Faludi, 2006). That is, the films depict non-conditions as normalized yet base the main story-lines on class and marriage. In this way, they challenge non-conditions of whiteness, marriage, and conformity from within the framework of normalized corporeity itself. Unfortunately, 2006 *Friends with Money* is all about disapproval of a woman because of her class and marital status (Ponterotto, 2016), although the reason for this could be to spread awareness of normalized corporeity in society.

This changes from 2014 to 2017 when *How to Be Single* and *The Single Mom's Club* counter the vilification of single women. *How to Be Single*, *The Single Mom's Club* and *Bend It Like Beckham* all portray single women as achieving their goals without relying on marriage. They hence send a feminist message communicated through subversion of the non-condition of non-marriage, where representation of career women mirrors the increase in female labor in the US since the 1980s feminist backlash (Faludi, 2006).

In sum, stereotypes of women have dominated throughout the history of media and film because normalized corporeity and homogenization are what sell. Therefore, it is interesting is that, despite being mainstream, the majority of the films discussed in this essay reverse meanings of non-conditions and counter myth. And despite nonlinear changes in representations of women, they all remain international hits. As such, their continued popularity can be attributed to the fact that money, race, class and marriage are universal topics that audiences relate to.

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