

**“This is me making armpit fudge!”: Construction of a Misunderstood Group on Television**

**by**

**Jasmine LeBlanc**

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Supervisor: Boulou Ebanda De B’Beri

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**Abstract**

Noticing that there are ever more popular television shows centering around the working-class, this thesis analyses the complex representations of working-class, female characters on the popular prime-time television shows *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and *Shameless* through a mixed method, phenomenological approach focusing on a visual and textual analysis. Primarily making use of a Cultural Studies and feminist lens, I focus on deconstructing the categorical codes: body language, attire, attitude, language, interaction with others, and class comparisons that present themselves in each episode and argue that these shows' representation follow both a dominant ideological framework and present forms of agency that illustrate how intersectional these characters are.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

**“This is me making armpit fudge!”** Honey Boo Boo exclaims loudly with a Ziploc bag full of ingredients in her armpit.

Standing in the family’s small kitchen surrounded by her sisters, Chubbs and Pumpkin, Honey Boo Boo begins to flap her left arm up and down like a bird. With a very concentrated look on her face, she squishes the ingredients while farting noises have been added to accentuate her seemingly ridiculous behaviour. As she continues to make her sugary treat, she begins to stomp her foot on the kitchen floor in a rhythmic pattern; perhaps full of excitement.

**"Alana and Jessica were making armpit fudge. So, I decided to step in and do my own thing. Butt crack fudge"** Pumpkin says sarcastically.

Pumpkin, holding a similar bag full of ingredients, begins to shove it down the back of her grey sweatpants. Pumpkin begins to dance around the kitchen, moving her hips from side to side as if she is mixing the ingredients with her backside. Her movements, similar to her younger sisters, have been emphasized with the addition of squishing noises.

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Running away from the police, farting at the dinner table, taking advantage of the government’s social security programs, ending up in a juvenile detention center, becoming a single teenage mother, or, in this instance, making fudge by sticking ingredients in your armpit or butt crack, are just a few of the many images commonly used to represent characters who ascribe to a lower socio-economic status on television.

My thesis focuses on the representation of working-class characters in the media, specifically, on popular, prime-time television programmes. In recent years, television programming in North America and the United Kingdom have increasingly depicted people of a

lower socio-economic status (Morley, 2009). Not only is this group of people becoming more visible on television through character depictions, but the television programming that portrays them is becoming an evermore popular genre.

Through the ever-increasing popularity and proliferation of shows similar to *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and *Shameless*, which focus on the depictions of low socio-economic classes, “issues of class representation have become increasingly central to the [media studies] discourse” and becomes the most compelling reason why I am investigating their depictions (Holladay, 2015, p. 14). Furthermore, as “representations of identity help [influence] what a culture thinks is *normal* for a particular group,” I will be deconstructing the ways characters represent lower-classes and the meanings that it can produce when viewed by contemporary society (Mittell, 2010, p. 306).

### **Defining Social Classes and Working-Class**

While focusing on the representation of characters that ascribe to a low socio-economic status, or, from now on, the working-class, I must define social class and working-class. These definitions are important to clarify because they have different meanings in society and are not intended to be used in a derogatory manner, but rather, for the sake of brevity.

By some scholars, the notions of social class and class stratification can be first connected with the “structures of inequality associated with ascribed or supposedly natural characteristics in feudal estates and religiously defined hierarchies” (Crompton, 2008, p. 11). In modern society, it can be attributed to the Industrial Revolution in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when “class-based organizations, organizations claiming to represent classes and class interests, such as political parties and trade unions” (p. 11), were created and influenced the socially constructed

ideology of class; stratification system brought on by the inequalities associated with “structures of production, distribution and exchange” (Crompton, 2008, p. 12).

These concepts can also be understood through the popularization and introduction of Marxism as it “developed key ideas about the class structure of modern societies in the forty years following the wave of European revolutions” (Saunders, 2006, p. 5), such as “the allocation of individuals, occupations or social categories within specific class schemes and a concern for the continuous appropriation of societal stratification throughout time” (Crompton, 2008, p. 27). Furthermore, some argue that the term working-class is inspired by the Marxist concept *proletariat* which describes an “intermediate position between propertied citizens and slaves [that] never achieved an independent development” (Marx, & Engels, 1972, p. 7).

In recent history, the conceptualization of class through a Marxist lens has been contested by scholars, such as Cultural Studies scholars, as being too restrictive so they have introduced a more discursively constituted understanding (Hall, 1985; Holladay, 2015). In other words, notions of class are complex and should be regarded as such, rather than understanding “the ‘ruling-ness’ of a class [as being] the guarantee of the dominance of certain ideas,” thus fixing class formation (Hall, 1986, p. 28).

For instance, Pierre Bourdieu (1984) introduces a complex notion of class that takes into consideration hierarchies of capitalist societies and characteristics; “social class is not defined solely by a position in the relations of production, but by the class habitus which is ‘normally’ associated with that position” (p. 323). Specifically, Bourdieu (1984) argues that through habitus - “the internalized form of class condition and of the conditioning it entails”- class members know, without thinking about it, just how to react to different cultural stimuli (p. 101).

Similarly, Stuart Hall (1986) argues that “ideas and concepts do not occur, in language or thought, in [a] single, isolated, way with their content and reference irremovably fixed, ... [rather] it depends on the ‘logics’ which connect one proposition to another in a chain of connected meanings; where the social connotations and historical meaning are condensed, and reverberate off one another” (p. 39). Applying this to the notion of social classes, Hall (1986) believes that there are common frameworks of “languages, concepts, categories, and the systems of representation—which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make sense of, define, figure out and render intelligible the ways society works” (p. 26).

In this thesis, I will use the understanding of social class to refer to both a stratification based on socioeconomic variables (i.e., income, occupation, and education level), and “the less tangible elements of culture that mark an individual’s class habitus” such as language and behaviour (Holladay, 2015, p. 27). Through a combination of the above understandings, the working-class will be acknowledged as the lowest socio-economic group in a socially constructed class society in terms of their income and education.

## **Methodology**

Through an inductive, mixed-methods approach using phenomenology, I will identify working-class characters in the popular prime-time television shows *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* and *Shameless*. I also analyse their representations by employing a discourse analysis; specifically, a visual and textual analysis. A visual analysis will expose the denotive properties, which includes detailing everything within each scene and frame. To further delve into their representational complexities, I will textually analyse the same scenes regarding their expression of my categorical codes which will reveal, if any, establishments of normative and non-conforming behaviour or media discourses exist.

Considering I am focusing on three television shows that are, or were, broadcast during prime-time television slots, I want to define what is considered “prime-time” in Canada. Defined by the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission* (CRTC), the governing body that regulates broadcasting and telecommunications in Canada, “prime-time” is a section of time “when television audiences are at its greatest” (Babe, 1976, p. 563). Content shown during the “prime-time” slot is broadcast between the fixed “hours of 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm” and consists of “diverse categories of programming” as regulated by the CRTC (Babe, 1976, p. 563).

It is important to mention that I am analysing television shows that were broadcast during this sought-after time slot because this means that large numbers of people were exposed to the programmes and the messages articulated in them. The television shows I analyse were chosen, in part, because of their popularity and can be easily accessed through online streaming services, but mostly because they are known to portray working-class women and the dysfunctionality of families in everyday life. The array of different genres were also chosen to show the potential similarities and differences characters represent my categorical codes.

### **Television Show Synopsis**

The first show I analyse is *2 Broke Girls*, a sitcom that chronicles the lives of two waitresses at the Williamsburg Diner in Brooklyn. The main characters are Max Black, a waitress who comes from a poor, working-class family and rough upbringing, and Caroline Channing, a former rich, upper-class woman who is now penniless as her father lost all their money and is in jail for a Ponzi scheme. Even though Caroline is poor, she still finds a way to wear high-heels and pearls. The pair quickly connect and become the unlikeliest friends and roommates. However, they must live paycheque to paycheque while trying to live out their dream of opening a cupcake shop (Yang & Xu, 2015).

2 *Broke Girls* also features other workers and patrons of the diner who are in similar financial situations, such as their boss, Han Lee, who is often the subject of racially charged jokes, the perverted cook Oleg, the cashier Earl, and the girls' Polish immigrant neighbour Sophie (Messerli, 2016). This eclectic group of characters come together to create a show that aired on *CBS* for six seasons, and one hundred-thirty-eight episodes (Yang & Xu, 2015).

Next, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* was a spin-off show of the controversial programme *Toddlers & Tiaras*<sup>1</sup> which followed the lives of child pageant stars. Airing on *The Learning Channel (TLC)* for four seasons until its contentious cancellation in 2014, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* documents a former pageant star and her family's crazy and offensive acts throughout their hometown, McIntyre, Georgia (Adams, 2015). From 2012 to 2014, the series produced fifty-two episodes, including a fifth season, which was taped but never aired (Cavalcante, 2014).

Primarily responding to their nicknames rather than their given names, the cast members include: pageant star Alana "Honey Boo Boo" Thompson, her overweight mother June "Mama June" Shannon, her father Mike "Sugar Bear" Thompson, and her sisters, who all have different fathers, Lauryn "Pumpkin" Shannon, Jessica "Chubbs" Shannon, and Anna "Chickadee" Shannon, a single, teenage mother (Adams, 2015). In addition, other family members often appear; Mama June's sister, Doe-Doe, Alana's gay uncle, "Poodle", and Anna's new-born, eleven fingered daughter Kaitlyn (Cavalcante, 2014).

The last show I analyse is *Shameless*, which first aired in January of 2011 and currently has seven seasons, with eighty-four episodes, on *Showtime*. This programme centres around the

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<sup>1</sup> *Toddlers & Tiaras*, which also aired on *TLC*, was a reality television series that provided "viewers a glimpse into the bizarre and shocking realities of pageant life" by documenting the "dysfunction that ensues when mothers seek to validate their daughters' beauty, thereby exposing the oddities attendant to child pageant stardom" (Lieberman, 2009, p. 747).

exploits of a dysfunctional, working-class, Chicago family: The Gallagher's. Frank Gallagher, the father of six, is a deadbeat, alcoholic who tries to take advantage of others and the government in order to acquire money (Creeber, 2009). Unlike Frank who is consistently in his children's lives, their absent mother, Monica, re-enters their lives from time to time.

The primary focus of the show, however, is on their children. The eldest daughter, Fiona, tries her best to hold the family together even though she was forced to drop out of high school to take care of her siblings (Creeber, 2009). Somewhat following in his father's footsteps, Philip, or "Lip", is a very intelligent student who has earned himself a full scholarship to college. Like his mother, Ian suffers from bipolar disorder and depression which worries his family and is in a secret, gay relationship with his allegedly homophobic neighbour. The youngest children, Debbie, Carl, and Liam, are like their older siblings as they progressively become more rebellious. Finally, the family's friends also appear throughout each episode to contribute to the Gallagher's crazy life: Fiona's best friend, Veronica and her boyfriend Kevin (Rochlin, 2011).

### **Chapter Outline**

To conclude, I will outline the remaining chapters. Chapter 2 concentrates on the areas of literature that address representation by explaining Marxism's relation to representation, specifically two branches of this doctrine: Frankfurt School and Cultural Studies and their ideology of media. Specifically focusing on Cultural Studies, I look at how this field interprets media representations, focusing heavily on the Hall's notions of meaning and representation as being constitutive of meaning. I also explain how theoretical lenses and concepts created by conceptual maps will help me analyse the television shows. This chapter concludes with an introduction to my research questions, objectives, and a rationalization of my work.

Chapter 3 focuses on outlining and rationalizing my methodological strategy. This chapter addresses my mixed method, phenomenological research design of exposing the representations of working-class characters. I introduce the use of a discourse analysis and explain the research tools I use to categorically code and choose each episode from the aforementioned shows.

Chapter 4 analyses each episode. I conduct a visual, denotative analysis by describing specific scenes that are found to be relevant to my research questions and a textual, connotative analysis to bring together theoretical lenses and concepts to further deconstruct the representations of working-class characters. After my analysis, I discuss my key findings and how they relate to my research questions and other scholars' findings.

The concluding chapter presents a summary, as well as important key findings and insights regarding my analysis. I also reflect on what I have learned throughout this journey, my challenges and limitations, and suggest ways my research can open doors for further Communication Studies inquiry.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter begins with a literature review to critically assess the available research that pertains to the key concepts and theories relevant to my research questions (see Appendix A).

Since my focus is on the depictions of working-class characters, I must first discuss the term *representation* which can be historically traced back to the times of Plato and Aristotle when discussing literary theory. For Plato, representation refers to words and images which can signify the real, such as “trees, animals, and music” (Sörbom, 1994, p. 39). Plato argues that images are not real, rather they are reflections used to “trick innocent people” into believing they are real (Sörbom, 1994, p. 30). He also uses the term *mimesis* to refer to simulated representation or mimicry that comes from art to replicate nature and imitate reality (Young, 2011).

Aristotle continued Plato’s research; however, his ideas diverged from Plato’s regarding representation, or *mimesis*, as a “fundamental human instinct” (Childers, 1995, p. 188). Rather, Aristotle believed it was the “representation of universals” that helped humans understand the world (Childers, 1995, p. 188). Focusing on representation in the literary context, the pair also acknowledge that it could be used to analyse other art forms (Childers, 1995).

Even when representation was being used by Plato and Aristotle, it was being used as more than just a term or concept, it was a theoretical perspective and methodology used to understand the world. Today, representation can be used in Cultural, Media and, Television Studies to understand the production of culture through the analysis of different interpretations and meanings (Hall, 1997). Hanna Pitkin (1967) argues that researching representation is significant because of its “importance and ubiquity, on the one hand, and its complexity and consequent role in long-standing theoretical confusions and controversies, on the other” (p. 2).

As representation can be understood in a variety of ways, “some theorists offer definitions which directly contradict those offered by others or bear no relationship to them”, which concludes that perhaps “representation has no fixed meaning,” rather it changes to discuss different things (Pitkin, 1967, p. 4). For instance, Charles Sanders Peirce, through a philosophy lens, explores it through semiotics, and argues that for representation to be possible, there must be something to connect an object to a sign or symbol (Liszka, 1996). While defining it through its etymology, Pitkin (1967) says that “Romans had the word *repraesentare*...to mean the literal bringing into presence of something previously absent, or the embodiment of an abstraction in an object” (p. 3), or as “a king representing a nation, as an ambassador, any public official representing the state” which takes a political economy perspective (p. 2).

Alternatively, through a Cultural Studies lens, Stuart Hall defines representation, specifically visual representation, as “the way in which a meaning is somehow given to the thing depicted” which did not exist outside, or before, something has happened (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 2). Even though Hall’s texts primarily discuss the representation of race, his understandings of representation will be used to analyse the depiction of other minority groups in this thesis.

Similar to the various ways representation is defined, it can also be used with other theoretical perspectives in various ways such as with the Marxist Perspectives. This subsection will go over Marxism, its definition, and relation to representation and media.

Throughout its use, Marxism has been explicitly defined in different ways by focusing on its different aspects. For instance, Bertell Ollman (2004) defines it as “the struggle between two main classes: the capitalists, who own the productive resources, and the workers, who work in order to survive. [Concisely defined, Marxism is] the complex and developing relations between these two classes” (p. 1). Ollman (2004) defines it through its historical values, but has loose

parameters where attention is only placed on the relationship between different classes and not the domination and exploitation this theory sets out to expose.

Comparatively, Mayer (1990) focuses on the domination one group has over another, by defining it as the “ownership of productive assets to establish a systematic correspondence between class position and exploitation status” (p. 419). Mayer’s (1990) definition specifically explores the relationship between economic, social, and political “exploitation within socialist societies” (p. 420) and does not restrict the ways exploitation can occur while analysing resultant power structures which makes it appropriate for this study.

Historically, Marxism, created by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and influenced by Thomas Hodgskin’s thoughts on the alienation of labourers under a capitalist society, became a movement of self-emancipation (Marx & Engels, 2010). First noted in the “*The Communist Manifesto*”, the pair outline ways of achieving economic equality and the disappearance of social classes during the Industrial Revolution which saw “skilled craftsman transform into exploited labourers” (Jones, 2004, p. 1). Overall, Marxism was created to champion worker’s demands against the government and unite them in order to “overthrow oppressive business owners” and “collapse capitalism” (Jones, 2004, p. 1).

Over time, theorists, such as Guy Debord, contributed to this theory. Focusing on the spectacle, which derives from the Marxist notion of commodity fetishism, Debord, looks at the ways governments, media, and capitalism control society through mass production and consumption. He argues it was used as a control mechanism by consumer capitalists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to sell society “moments of experience” (Bunyard, 2011, p. 72).

Scholars have also applied Marxism to Television Studies by examining the effect television has on social classes and order. For instance, David Morley (2009) uses it to focus on

class structures, class representations, and their structural relationships with the “problematic class category of the ‘lumpen proletariat’” (p. 489) which describes working-class people who do not wish for revolutionary advancement. Morley uses this lens to explore the relationship between exploitation and representations on British television.

Erik Olen Wright (2000) also uses Marxism to understand the relationship between the “power of the working-class and the capitalists”, and their willingness to compromise (p. 958). He argues that rather than capitalists one-sided power, it is hegemonic as class conflict contains compromise and is dependant on a variety of “economic, institutional, and political factors” (Wright, 2000, p. 999). Wright’s (2000) work does not apply Marxism to television directly, rather he generally demonstrates insights on the levels of control capitalists have over the working-class.

For my purpose, Marxism will examine the domination elites express over the working-class to expose class divisions on television shows. Similar to its use by other Television Studies scholars, each episode will be analysed regarding the ways they may undermine, or conform to, dominant ideologies and power structures. To do this, I will be looking for similar ways working-class characters are represented.

In sum, Marxism is highly complex, both historically and when determining a definition because of the multiple ways it can be understood. Exploring the myriad of ways scholars have expanded and modified its use was important for me to narrow down the ways I use it.

Similar to the variety of ways Marxism can be used, there are also numerous branches that emphasize aspects of the classic version (Mastin, 2008). I will introduce two branches of Marxism that focus on the analysis of representation; the Frankfurt School and British Cultural

Studies which have both been used in Media and Television Studies to analyse the media and “its role in society” (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 3).

During the mid-1920’s, “the Frankfurt School came into existence...as an association of Left intellectuals” (Arato & Gebhardt, 1982, p. ix) and focused on Marxism, Kantian, and critical theories. Located in Germany, the school was founded through a donation made by Felix Weil but had to close and relocate to the United States in 1933 due to the war (Seiler, 2004).

The schools’ scholars used Marxism to discover “systematically concealed interests behind theories... and the confrontation of true and false dimensions of existing theories” (Arato & Gebhardt, 1982, p. x). Members, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, also created critical theory, which critiques capitalism and how governments control production and the distribution of goods, through the application of Marxism (Zuidervaart, 2003). The pair also broaden Marxism through their critique of the culture industry which is argued to be a form of domination set out to standardize cultural goods and manipulate society (Zuidervaart, 2003).

The Frankfurt School became the birthplace of Cultural Marxism and Marxist Media Theory through the desire to understand “media as a means of constructing culture” and research the “manipulation of images to benefit the interests of the dominant class” (Littlejohn, 2007, p. 175). The schools’ scholars were argued to have “inaugurated Cultural Studies of mass communication and developed an early model of Cultural Studies” which has contributed to branches such as British Cultural Studies (Kellner, 2003, p. 27).

Argued by Arato and Gebhardt (1982), scholars at the school, Cultural Marxism had a limited understanding of culture as Marx did not explicitly write about it, rather, Marx “located culture, in the narrow sense, in terms of mental labour, whose pretensions he criticized” (p. 187). Generally, Marx looks at culture through his terms “mode of production” and “social formation”

(p. 189) which were interpreted by the Frankfurt School into what is known as “high and low culture” (Arato & Gebhardt, 1982, p. 187). The terms then can create a dichotomy between media as being a force of resistance to capitalist modernity and a mode of manipulation.

Viewed as a point of contention with Cultural Studies theorists, Frankfurt School scholars interpret representation “as [a] reflection/distortion of reality” as “the word representation, or re-presentation, [carries] with it the notion that something was there already and has been re-presented” (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 2). The school views it as “the way in which meaning is given to the things depicted through images, or whatever is on the screen which stands for what we are talking about;” in other words, meaning is already known (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 6).

Frankfurt School scholars, and scholars who use this lens, analyse representation through the notion that the meaning is universal and should be examined regarding its delineation from this understanding. Stuart Hall describes this method by stating: “if you think that the meaning it is giving is very different from, or a distortion of what it really means, then your work on representation would be in measuring that gap between what we think as the true meaning of an event or an object and how it is presented in the media” (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 6).

Analysing the gap between what is viewed to be true meaning and how it is presented also shares nuances with the dichotomy between positive representations, the subjective notion that what is being shown is the true meaning, and negative representations, a subjective notion that the representation is incorrect. This analytical style can be seen today through some modern Media and Television Scholars’ literature on the media representations of class.

For instance, some texts use this lens to analyse the reinforcement of certain social behaviours and norms by working-class characters that were deemed by authors as negative representations. Ellen Seiter (1986) argues that media reinforces social norms through

stereotypes as they “justify social differences” (p. 16). She also mentions that “stereotypes of socially powerful groups are studied less frequently”, while “‘minorities’ are rarely examined” (p. 19) which leads society to believe that they are “realistic representations” (p. 20).

Tasha Rennels (2015a) also argues that “the working-class, especially women, are considered repellent for their inability to conform to dominant cultural standards, consequently, these women have to work incessantly to avoid ridicule from middle-class observers” (p. 275). In this instance, Rennels (2015a) is analysing the framing of female characters through the socially constructed notion of “authentic displays” and their inability to conform to them (p. 274).

Focusing on reality television, Mike Meloy (2009) argues that its artificial, deceptive, false nature reinforces social behaviours and norms as it “has evolved into a medium that promotes the clear division” between classes (p. 1). He explores this division through the notion of winning and losing which, as he argues, has a direct link to perceived social status. Meloy (2009) argues that “winners of challenges get a reward - invariably one that allows the participants a glimpse of the social result of economic winning, and the extreme consumer-driven privileges it affords,” which reinforces the notion that the upper-class is being “privileged,” resulting in the proliferation and maintenance of artificial representations (p. 1).

Conversely, other texts focused solely on the analysis of positive, working-class representations through the Frankfurt School lens; those that subvert dominant societal norms. For instance, Sari Thomas and Brian Callahan (1982) analyse television shows to disseminate the myth that being upper-class equates to happiness. Focusing on the “presentation of dress style, speech style, and personality,” the pair conclude that working-class characters are “presented as less desirable” (p. 186) but are portrayed as “happier” and having “stronger interpersonal harmony” when compared to higher classes (p. 189).

Similarly, Andrea L. Press (1997) analyses how the sitcom genre can empower lower-classes, such as how *Rosanne* confronts issues of class mobility and showing women in matriarchal roles. Press (1997) introduces the possibility of breaking from neoliberal structures that proliferate negative class images by creating “new images and ideas regarding women’s roles to the consciousness of women who might otherwise be unaware of such possibilities or, alternatively, impossibilities” (p. 149).

Indeed, it is not as straightforward to state that texts solely focus on positive or negative representations as some texts discuss both. For instance, Glen Creeber (2009) looks at the ways British television tries to “take away the ‘shame’ of one class not fitting into the accepted codes of another” (p. 436). He also analyses the outcomes of shows that try to authenticate a “subjective view of culture...which appears to undermine any clear version of the ‘real’ [by] asking its audience to reposition [their] view of the people and culture it depicts” (p. 437).

Concentrating on sitcoms, Michael Grabowski (2014) analyses their depictions of working-class family struggles. For instance, *The Middle* focuses on dreams as being unattainable for working-class families which represses the will to subvert dominant ideologies. Alternatively, on *Roseanne*, Grabowski (2014) argues that characters frequently “acted out against class norms to call out inequities which were created by systems of authority” (p. 131).

In sum, the reviewed articles are examples of the ways a Frankfurt School lens mobilizes Marxism to analyse representation. These scholars seem to focus on the subjective correct meanings and the gap that may arise when these representations are depicted through the media differently.

Moving forward, the next branch of Marxism discussed is British Cultural Studies and its interpretation of representation. Emerging in the 1960’s, British Cultural Studies was a “project

of approaching culture from critical and multidisciplinary perspective which was instituted in England by the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies” (Kellner, 2003, p. 31). As this field “analyses the system and structure of domination and forces of resistance”, Marxism has played an important role since its conception (Kellner, 2003, p. 31).

Furthermore, John Storey (2006) argues that Cultural Studies is informed by Marxism in two ways: “first, to understand the meaning(s) of culture we must analyse it in relation to the social structure and its history. Although it is constituted by a particular social structure with a specific history, it is not studied as a reflection of this structure and history. On the contrary, Cultural Studies argues that culture’s importance derives from the fact that it helps constitute the structure and shape history. Second, Cultural Studies assumes that capitalist industrial societies are societies divided unequally along, for example, ethnic, gender and class lines and is argued to be one of the principal sites where these divisions are established and contested” (p. xvi).

Emerging from the Marxist understandings of societal structures and the division of groups in capitalist societies, this field focuses on exploring the “ethnography of lived experiences” through “theories of language, representation and subjectivity” (Barker & Jane, 2016, p. 4). It also tries to subvert the idea that “the media re-presents a meaning that is already there”, which is argued to oversimplify the meaning making process (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 6). Sut Jhally explains Cultural Studies purpose through its understanding of societies’ taken-for-granted complexities: “When we are immersed in something, surrounded by it the way we are by images from the media, we may come to accept them as just part of the real and natural world. We just swim through them, unthinkingly absorbing them as fish in water. What Cultural Studies would like us to do is step out of the water in a sense and look at it, see how it shapes our existence, and even critically examine the content of the water” (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 3).

Another important aspect of Cultural Studies is its understanding of framing and articulation of the media. This field places great importance on “media culture [as it] is involved in the processes of domination and resistance...that permeates everyday life” (Kellner, 2003, p. 36). For instance, as media reaches the masses, it has the power of “producing identities and ways of seeing and acting that integrated individuals into the mainstream culture” which makes it an important aspect of Cultural Studies to analyse how media frames and articulates representations (Kellner, 2003, p. 36). I focus on the ways Cultural, Media, and Television Studies scholars use framing as a tool to analyse the ways “social forces influence media messages” (Scheufele, & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 12).

With roots in psychology and sociology, scholars such as Erving Goffman have commonly used framing to analyse the ways individuals “constantly struggle to interpret their life experiences and make sense of the world around them” (Scheufele, & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 11). For instance, through a sociological lens, Goffman uses framing to study “relational meanings generated within an interaction ...to convey what goes on as governed by usually understated rules or principle [that are] implicitly set by the characters within the interaction” (Goffman, 1974, p. xiii). Regarding media analysis, he argues that frames can be used to “structure the experiences of individuals” and guide their experiences and understandings (Goffman, 1974, p. xvi). Also, “based on the assumption that how an issue is characterised in [the media, such as] news reports, [framing] can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences” (p. 11) as it is a “mode of presentation that tries to shift people’s attitudes” by influencing opinions through the media they consume (Scheufele, & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 15).

Goffman also introduces two levels of media framing: first, at a macro level, which “refers to modes of presentation that journalists and other communicators use to present

information in a way that resonates with existing underlying schemas among their audience” (p. 12), and second, at a micro level, which “describes how people use information to form impressions” (Scheufele, & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 12).

In Television Studies, framing can be used similarly to Goffman’s work to analyse news media. For instance, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) view framing as a “conceptual tool which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret, and evaluate information [by] selecting some aspects of a perceived reality to enhance its salience” (p. 94). Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) “analyse 4,123 news stories in 2,601 newspapers, over 26 days” (p. 98) to “compare the use of frames in television news to consider whether there are important differences between and in media” (p. 96). They conclude that “news frames did vary by topic” (p. 107) and were used “more frequently than print news media” (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000, p. 106).

Sarah Jackson’s (2013) analysis also focuses on framing use in the “news coverage of the kidnapping and rape of Megan Williams in 2007” (p. 46). She found that “rape narratives [can] enable and reinforce normative ideologies of sex, race, and class differencing” as these “cases are rarely reported on or examined” (Jackson, 2013, p. 48). This allows her to conclude that the story had “an obvious lack of marginalized voices, providing nearly four times as many male than female sources” (p. 58) and “the victimization of a black women by male and female white perpetrators is ideologically constructed by newsmakers” (Jackson, 2013, p. 59).

Similar to framings use by Cultural Studies scholars, media can also be studied through the notion of articulation. Originally coming from Marxism to avoid reductionism, articulation in Cultural Studies is viewed as “both a way of understanding how ideological elements come together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated...to certain political subjects” (Grossberg, 1986, p. 53). Scholars can use it to “delineate how cultural

artifacts articulate social ideologies and representations of gender, race, and class, and how they are related to each other” (Kellner, 2003, p. 25) by analysing how society produces culture and its influence on individuals or groups in society.

Inspired by post-Marxist, Ernesto Laclau, who describes it as “the political connotation of ideological elements [that have] no necessary belongingness, thus we need to think [about] the...connections between different practices”, Hall defines articulation as “the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions...[and] asks how an ideology discovers its subject rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it” (Grossberg, 1986, p. 53).

In other words, articulation can be used to “theorize the relationships between components of social formation” such as the “formation of a temporary unity between elements that do not have to go together” (Barker & Jane, 2016, p. 9). For instance, it has been “deployed to discuss the relationship between culture and political economy [as] culture is said to be ‘articulated’ with moments of production but not determined in any ‘necessary’ way by that moment” (Barker & Jane, 2016, p. 10).

Articulation not only relates to aspects of political economy, but also elements of this thesis, such as potential economic factors that can influence cultural practices through “prevailing structures of power” on television (Babe, 2010, p. 103). First, political economy can be defined in many ways, for instance, Robert Keohane (2005) defines it as “the reciprocal and dynamic interactions between politics, society, and economics in the pursuit of wealth and power” (p. 18), while Tom Evens, Petros Iosifidis, and Paul Smith’s (2013) use a Television Studies perspective to define it as a way “to understand how media organizations behave, and the content they provide, is shaped by the economic and political context in which they operate” (p.

4). In other words, it can be used to analyse how media is influenced by the power and ideologies of economic and political entities in society (Evens, et al., 2013; Keohane, 2005).

Historically, political economy has a long past as a topic of intellectual inquiry, but as an academic discipline, it emerged in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to discuss what is known today as economics and was debated regarding who used the theory first (Letwin, 2013). Into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, economics and political economy became their own distinct fields, with economics focusing on the production, distribution, and consumption of goods (Jevons, 1965), while political economy looks at the influence and power of political institutions (O'Hara, 1911).

In terms of contributions to this theory, John Maynard Keynes created 'the middle way' theory which "sought to chart a course between the ideological and political extremes" (Markwell, 2006, p. 1) during the Great Depression era and "cure economic depression, prevent war-time inflation, and promote lasting post-war prosperity" (Sheehan, 2016, p. 17). Used today, it can analyse the interconnections between G-20 nations during "global financial crisis" (Sheehan, 2016, p. 23).

It can also be used in combination with other fields of study. For instance, Robert Keohane (2005) contributed to this theory by combining political science with economics to analyse how "wealth and power link to international relations" between countries such as Japan, Europe, and the United States (p. 18). Through his work, Keohane helped establish a sub-discipline called international political economy which is argued to bring political economy back to its roots of studying the integration between individuals, markets, and society at an international level (Balaam & Veseth, 2006).

Similarly, Evens, et al. (2013) use political economy to analyse the changing relationship between media and sports organizations due to the debates surrounding media rights. While

arguing “that policymakers and regulators should continue to balance the priorities of sports organizations and media companies with the wider social and cultural benefits to be gained from free-to-air sports broadcasting” (p. 10), Evens, et al. (2013) use this lens to explore the “complex regulatory frameworks that shape television sports rights” (p. xi) as policymakers have a hard time “protect[ing] the social and cultural value of sport” through media coverage (p. 10).

Applied to Television Studies, Chad Raphael (1997) utilizes this theory to understand the forces that popularized “reality based television and tabloid TV” by analysing a range of television shows from different genres (p. 1). Raphael (1997) argues that due to the changing television landscape, networks created their own television genre: reality television. The theory is employed to understand the political-economic forces used to contribute to the cultural shifts in society through the introduction of reality television as a genre (Raphael, 1997).

Similarly, Bignell (2010) uses this lens to discuss potential reasons for declining television script quality when political agendas are involved. Bignell (2010) reveals that certain “popular programmes and genres [are] given priority by the political economy of retail marketing of television programmes and their publishers” (p. 192) which is an “implicit and explicit discrimination of programmes which [aids in] determining cultural meanings” (p. 190).

Taking inspiration from Bignell (2010), I use political economy to critically assess representations as not being ideologically neutral by exposing the potential messages that come from the shows which may create a cultural shift in terms of how people perceive classes.

In sum, framing is a tool used to look at the ways media, at a macro and micro level, presents ideas that may influence audiences. We also looked at articulation as a method of analysing politics and media in terms of understanding topics or objects that have no previous

connection, being connected, as well as political economy through its contested history and its ability to uncover potential ideological frameworks that may influence working-class portrayals.

Moving forward, I discuss the concept of meaning, and representation as being constitutive of meaning which, through a Cultural Studies lens, was popularized by Stuart Hall. Known as the “godfather of multiculturalism”, Stuart Hall focused his work on issues regarding culture, race, and gender, and the hegemonic power of culture, media, and language on identities. Hall was not only a trailblazer in the field of Cultural Studies, but also championed for minorities in his works which reflected in his concern over the “notion of representation [being regarded] as too literal and too straightforward” (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 7).

Hall was also inspired by scholars such as Raymond Williams, who he called the “caesura out of which Cultural Studies emerged” and was credited with “providing a basis to break from earlier traditions of thinking about culture” to pave the way for future scholars to discuss deeper societal meanings (Procter, 2004, p. 37). Hall’s work seems to take from Williams (1976) understanding of language being “specific and variable to different cultures, nations, and social groups,” (p. 89) as well as the argument that “the medium in which representation occurs, is radically different from the objects represented in it, so that the effect is at best a convention, [and] at worst, a falsification” making us believe it is real (p. 261).

Hall (2001) was also influenced by Michel Foucault’s “discursive approach to language and representation” (p. 72) and his acknowledgement of the relationship between power and knowledge which would expand the scope of Cultural Studies (Schulman, 1993). It is also argued that Hall was inspired by Foucault’s understanding that power relations expressed through language as being “[meaningless] outside of discourse” (Foucault, 1972).

Through the discourses that inspired him, Hall's notion of meaning has influenced the field of Cultural Studies. Understood as being fluid, meaning is "constantly being produced and exchanged in every personal and social interaction in which we take part" (Hall, 2007, p. 3). In other words, "we cannot say: my meaning is true and yours is not. Even if we agree, we have only to wait a day or a week and the meanings will change" (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 18). Also, "meaning can only be shared through our common access to language" as it "is the privileged medium in which we make sense of things, [and] meaning is produced and exchanged" (Hall, 1997, p. 1). Thus, language can construct meaning "because it operates as a representational symbol to represent to other people our concepts, ideas and feelings" (Hall, 2007, p. 1).

Similarly, Hall (2007) argues that language creates common cultures by "produc[ing] and exchang[ing] meaning between the members of a society [who] interpret [the world] roughly in the same way" (p. 2). This also contributes to conceptual maps, "which allow us to make sense of a world, but is ambiguous as to its meaning until we've made sense of it" (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 9). In my case, this process is important to consider as there are multiple ways television scenes can be interpreted through a viewer's own conceptual map.

Consequently, meaning contributes to representation as being constitutive; "the meaning of an event...does not exist [meaningfully] until it has been represented" (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 7). Hall explains that "representation is *constitutive* of the event [because] it enters into the constitution of the object that we are talking about. It is part of the object itself; it is constitutive of it. It is one of its conditions of existence, and therefore representation is not *outside* the event, not *after* the event, but *within* the event itself" (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 8).

In other words, meaning can only be given to an event once we understand it through our own conceptual maps. In Television Studies, meaning can be given to media representations

through a scholar's concept as they have created it using their own conceptual map to make sense of their world. I will now give examples of some cultural maps I use to make sense of instances that occur in my chosen television programmes.

First, neoliberalism is used to understand the reinforcement of class stratification, individual responsibility, and dismantling of the welfare state in modern society. Its creation can be dated back to the "end of the nineteenth century" in Charles Gide's work, but it does not relate to its present use (Thorsen, 2010, p. 197). Today, neoliberalism is argued to have been coined in 1935 as a "new political movement" of advocacy towards private property, which has grown in use into the 20th century (Mirowski & Plehwe, 2009, p. 12).

Presently, it can be used in Television Studies to examine the portrayals of lower-class characters on television. For instance, defined as "a conservative political agenda" to promote "economic deregulation" and individual responsibility (Rennels, 2015b, p. 46), Rennels (2015a) uses it to argue how shows reinforce personal responsibility through "stylistic choices" (p. 273) such as bringing in an etiquette teacher to "help bring less-educated, lower-income participants up to middle-class standards" (p. 276). She also explores how neoliberalism "frames the hardships working-class people face as individual failures" which renders them "undeserving of support" (Rennels, 2015a, p. 273).

It can also be defined economically as "the first instance a theory proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms" (Harvey, 2005, p. 11). Using this definition, Navarro (1998) employs it to analyse the economic and social consequences of neoliberal policies on "unemployment, social inequalities, poverty and family debt" (p. 607) which "creates enormous instability in the labour force, [and] worsens the living

conditions of certain populations” (p. 608). Navarro (1998) argues that these effects intensify globalization by “cheapening unskilled labour, or importing from low-wage counties (p. 644).

Neoliberalism is also intrinsically connected to its counterpart; liberalism. John Locke argues liberalism is used to empower individuals, and, at the time of his writings, would challenge the power of the monarchies (Didonna, 2014). Over the course of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, liberalism’s meaning has changed to something John Stuart Mill saw as a “political and economic system that maximized social progress” (Didonna, 2014, p. 1), which is relevant today as it seeks to empower and support individuals effected by inequalities.

Neoliberalism can also be connected to theories such as Marxism to understand the ways governments control and regulate the economy. Similarly, in conjunction with political economy, I use Marxism to examine the potential use of agenda-setting functions on television which may influence working-class portrayals to advance neoliberal ideologies.

Next, the juxtaposition between upper- and lower-classes to create the “other” can be used to analyse the power groups have over lower-classes. Historically, Georg Hegel (1998) conceptualised the “other” through his understanding of the “self” which is an encounter between two self-consciousnesses; you know oneself, when you recognize the differences in the “other” (Hegel, 1998). Edmund Husserl applied Hegel’s (2003) concept to discuss the relations between the “self” and what he calls the “alter ego”, and between the “self” and others (p. 117).

Over time, theorists have applied these understandings in many ways. For instance, Rennels (2015b) uses cultural “othering” to analyse the how reality television can marginalize the working-class through emphasised differences. She specifically explores how producers of *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* have power over minorities because they do not have their own

power to fight back (Rennels, 2015a). The cast is also “construed as being content with who they are” which authenticates this power dynamic (Rennels, 2015a, p. 280).

Through a colonial studies lens, Lois Weis (1995) analyses how “othering” is an “integral part of the identity formation of dominant whites” (p. 18). Defining the “other” as a “process which serves to mark those thought to be different from oneself,” Weis (1995) argues that non-westerners were described as the “colonial other” in Western discourse so they “could always be judged” by the “western white self” and are only understood when “relations of domination and subordination, historically and currently,” are taken into consideration (p. 18).

Interpreted similarly, Lünenborg and Fürsich, (2014) define it as the “unquestioned ‘us’” and a “dichotomizing discourse about ‘them’” (p. 961), while Michal Krumer-Nevo and Mirit Sidi (2012) see it as a “process of attaching moral codes of inferiority to difference” to discriminate “against individuals based on belonging to marginalized groups” (p. 300).

In terms of its connection to theory, like Canales (2000), I use it with intersectionality to connect “othering” with contributing attributes of marginalization such as class, race, and gender. I also use it with Marxism to illustrate the power the upper-classes have over the lower-classes through the reinforcement of differences.

Next, the middle-class gaze can be used to understand why certain aspects of classes are emphasised over others. Inspired by Laura Mulvey’s work, Lyle (2008) coined the term to analyse how the middle-class can maintain their own values while constructing the lower-class as being “morally wrong, not polite, having bad taste, and being suited for specific forms of labour” (p. 320). With elements connected to neoliberalism, Lyle (2008) defines it as a way to “understand [how] the media operationalises the middle-class which underpins the anxieties about the working-classes as being of lesser value” (p. 320).

Similarly, Eriksson (2015), the only other scholar to use this concept, also defines it as “a mode of production [that] makes fun of ordinary working-class people” (p. 21). Eriksson (2015) uses it to analyse the ways classes in power judge working-class people as they “are increasingly evaluated and delegitimized through a kind of middle-class gaze that judges them as repulsive or silly based on inappropriate style, consumer choices, and behaviours” (p. 20). Focusing on speech, editing techniques, and effects, Eriksson (2015) explores how they are used to construct the working-class in “a position of laughter, ridicule, and sometimes embarrassment” (p. 21).

This concept can, and has been, used in combination with feminism and neoliberalism. For instance, Lyle (2008) uses it with feminism to analyse the relationship with gender and social class, whereas Eriksson (2015) uses it with neoliberalism to study the changing representation of the working-class. I will use it to expose the ways characters’ behaviours are ridiculed and not deemed conforming when they do not follow dominant ideological standards.

Finally, inappropriate whiteness is a concept created by Rennels (2015b) to understand the dichotomy between what is considered ideal and non-conforming behaviour by the ruling class. She defines it as the portrayal of “white working-class families...as ignorant, uncivilized, uneducated, ridiculed and relegated to the margins when juxtaposed against...people from a higher class—their type of whiteness is idealized” (Rennels, 2015b, p. 31). Since its creation, no one else has used this concept, however, Rennels (2015a) suggests it can be used to analyse television regarding “how surveillance functions in the service of whiteness and class to authenticate a deviant form of whiteness” (p. 274).

When creating this term, Rennels (2015b) was inspired by Robyn Wiegman’s (1999) term counterwhiteness which is defined as a “disaffiliation from white supremacist practices” (p. 112) that “suggests someone who can easily claim a white physical identity can choose to

disconnect themselves from the privilege whiteness” (p. 48), but was modified to argue that marginalization authenticates class divisions and limits class mobility as the dominant ideology or status quo is preserved. For instance, it describes how displays of white supremacy, such as the Kul Klux Klan museum which signifies the “panoptic power of whiteness” can also be protested by whites, thus creating a “transformation from segregation to integration” (Wiegman, 1999, p. 119).

Also related to inappropriate whiteness is ideal whiteness, which Rennels (2015b) argues is used to claim superiority over the working-class by privileging people “for displaying dominant cultural standards inspired by neoliberalism” (p. 31). Similarly, Matthew Hughey (2012) uses the concept of ideal whiteness to analyse how “dominant understandings of citizenship, race, class, and civil rights can influence public opinion...by emphasising distinctions of proper whiteness” (p. 178). I will use both concepts in combination with Marxism and Cultural Studies to expose instances of working-class characters conforming to, or deviating from, ideological behaviours deemed as *appropriate* by the ruling class.

In sum, the conceptual maps above are examples of terms created by scholars to give meaning to certain representations and can serve as a means for myself, television viewers, and other scholars to make sense of what they are viewing.

I will now discuss Cultural Studies’ understanding of power and ideology and their attempt to fix meaning. As discussed, this lens regards meaning as ever changing, yet, meaning “depends on a certain [level] of fixing”; however, the goal of power and ideology is to fix “the image and a powerful definition of it to become naturalized so that is the only meaning it can possibly carry” (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 19). Hall argues that meaning can try to be fixed, however “it’s not going to be true [forever] and that tomorrow it is, in some way, going to make

a slightly different sense, and it is going to come out of the fixing and begin to loosen and fray” (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 19).

This became a topic of study in Cultural Studies since the 1960’s at the Birmingham School where they focus “their studies of ideology [and power], domination and resistance, and the politics of culture, towards analysing cultural artifacts, practices, and institutions within existing networks of power and of showing how culture both provided tools and forces of domination and resources for resistance and struggle” (Kellner, 2003, p. 36). I use this understanding of power and ideology while analysing the ways shows seemingly naturalize the oppression of women in working-class roles.

During this same period, “women began to revolt against what they considered oppressive practices of both contemporary patriarchal societies and their male comrades in the radical movements [to make] rise to a new theoretical discourse:” feminism (Kellner, 2003, p. 22). Once it became known that the two fields “shared focus on the analysis of forms of power and oppression” (Franklin, Lury, & Stacey, 1991, p. 171), this “enabled Cultural Studies scholars to examine new areas of social experience from different perspectives” (Lennox, 2005, p. 5), such as the “class and subcultures, [and] gender and sexuality” (Kellner, 2003, p. 52). Feminism’s influence on Cultural Studies now welcomes the analysis of power over “subordinate groups, races, genders, nations, and age groups” (Barker & Jane, 2016, p. 10).

Marking a shift in Cultural Studies as it allows for a “new area of exploration of social experiences though different perspectives”, feminism must be discussed, as well as intersectionality as it also unveils multiple forms of oppression (Lennox, 2005, p. 5).

Emerging from the feminist movement in the mid-1970’s and drawing from “key [feminist] texts in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century” (Carlson & Ray, 2011, p. 1), feminist theory

was developed in response to issues of gender inequality (Chodorow, 1989). The field has since shifted from “conceptualizing men and women as categories to questioning the content of those categories”, and from “universalizing to contextualizing women’s experiences” (p. 1) which questions themes such as “how institutions operate with normative gendered assumptions” and the effects cultures and politics have on shaping gender (Carlson & Ray, 2011, p. 1).

Defined in a broad and neutral way, bell hooks (2000) views feminism as “a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression” (p. viii). Kate Peirce (1990) takes into consideration the types of feminism and how “feminists themselves do not agree on a definition or the solution to the problems of women” by defining it as the “liberation of women to have the freedom to determine their social role, and to compete with men on terms that are equal” (p. 492). Considering this, I regard feminism as the unveiling of economic, political, social, and physical domination women face in society and on television.

In terms of contributions to the theory, theorist, activist, and, during the mid-1800’s, “England’s leading feminist”, John Stuart Mill (1869) took on issues of women’s suffrage and equality through his desire to empower women (Okin, 1972, p. xi). He fulfilled this desire by paving the way for women by presenting “the first mass women’s suffrage petition to the House of Commons on 7 June 1866” (Parliamentary Archives, n.d., p. 1).

Simone de Beauvoir also contributed to this theory through her analysis of women’s oppression in the 1900’s. Most notably, and argued to be a foundational text in the field, *The Second Sex* “challenged the construction of gender” and women as being the “other” (Scholz, 2008). Likewise, Borde and Malovany-Chevallier, Beauvoir’s (2010) translators, state that “women who now confidently assume that their autonomy is equal to that of their brothers owe a

measure of their freedom to Beauvoir” because of her investigation of the relationships between privileged men and the inessential woman (p. 8).

Feminism can also be used to analyse the role of women on television. For instance, Grabowski (2014) uses this lens to analyse the roles and behaviours of the mother figures in *Roseanne* and *The Middle* and their stance on feminist culture. In *Roseanne*, Roseanne is “set firmly in the feminist stance” through the different waves of feminism being taken into consideration while discussing her “right to be treated humanely” (Grabowski, 2014, p. 129). Grabowski (2014) also argues that *The Middle* seems to be gender equal, however, through this lens, it uncovers female characters holding little power.

Similarly, Lee and Moscovitz (2013) analyse *The Real Housewives of New York City* (*RHW-NYC*) regarding the casts post-feminist portrayal. Rather than focusing on how the cast empowered women, this lens reveals “anti-feminist tropes” (p. 79) such as neglecting home responsibilities for their social lives by having a “losing weight, looking youthful, and going out” mentality (Lee and Moscovitz, 2013, p. 72).

I use feminism as an underlying theory to understand the power and gender relations between the main female characters and those in different classes. When analysing each episode, I look at how female characters behave, their treatment, and how they are being framed, which may contribute to their domination or empowerment.

In sum, feminism continues to expand its scope as the field’s pioneers brought forth impactful arguments that remain relevant today and contribute to other fields of study. I use this lens to reveal and examine potential instances of oppression and marginalization against women.

Recognizing that some feminist and Cultural Studies scholars draw their research from analysing the marginalization of certain classes, it must be recognized that compounding forms

of oppression and layers of identity can present themselves when analysing these shows.

Considering this, intersectionality, which is argued to have been popularized through “activism about the social relations of power,” must be discussed (Berger and Guidroz, 2009, p. 7).

Sometimes considering just race, gender, and class, some scholars have defined this lens in a way that may overlook other forms of oppression. In other words, Choo and Ferree (2010) argue that the theory’s purpose is to give a voice to the oppressed as some experience multiple forms of subordination, but some definitions give “institutional primacy to one or more social inequalities” (p. 5). Consequently, Olena Hankivsky (2014) defines it by including many forms of oppression: “an understanding of human beings as shaped by the interaction of different social locations such as race/ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, disability/ability, [and] religion [which] occur within a context of connected systems of power and forms privilege and oppression from colonialism, racism, homophobia, ableism and patriarchy are created” (p. 2).

Intersectionality’s history is also a highly contested topic as scholars argue about its creation. The first perspective is that the theory is the “brainchild of feminism” in the 1980’s (Bilge, 2013, p. 412), while others argue that it has a deeper history of being an “analytical and political tool [used] for fostering a radical social justice agenda” (p. 407).

Argued to have been a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, Crenshaw recognizes it to have “central ideas rooted in the past” (Hankivsky, 2014, p. 2) but she reintroduced it to analyse the “multidimensionality of Black women’s experiences” as the justice system does not consider the multiple forms of discrimination that can take place (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 139). By analysing multiple discrimination-based lawsuits, she argues that a “single-axis framework” limits the potential ways that oppression can manifest itself (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 140). Albeit Crenshaw did not coin the term, she did contribute to it by introducing new ways to use the lens.

Collins and Bilge (2016) argue that intersectionality is a form of critical inquiry established well before the 1990's which "draws from Pierre Bourdieu's notion of fields of power" (p. 206). Nonetheless, Collins and Bilge (2016) contribute by researching its contested history, controversies, and use "across many disciplinary boundaries" (p. 207). For instance, they use it to analyse the 2014 FIFA World Cup protest's "axis of social division" which "build on each other and work together" to create forms of oppression (Collins & Bilge, 2016, p. 4).

Intersectionality can also analyse forms of oppression through characters on television. For instance, Lünenborg and Fürsich (2014) use it to "interrogate the nexus of gender, race, and class at the level of representation, media production, and consumption" when analysing German migrant women (p. 959). For them, it provides a deeper explanation concerning socio-cultural constructs, and helps to assess different dimensions of identity and inequality in the media. Similarly, Lee and Moscovitz (2013) use the lens to further examine "normative conceptions of class and gender" on *RHW-NYC* (p. 65) by analysing the relationship between gender, class, sexual orientation, and nationality when discussing the upper- and lower-classes.

I use intersectionality in a similar way to Lünenborg and Fürsich (2014), and in combination with Cultural Studies, to expose and understand compounding forms of oppression represented by the characters to give them complex identities and depictions.

Even though its history may be contested, intersectionality argues that there are multiple, compounding forms of oppression that need to be considered when people are marginalized. Used in fields such as Television Studies, this lens looks at the ways characters represent various forms of domination, which is similar to my use of the theory.

To summarize, the above literature review began with the introduction of the term representation, which is inherently connected with my analysis of working-class representations on the aforementioned television shows. Being used in combination with various lenses, I focused on its connection to Marxism and its view regarding representation. In this thesis, I use Marxism to examine class divisions and how the characters undermined, or conformed to, dominant ideologies and power structures.

Furthermore, breaking into many theories that emphasize different aspects of the original, I focused on two branches. First, was the Frankfurt School's interpretation of media and representation, specifically looking at the ways Media and Television Studies scholars analyse representations by focusing on the dichotomy between positive and negative representations. Next, I looked at Cultural Studies' interpretation of media by introducing the field, tools that scholars use to analyse media and representation, and their understanding of meaning. I focused on certain aspects of this lens such as its understanding of meaning, as well as Stuart Hall's understanding of conceptual maps, such as neoliberalism, the "other", middle-class gaze, and inappropriate whiteness to explain instances that occurred within the scenes.

I then looked at political economy's ability to analyse representations as not being ideologically neutral which I use as a background lens to uncover ways messages could change class perceptions. Next, I looked at power and ideology's attempt to oppress meaning which welcomed me to discuss feminist's influence on Cultural Studies and their study of marginalized women. I used theory as a background lens to understand power and gender relations through characters behaviour depictions, treatment, and framing. I concluded this review by discussing intersectionality and used this lens to not only expose compounding forms of oppression and empowerment, but to also expose characters many layers which creates their identities.

## **Research Questions**

The research that I conduct further analyses representations of working-class characters as found in *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and *Shameless*. The representations of the working-class will be studied through the following research questions:

- 1) What are the lower-socio-economic elements that are represented through *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and *Shameless*?
- 2) How do these elements contribute to the reinforcement of “otherness” and the articulation of dominant, hegemonic ideologies of the ruling class?

## **Research Objectives**

*General Objectives:*

- To provide a detailed analysis and understand the ways in which the working-class are represented in *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and *Shameless*; and

*Specific Objectives:*

- Specifically, analyse how dominant, hegemonic ideologies are being used to represent the working-class on these three television shows; and
- To document the ways in which these characters’ body language, attire, attitude, language, interaction with other characters, and class comparisons represent normative behaviours.

## **Rationalization of Research**

In recent years, I have noticed an increased number of television shows portraying the working-class; sometimes in positive ways, but in most cases, in harmful ways which may aid in maintaining dominant ideologies. As Hall notes, this is particularly true as mass media attempts to fix ideologies to subaltern, social class, similar to the environment in which I was raised.

Indeed, I come from a working, lower middle-class family that struggled on the poverty line, so I understand what it is like not to have the same opportunities as others. These inequalities and judgements that affect those who have fewer resources, gives me a different perspective on society and attributes greatly to the interest I have regarding this topic.

### **Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology**

This chapter outlines the approaches I take to analyse my chosen television shows.

#### **Research Approach**

Taking into consideration my research questions, I use a mixed methods research design to code and deeply analyse representations of working-class characters on my chosen television shows. However, I must first discuss qualitative and quantitative research methods as they have historically contributed to the creation of a mixed methods approach.

The qualitative approach is argued to have been “first used by anthropologists and sociologists as a method of inquiry in the early decades of the twentieth century, although it existed in a non-structured form much earlier” (Holloway & Wheeler, 2004, p. 8). For instance, “medieval philosophers distinguished *qualia* from *quanta*” and modern philosophers “from the seventeenth century, argued that there [were] different kinds of qualities: primary qualities...thought to be independent of observers [and]...secondary qualities, [which] produced effects in observers” (Brinkmann, Jacobsen & Kristiansen, 2014, p. 3).

Debated for its legitimacy up until the 1960’s, some argue that “‘hard’ and quantifying approaches assert themselves against ‘soft’ and qualitative descriptive strategies” (Flick, 2009, p. 17) which were seen as “relatively unsystematic” and “unscientific” (Holloway & Wheeler, 2004, p. 8). Petitioning against this mentality, institutions such as the Chicago School of Sociology, “functioned as a pioneer in promoting a distinctly qualitative mentality,” (p. 15) “keen to get out and study social life directly” and “create [a] conceptual apparatuses and theoretical ideas based on empirical material” (Brinkmann et al., 2014, p. 14).

Since then, it has been used in a variety of disciplines. For instance, in Television and Media Studies, Lee and Woscowitz (2013) use this approach to visually analyse “normative

conceptions of class and gender [on *RHW-NYC*] to produce an archetypal, trans-historical villain typified by figures...like Cruella Deville” through a mixture of open-ended, exploratory, and in-depth techniques (p. 65). Their research questions guide them to employ a qualitative approach to gather the information they sought out. Likewise, I am asking open-ended research questions that require detailed responses which forces me to use certain aspects of a qualitative approach.

In terms of a quantitative approach, some argue that it “was popularized in the 1950’s by social, political and economic scholars [who] examined social phenomenon and found that they needed to develop technical skills” of analysis (Anderson, 2007, p. 246). Like qualitative research, quantitative studies were “evident prior to the 1950’s, particularly in the fields of economics and social history” (p. 246) such as in the 1890’s when “the United States required American historians to consider quantitative issues in their study of the economy and population” (Anderson, 2007, p. 247). Its popularity grew through the increased “capacity for machine tabulation of numerical records and mainframe computing” (Anderson, 2007, p. 247).

Quantitative approach is also used across countless disciplines. For instance, in Television Studies, Ellis and Armstrong (1989) use it to “profile the nature of language use on television, test for the presence of the codes” (p. 161), and examine the “relationship between language and various social categories as typically portrayed on prime-time television” (p. 158). Over a one-month period, the pair code 37 linguistic patterns and 57 contextual locations which allows them to find correlations. Similar to my use, the pair are guided by their research questions and objectives which forces them to use aspects of this method.

Bringing together the qualitative and quantitative methods has helped formulate a mixed methods approach which “began as a discrete methodology during the 1980’s” but has been discussed “as a research methodology since the 1950’s” (Kettles, Creswell, & Zhang, 2011, p.

536). Indeed, there have been “specific forms of mixed methodology developed”, but there is no consensus by scholars as to the ‘right’ way it should be used as it “depends on the situation in which it will address the problem [and] when one approach is inadequate by itself” (Kettles et al., 2011, p. 538). Due to the “many different definitions [and explanations] of [this approach], it is essential that researchers consider how they will combine methods” (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2015, p. 136).

Used in Media Studies, it is seen to be “a relatively new field of study” (Snelson, 2016, p. 3) which Nyirő (2012) uses to analyse “consumer and user acceptance, and usage of new media technologies and innovations to identify the factors determining the acceptance thereof” (p. 784). As the “research design is chiefly determined by the aim of the research questions” (p. 784), Nyirő (2012) uses a mixed methods approach by employing focus groups and online questionnaires to explore her research objectives.

Similarly, my research questions require me to construct my analysis through the utilization of a mixed methods approach because I use aspects of qualitative and quantitative approaches. From the qualitative approach, I use open-ended, exploratory research questions which require detailed responses, while coding tools and categorical codes are used to organize and deconstruct representations of the working-class which comes from a qualitative approach.

### **Research Design**

With my research being concerned with analysing a specific social phenomenon, I use phenomenology as my research design to expose socially constructed, ‘real’ depictions of working-class characters. Largely developed by Edmund Husserl, and contributed by hermeneutic scholars, philosophers, and sociologists “in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (Holloway & Wheeler, 2004, p. 8), this approach is usually employed to identify, and

focus on, specific social phenomenon. Indeed, “phenomenology is concerned, [among many other things,] with the study of experiences from the perspective of an individual”; it exposes the taken-for-granted norms and challenges “structural and normative assumptions” that may have been naturalized in society (Lester, 1999, p. 1). Nonetheless, phenomenology has “branched and proliferated in many directions” (Brinkmann et al., 2014, p. 12) which means “that today, it means different things to different people” (Audi, 2015, p. 664).

Focusing on Television Studies texts, phenomenology is used by scholars such as Jenny Nelson (1990) to “trace how the phenomenon of [television] reruns expose and transform tacit assumptions concerning the structure and function of televisual discourse” (p. 86). She also states that “media scholars are in a unique position to take advantage of the procedures that phenomenology offers, both as a philosophy and a research method” to “describe, thematize, and interpret the meaning of largely-taken-for-granted” phenomena that may be overlooked (p. 80).

I use phenomenology as a background lens to expose individualized and subjective insights regarding the representation of working-class characters on television as being presented as a ‘real’ or ‘true’ phenomenon. It allows me to initially expose the phenomenon which will then be further deconstructed using theories, concepts, and categorical codes.

## **Research Methods**

I analyse the television shows through a visual and textual analysis which are emphasised aspects of a discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003). Argued to have been popularised in the 1970’s by theorists such as Foucault, discourse analysis is a general term that encompasses “many different approaches to the study of language” (Gee, 2014, p. 8) and is used “to gain deep[er] explanations of how language works and why it works that way” (p. 9). Although discourse analysis is relatively young, historically, “it derives indirectly from hermeneutics,

semiotics, philosophy and literary studies – disciplines stretching back hundreds of years” (Kaplan & Grabe, 2002, p. 192).

As “there are many different approaches to [a] discourse analysis [which] fit different issues and questions, none of them are uniquely ‘right’” (Gee, 2014, p. 11). For instance, some versions “look at only the ‘content’ of language, themes or issues being discussed” (Gee, 2014, p. 8) while others use it “to show systematic relationships between socio-cultural practices and texts, including linguistic, spoken and written languages, visual images, and sound effects” (Ottoosson & Cheng, 2012, p. 11).

In Television Studies, scholars Ottoosson and Cheng (2012) use it to analyse the “different types of gender representations and whether the characters in *Sex and the City* challenge patriarchal privilege” (p. 1) by “interpreting relevant scenes and dialogue that show gender discourse” (p. 23). They conclude that “women are represented as being independent, [but] do not challenge the current gender power structure” (Ottoosson & Cheng, 2012, p. 35).

Used by a variety of disciplines in Social Sciences and Humanities, aspects of discourse analysis are emphasized to create a visual analysis which “helps ‘interrogate’ a visual text by questioning: who is playing the active roles of doing and/or looking and who the passive roles of being acted upon and/or being looked at in visual texts with certain kinds of participants” (Van Leeuwen, & Jewitt, 2001, p. 12). Explained by Creswell (2003), a visual analysis also focuses on information and descriptions taken in the form of photographs or videos. Similarly, Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001) view it as a method that analyses “the ‘syntax’ of images as a source of representational meaning” (p. 10) through description, “point of view, image composition, narrative, and distance between characters” (p. 27).

Specifically in Television Studies, a visual analysis can deconstruct and analyse sequences, scenes, shots, and frames in television shows. For instance, Lyle (2008) uses it to examine camera movement, lighting, composition, and camera transitions in *Wife Swap* as she argues they emphasize class differences by representing each family differently. Similarly, Grabowski (2014) visually analyses 10 episodes from *Roseanne* and 17 episodes from *The Middle* to examine the different ways working-class characters were portrayed in similar situations, reacting to figures of authority, positive thinking, parenting, and workplace situations.

Next, a textual analysis, or content analysis, is “a systematic methodology of gathering, analysing, and grouping descriptive information available into interpretable concepts for various support applications” (Lai & To, 2015, p. 140). In terms of its specific application in Media and Television Studies, textual analysis can analyse “the form and substance of texts [and visuals in media to expose] underlying meanings and ideas” (Holsti, 1969, p. 1).

It can also analyse television representations shown inside and outside frames by “systematically evaluating the information and categorizing it” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 12). For instance, Haslop (2016) uses it to analyse and compare the differences between the original *Doctor Who* series and the new series with regards to class representation. He concludes that the differences were mainly regarding British society, such as the state of cultural, social, and economic capital which were unveiled, in part, because texts were used to interpret the deeper meanings in the episodes, both on and off the screen.

Some Television and Media Studies scholars use a combination of the two methods to further explore their research questions. For instance, Lünenborg and Fürsich (2014) use a visual and textual analysis to deconstruct the representations of migrant women on German television. First, they visually analyse “54 television shows that aired in March 2010” (p. 973), categorise

how migrant women were shown, and “focus on the ideological assumptions made” towards them (Lünenborg, & Fürsich, 2014, p. 5). Focusing on *Germany’s Next Top Model (GNTM)*, the pair use a “textual analysis to flesh out the specific discursive strategies used” (p. 964) and brought in “previous research on typical roles of migrants in the media” to understand the deeper representational meanings (p. 963).

Inspired by the ways Lünenborg and Fürsich (2014) use a visual analysis to “examine how often migrant women were visible, the context they were shown in, and what roles they took on or were attributed to” (p. 962), I use it to describe the denotive elements of each scene; the scene’s setting, location of the characters, and what has been said. The pair also use categories to code social phenomenon such as headscarves, “art, media, and culture, crime, and politics” (p. 963) in *GNTM*, which also inspired me to create categorical codes to explore; characters’ body language, attire, attitude, language, interaction with others, and class comparisons. To remain consistent and present valid claims, they will be used to analyse each episode.

My final inspiration came from the ways Lünenborg and Fürsich (2014) use a textual analysis to “analyse the ideological connotations of representations...to flesh out the specific discursive strategies” (p. 964). I use this method to further analyse the deeper articulated and connotative meanings presented in each scene. In other words, as phenomenology aids in discovering the initial phenomenon, a textual analysis will extract articulated meaning from these scenes, on and off frame, and deconstruct their deeper meanings by connecting them to any of the six categorized codes, concepts, and theories.

In sum, when used together, a visual and textual analysis provides a deeper analysis behind a character’s representational meaning. Inspired by Lünenborg and Fürsich (2014), I am

using a visual analysis to describe the scene's denotive meaning, while a textual analysis will be used to connotatively analyse and deconstruct representations of working-class characters.

### **Research Tools**

In mixed method designs, some scholars use coding software to “identify themes or topics from the [information] compiled [to] help maximise efficiency and speed up the process of grouping [information] according to categories and coded themes” (Wong, 2008, p. 1). In Media and Television Studies some scholars refer to “coding [as] a range of audio-visual systems which have the capacity to construct and organise meaning in media” (Casey, et al., 2008, p. 38). For instance, Casey et al. (2008) uses coding to document and organize ways animated sitcoms use “simplistic humour, slapstick gags, and intertextual references to popular culture” (p. 21).

Some scholars also use computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (*CAQDAS*), such as *ATLAS.ti*, *NVivo*, and *QDA Miner Lite*, to help in the analytical process (Bleck, Entzminger, Mayer, & Thompson, 2014). These programs can be found online and share similar coding abilities, but some can be expensive and feature applications that are unfamiliar and unique (Bleck et al., 2014). As I am quite familiar with *Microsoft Excel*, I use it to document the six categorical codes in an organized and comprehensible way so the information can be further analysed (see Appendix B). The only caveat is that I will not be able to detail each classification in each cell as it can only hold a small amount of text. I will overcome this challenge by only including a summary of the occurrences and save the detailed version for later in this thesis.

As I am conducting a comparative analysis, I focus on the discourse and portrayal of working-class characters in each show which includes the similar and different ways they represent my chosen, and specific, categorical codes. Therefore, these television shows were chosen as they show working-class, female characters in different ways through a variety of

television genres. With that being said, I also created a methodological system to help me choose one episode from *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and *Shameless* to reduce the bias because I have already chosen these shows due to their large viewership and that they are known to concern themselves with the working-class.

To mitigate any further bias that could result from handpicking the episodes, I use a program as my methodological model of choosing each episode. Found on the website [www.randomizer.org](http://www.randomizer.org), *Research Randomizer* is a free service created by Geoffrey Urbaniak and Scott Plous (2013), to generate random number sets through the “use of a complex algorithm” that is said to be perfect for “students, teachers, and researchers” (p.1). Used more than 2.1 billion times and compared to other randomizing programs, this seemed to be the most credible as the website offers facts about the program, its awards, and the developers contact information.

Working with number sets, each episode is changed to a number. For instance, Episode 1, Season 1 of *Shameless* is given the number 1, while Episode 1, Season 2 is the number 13 as Season 1 only has 12 episodes. Using this process, each episode has an overall number and only episodes airing before November 20, 2016 are taken into consideration and previewed regarding their relevance; they must concern themselves with the financial struggles of working-class characters, and center around the idea of food or food struggles. If the episode is not appropriate, a new one will be chosen (see Appendix C).

As indicated by the *Research Randomizer*, I will analyse the following episodes: Season 4, Episode, 1 titled “*3 Generations & 1 Pork Rind*” from *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, Season 2, Episode 11, titled “*Just Like the Pilgrims Intended*” from *Shameless*, and Season 1, Episode 13, titled “*And the Secret Ingredient*” from *2 Broke Girls*. The above episodes have been screened and are deemed appropriate as they concern themselves with my research questions.

#### **Chapter 4: Analysis and Discussion**

In this section, I focus on analysing scenes and moments that pertain to my research questions. Outlined in Chapter 3, I construct this analysis by visually analysing each scene which includes describing the environment and connection to categorical codes. I then textually analyse these representations by utilizing concepts to explain the connotative meanings that appear.

I begin my analysis with *2 Broke Girls* which is a sitcom that chronicles the lives of two Brooklyn diner waitresses, Caroline Channing and Max Black. The show is comprised of a series of narratives that locates the character of a once rich women, Caroline, within the working-class sphere. Max, the other main character, came from a rough upbringing in a poor, working-class family. The pair quickly form a friendship and become roommates; however, they must live paycheque to paycheque while trying to live out their dream of opening their own cupcake shop. The first scene I analyse focuses on Caroline having to deal with a disgruntled customer. Max tries to back her up, but Caroline wishes to deal with the situation on her own. The second scene concerns itself with an interaction between Caroline and Max regarding Caroline's understanding of coupons, and coming to terms with her social class.

Next, I analyse *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, a spin-off of *Toddlers & Tiaras*,<sup>2</sup> which is a reality television show that documents a family's 'crazy' and offensive acts throughout their rural town of McIntyre, Georgia (Cavalcante, 2014). Responding to their nicknames, the cast includes: pageant star Alana "Honey Boo Boo" Thompson, her overweight mother June "Mama June" Shannon, her father Mike "Sugar Bear" Thompson, and sisters, Lauryn "Pumpkin"

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<sup>2</sup> *Toddlers & Tiaras*, which also aired on TLC, was a reality television series that provided "viewers a glimpse into the bizarre and shocking realities of pageant life" by documenting the "dysfunction that ensues when mothers seek to validate their daughters' beauty, thereby exposing the oddities attendant to child pageant stardom" (Lieberman, 2009, p. 747).

Shannon, Jessica “Chubbs” Shannon, and Anna “Chickadee” Shannon (Cavalcante, 2014). The first scene shows Honey Boo Boo, Chubbs, and Pumpkin in the family’s kitchen making fudge, specifically armpit and butt crack fudge. The second scene shows Mama June attempting to re-enter the workforce by helping her sister, Doe-Doe, at a bakery.

Finally, I analyse *Shameless*, a drama centered around the exploits of a working-class, Chicago family: The Gallagher’s. The show focuses on the eldest daughter, Fiona, who tries to hold her family together as her father, Frank, and mother, Monica, do not act like parental role models for their children. The series also follows the other Gallagher children: Philip “Lip”, a very intelligent student; Ian, who suffers from bipolar disorder and depression; and Debbie, Carl, and Liam who are progressively becoming more rebellious. (Rochlin, 2011). I first analyse a scene that focuses on Fiona, Debbie, and Carl arguing about how they need to pawn electronics to afford food. The final scene focuses on Debbie and Carl taking down a pool in their backyard while exploring reasons why Carl cannot get himself a gun.

The above scenes were chosen through the guidance of my research questions and that they center around similar narratives. It is important to note that at least one scene from each series has its focus on the kitchen or the notion of food which means I will also look at the representation of working-class poverty in addition to social class.

## **2 *Broke Girls* Scene #1**

The first scene in *2 Broke Girls* (00:00-00:57) creates and maintains the working-class environment through the ways each character represents the categorical codes. The scene opens in the Williamsburg Diner, an old, traditional looking diner that has dark brown wood paneling on the walls and dark counters. There are tables and booths scattered around the diner, some of which have silver duct tape on them which serves to show how old the establishment is.

Caroline and Max, the waitresses and main characters, are both wearing the same uniform; a mustard yellow dress with red piping that falls just above the knee. Caroline, a blonde woman, has the dress zipped up all the way, while Max, a dark-haired woman, has the dress zipped down with her hair swept behind her so nothing is blocking her cleavage (see Appendix D). Through a feminist lens, specifically Lyle's (2009) notion of the middle-class gaze, a term used to "understand the ways media operationalise middle-class habitus...which is underpinned by an anxiety about the working-classes as being of lesser value" and to "shore up the upper- and middle-classes' own identities as of greater value" (p. 320), can be used to analyse the pair's attire as it is an excellent meaning making object.

For instance, Caroline, a woman who grew up wealthy before losing it all, wears the same uniform as Max but differently. She embellishes it to, perhaps, make herself look more fashionable. With her uniform zipped as high as it can go, she adorns her chest with a large pearl necklace, a belt, and heels (see Appendix D). On the other hand, Max has her uniform zipped down enough so her cleavage is showing, has her hair swept behind her so nothing is blocking her chest, and little jewellery. Max's sexuality is emphasised over any other quality as her chest occupies the center of the frame to show her large bust and deep cleavage (see Appendix E).

When compared, the pair are not being represented in the same way. Through Max's attire, it seems like her characterization is being exploited for her sexuality to gain more attention, or an expression of self-love. Caroline's character may have been taught the "appropriate" ways to conduct herself in society that aligns with the dominant ideology, which could be why her attire is modest and embellished with accessories. As their differences are so stark, connotative meanings can be suspected and perhaps understood as going along with the dominant ideological understandings of the working- and upper-classes.

Opening with a medium-long shot, Caroline places an order she receives by hanging a piece of paper to a metal rod: **“One steak sandwich and a cheeseburger with Muenster Cheese.”** Caroline turns away from the kitchen, smiling. Then Max says: **“We’re out of Munster,”** which causes Caroline’s smile falls to off her face: **“Oh, since when?”** Max then sarcastically responds: **“Well, let’s see, the diner opened in ’82, so, ’82.”**

Through a medium-long shot, Caroline walks back over to the customer with a smile: **“Hi, sorry but we’re out of Munster.”** The male customer, wearing a plaid shirt with a black sweater over it, a hat, and long hair, replies angrily: **“Seriously, dude? I wanted Munster.”** Caroline quickly responds: **“Sorry, we have Cheddar, Swiss or America.”** During this interaction, Caroline is very apologetic and professional to the customer. She is doing everything she can to find an alternative solution to keep him happy which is noted through her use of complete sentences, in favour of slang or a rude attitude.

Having been studied by scholars such as Plato, Aristotle and a myriad of others, there is a significant body of evidence demonstrating how “signs are used to convey meaning about objects [based on] sharing the same language” (McQuail, 2010, p. 346), or, in the case of Hall, shared cultural maps to produce meaning (Hall & Jhally, 1997). Non-verbal communication, such as body language, also contributes to the production of meaning as it can “often add to or extend verbal communication” (McQuail, 2010, p. 565).

For instance, even though Caroline is placed in a situation where she must deal with a disgruntled customer, her hand gestures and facial expressions, such as smiling, contribute to her overall positive and apologetic attitude. She gives him all the options that are available, all while smiling. Her actions, tone of voice, and “happy to help” displays authentic what can be

understood as “ideal whiteness – a whiteness that conforms to dominant cultural standards... such as wealth, rationality, personal responsibility, and self-control” (Rennels, 2015b, 277).

Analysing Caroline’s character through ideal whiteness, her behaviours and femininity can be understood as conforming to the dominant ideologies because she is expressing how “rationality, self-control, [and being in control of a situation] are standards the middle- to upper-class are presented as naturally possessing” (Rennels, 2015b, p. 282). Moving forward, the customer becomes more irritated by saying: **“I hate Cheddar and Swiss blows.”** Her rationality and control are seemingly authenticated as she continues to give the customer different choices to calm him down and make him happy: **“Well... then American?”**

Another aspect of ideal whiteness is illustrated through Caroline’s willingness to please the male customer, even if it means being yelled at. Even though the customer responds by loudly saying: **“American cheese? What am in, at grade school?”**, Caroline still stands in front of him smiling. These instances may be understood as the aspect of ideal whiteness known as “ideal white femininity” which, as explained by Rennels (2015a), is the subordination of females “to men...to avoid ridicule from middle-class observers” (p. 49). One can see this subordination through Caroline’s polite manner and eagerness to please the male customer. Through this ideology, she is also conforming to the dominant hegemonic ideologies of ideal whiteness that have been continuously represented and normalized in society and on television.

As the customer barks back at Caroline, Max comes up behind him and says: **“Yeah, go to the principal’s office. I can’t have another idiot up my ass right now. It’s at capacity!”** She is chewing gum with her mouth open and carrying a note pad and pencil while she is speaking. This can be understood as rude behaviour through her comments, calling the customer

names, swearing, and pointing her pencil at him. Max is also displaying the same attitude to the customer as she did to Caroline earlier in the scene.

Max's characterization can be interpreted as exemplifying inappropriate whiteness through her inability to conform to the dominant 'idealized' waitress. This dichotomy is interpreted when the two characters are opposed to each other; Caroline, who is shown as polite and professional, while Max is not conforming, shown chewing gum with her open-mouth which is viewed as unprofessional and uncivilized.

Max's characterization can also be viewed as an ideological attempt to authenticate the representation of the working-class, or even a representation of resistance against the dominant ideology. Viewing the pair's characterization, one can interpret the compounding forms of oppression towards the working-class through verbal and non-verbal behaviours. These manifestations connect to intersectionality which looks at the "axis of social division" including race, gender, and class (Collins & Bilge, 2016, p. 4). In this case, the multiple forms of oppression can be legitimated because the main characters are women who ascribe to the working-class and, in Max's case, use sexuality to garner more attention from customers.

Denotatively speaking, it seems like there is only one form of oppression plaguing Max: gender. However, when looking deeper, there are compounding forms that include notions of gender, class, and sexuality. Through this intersection of marginalizing attributes, viewers can connect these working-class women to a larger ideological system by assuming they all will act similarly on television and in real-life. Furthermore, it can be concluded that through this lens, Max is a multifaceted character whose identity is complexified through the above.

Similar non-conforming behaviours characterized by Max includes her motion to the customer with her pencil. This seemingly simple motion may be understood as her not caring

about his order or ability to get the right cheese, but it becomes more complex as she calls him an “idiot.” The customer acknowledges her unorthodox behaviour by turning his face from Max to somewhere off in the distance, eyes becoming wide with shock which may be understood as her resistance “to dominant cultural standards” (Rennals, 2015a, p. 275) (see Appendix F). This also exemplifies Hall’s understanding of articulation by bringing together the ideological elements of language and the non-verbal behaviour of pointing a pencil, which can produce meaning separately, but together, can create a unique interpretation. Together, Max’s behaviour is understood as inappropriate by the customer, evident through his own non-verbal body language.

Caroline speaks to Max in a stern voice: **“Max, I got this. Would you like to see the menu again?”** which causes her to walk off screen. By telling Max *“I got this”*, this situation can be understood as Caroline having the situation under control; exemplifying traits of ideal whiteness. Placing a menu in front of the customer, clearly irritated, he grabs it and angrily says: **“This is crap, okay, I wanted Munster.”** Caroline also becomes irritated and snaps, saying: **“Well, I wanted to be running a Fortune 500 company instead of waiting on a toxic man-child like yourself. But, we can’t always get what we want. So, order something else, put it in your pie hole and get on with your damn life.”**

Caroline’s reactions can also be understood through her intersectional position which includes her past and current situation; she is part of the working-class but was from the upper-class. Gesualdo (2016) argues that the “intersectional framework [can] create both opportunity and oppression [as] ...structures of race, class, and gender create disadvantages for women, they provide unacknowledged benefits for those who are at the top of these hierarchies” (p. 49). Through this unique position, she experiences an interesting intersectional perspective of the world; once knowing opportunity to facing forms of gendered and class oppression.

Through Caroline's complex intersectional position, her reaction towards the customer can also be understood as an expression of agency. By going against the construction of ideal whiteness, which can be connected to her old, upper-class life, Caroline is expressing Bilge's (2010) understanding of agency "which attempts to grasp individuals' capacities to act independently of structural constraints, or against them" (p. 12). She is using her individual agency not only by telling Max she has the situation under control, but by snapping at the customer which may be a form of resistance against the socially constructed status quo by upper-class individuals (Bilge, 2010, p. 12; Rennels, 2015a). Caroline's characterization seems to be tapping in to her unique class understanding which makes her representation so multifaceted.

Similarly, Max's intersectionality also contributes to her character's complex identity because she is a woman brought up in poverty by her working-class, divorced parents. At the end of the scene, Max congratulates Caroline for finding her agency, something Max seems to already have found, by stating: "**Welcome to Waitress. We've been expecting you.**" Caroline seems to break from the dominant ideology that was guiding her actions at the beginning of the scene by welcoming and uncovering more of her complex, intersectional attributes.

Overall, it is important to deconstruct the deeper meanings of the pair's characterization as it reveals levels of agency and complexity. Stated by Hall (1998): "since ordinary people are not cultural dopes, they are perfectly capable of recognizing the ways the realities of...life [is] reorganized, reconstructed, and reshaped by the way they are represented" (p. 447); even though the pair are merely a construction of reality, they are expressing agency over dominant ideologies by going against what would be "correct" behaviour in the scene.

This scene also seems to naturalize behaviours and attitudes associated with lower-classes. However, without talking to the show's producers myself, which goes beyond the scope

of this thesis, we cannot know for sure the connotative messages that the producers have sought to deliver. We can, however, speculate using theoretical lenses. For instance, had we just looked at this scene through one lens, such as political economy, my analysis would be limited and resemble a Frankfurt School analysis by looking at representations as being collective understandings. Through a combination of lenses, it seems like the producers are both attempting to fix images to the working-class and they also show them as being non-conforming agents.

### ***2 Broke Girls Scene #2***

The next scene (07:02-08:34) starts with a medium long shot of Max and Caroline in a small grocery store checkout. Caroline is wearing a jacket over her work uniform, with a large scarf covering her chest, and heels. Unlike the last scene, Max also has a jacket on with a scarf underneath it to cover her chest. Done at work, it can be understood Max does not need to exploit her sexuality and gender to get attention from patrons. The cashier, a black woman with a Caribbean accent, is wearing a blue shirt covered by a red vest and large gold earrings (see Appendix G). Checking out, the pair are putting their groceries in brown paper bags when Caroline comments: **“Should there be someone to do this for us?”**

By saying this with a confused look on her face, Caroline seems to be comparing her previous grocery shopping experience as an upper-class person to the working-class experience. This can be interpreted as an example of the juxtaposition between classes to create the “other” by emphasising the differences in experiences; Caroline’s character assuming all grocery stores have someone to bag their groceries which socially constructs what an upper-class grocery shopping experience is like. By “othering” Max, the cashier, and the other patrons in the store, Caroline is marginalizing their experiences through her assumptions and comparisons.

Like the previous scene, Max responds with a sarcastic remark: **“Oh, he’s probably in the aisle cleaning up after the candy gang.”** At a medium shot, the cashier states: **“All right now, your total is \$70.49.”** She finishes her sentence by giving the pair attitude by pursing her lips and tilting her head which is like the rude behaviours displayed by Max in the previous scene. Through their similar displays in attitude to create frames of reference and that they occupy the same social strata, connections can be made regarding the ways working-class people conduct themselves at work.

Caroline’s eyes widen in shock, eyebrows raise, and mouth open: **“Wow, that seems like a lot.”** Standing next to her, Max goes into her pocket and pulls out a stack of crumpled coupons, saying to Caroline: **“Here, give her the coupons.”** Caroline looks down at Max’s hand with a disgusted look on her face. She is so repulsed about the idea of using coupons that she physically moves away from Max’s outstretched hand while stating: **“The coupons?”** Caroline’s first reaction to coupons becomes compounded with her many other reactions which, together, have the potential to produce meanings regarding the ideological understanding surrounding couponing and some of the working-classes dependency on the practice.

Annoyed, perhaps at Caroline for not taking the coupons from her hand and her response, Max replies: **“Yeah, here.”** Caroline speaks slowly to Max, still with a disgusted and disturbed face: **“Max, you use coupons? I had no idea.”** A laugh track is used to instruct viewers to laugh and that this should be considered funny which, as Bore (2011) notes, “functions to ensure that the comedy feels like a ‘safe’ space where it is okay to laugh at people’s misfortunes or transgressions” (p. 24); not only can this be interpreted as reducing the importance of couponing by laughing at peoples struggles, but also at Caroline’s ignorance. Through “comedy’s historical roots in live entertainment, a laugh track functions to *suggest* a live performance and a collective

audience united in time and place [and] provides a sense of authenticity...to the performance” (Bore, 2011, p. 25) which permits laughter from the audience, even if it marginalizes or undermines the necessity of couponing for lower-class individuals.

Analysing this from a different perspective and drawing from Jackson’s (2013) analysis of framing, I would like to suggest that, at a micro level, framing is being used to influence how the audience connects with coupons by reinforcing their normative ideologies on the subject. If viewers already have a similar understanding of couponing being linked to lower-classes, as Caroline does, this interaction would simply reinforce and further naturalize those ideologies.

For instance, I will now look at two of the many ways this interaction’s framing can be interpreted. First, Caroline is shocked and disgusted that Max must use coupons to subsidise her groceries. Her intense reactions can be interpreted as lending themselves to a neoliberal mindset that focuses on an individual’s responsibility that should not warrant external help (Eriksson, 2015). This may also imply that the working-class are of lesser value and are not the “embodiment of proprietary”, if the coupons are used (Lyle, 2008, p. 320).

In a less deterministic way, Max’s characterization frames them as a normal way to offset the cost of groceries and fulfil her essential needs which seems to go against the dominant ideological position the show is trying to maintain thus far. In this instance, Max’s reactions to coupons reminds viewers that even though they are hard-working women, as they are seen in multiple scenes at work, the pair still need to use coupons so they can afford groceries.

Going back to the framing of Caroline’s position, it is further reinforced in Max’s next line: **“You’re looking at me like I’m on *To Catch a Predator*.”** Max is connecting Caroline’s attitude and body language regarding coupons to a television series that centers around people “posing as minors online and inviting [sexual predators] to meet up [with] them in person”

(McCollam, 2007). Through this frame, it can be interpreted that the working-class's use of coupons is being juxtaposed with arguably the least valued people in society; pedophiles.

Similar to a previous line, a laugh track is used which reduces coupons to a laughable method of cutting the cost of groceries. Caroline states with a sympathetic and disgusted tone of voice, going for her purse: **"We don't need to use those; I have my tip money right here."** In combination with her previous line, Caroline's character is framing coupons as an individual failure that can be laughed at, which reinforces neoliberal ideologies. It can be understood that by continuously framing coupons as something looked down upon by the upper-classes, even though Caroline is part of the working-class, can influence the meaning making process and how the audience connects with coupons.

The scene continues by Max saying: **"What are you talking about, I have coupons. Here, take them."** Through her tone of voice and eyebrows being furrowed together, it is apparent that Max is beginning to get angry that Caroline is not taking the coupons. After forcing the coupons into Caroline's hand, she reluctantly grabs them and begins to hand them to the cashier who is looking at her nails. Like Max's habits at work, it can be inferred through the cashier's body language that she finds her job to be boring. Caroline says to the cashier: **"I...I have...I can't, I don't want to. I've fallen too far; I can't fall any further. Don't make me."**

Neither the cashier, who has a bored look on her face, nor Max, who seems to be irritated by Caroline's reactions, are judging Caroline for using coupons; Caroline is the only one that is making a scene. Caroline brings her outstretched hand back from the cashier and gives the coupons back to Max; refusing to give them to the cashier. This causes Max to push her hand back, forcing Caroline to give the coupons to the cashier as Max states: **"Look, it's not a big deal. Lots of people use coupons."** Presenting a different way of looking at coupons, Max

downplays the seemingly terrible understanding about them that has been constructed. Through a Cultural Studies lens, it could be argued that this is giving viewers a new way of viewing coupons as they are “*not a big deal*” and “*lots of people use [them]*.” However, this notion is immediately disregarded and not explored further as Caroline says: “**Coupons are for...**” Max angrily interrupts Caroline by loudly saying: “**Poor people. Yes, like us.**”

Like the previous scene, this situation can be understood as a powerful model of intersectionality. Rather than viewing this as Caroline, who still attaches herself to the upper-class, marginalizing Max, a working-class woman, through her comments about couponing, this scene complexifies their characterisations through their unique intersections of class and gender which attempts to form a system of power and privilege. Max’s characterisation is shown fighting this axis of oppression Caroline brings forth by loudly pointing out they are part of the same class. Max’s complex characterisation is further illustrated through her agency and by seemingly breaking free from what a stereotypical working-class character would have said in the same situation, thus attempting to redefine couponing and their relationship to it.

In the last few lines, the pair state that many different people use coupons, but backtrack by narrowing them down to only “*poor people.*” These messages, all of which can aid in the construction of certain meanings, paint a social picture for the audience to understand couponing as humorous and used by the least valued people in society; the poor. On the other hand, this scene can be understood as bringing to the forefront the idea that many people use coupons to subsidise their groceries which can start the conversation and fight the messages that have been seemingly attached to couponing in the past. Furthermore, by going against neoliberal ideology, Max welcomes and invites the audience to do the same if they are in the same financial situation.

In sum, the above scenes analyse Max and Caroline's character's denotative and connotative representations of the categorical codes. For instance, through the character's language, specifically through Max, it is understood that working-class characters commonly use foul language during tense situations. Detailed below, Mama June from *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* and Carl from *Shameless* also use lewd language in tense or uncomfortable situations.

Furthermore, on multiple occasions Max's character exemplified rude behaviours and attitude, such as chewing gum with her mouth open and sarcastic remarks. Not only can this normalize these actions, but it has the potential to ideologically fix the image of how working-class people *should* behave. Behaviours and attitudes deemed as not following the constructed dominant social norms were also shown in *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* and *Shameless*. Indeed, these instances will be analysed in further detail below, but, it is enough to state that there are some similarities between the representations of working-class characters.

As for Caroline, her character is quite unique; having one foot, mentally at least, in the upper-class and the other in the working-class. Overall, she is quite professionally dressed and conducts herself politely, however, through her intersectional attributes, she displays behaviours and attitudes associated with working-class characters which may an expression of agency.

In these scenes, it can be assumed that certain behaviours are more commonly shown by working-class characters which can create certain social meanings associated with characters' conduct. In other words, by representing working-class characters in similar ways, it can form representational codes viewers associate with this group (see Appendix H).

### ***Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* Scene #1**

The first scene in *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* (24:03-25:30) opens with a medium-long shot of Honey Boo Boo and Chubbs standing in a small kitchen that has dark cabinets, a white

countertop with a mess of tableware on it, a black dishwasher, and a stainless-steel fridge.

Chubbs, wearing a white t-shirt with pink stripes and blue jeans, is standing in the corner of the kitchen while Honey Boo Boo, wearing a white t-shirt with a pink bow in her hair, is standing between her and the fridge. The pink details on their shirts and the bow worn by Honey Boo Boo reminds the viewers about their innocence as children. Like the attire worn by Max from *2 Broke Girls* when she was not at work, their clothes are very simple and do not have any logos which may mean that they cannot afford brand name clothing.

Chubbs says to her sister: **“Go in the fridge and get the butter, and the cream cheese.”**

When Chubbs, and the rest of her family speaks, subtitles are shown on the screen which can be an example of middle-class gaze which highlights the family’s Southern accent and “suggests that their language is so incomprehensible to viewers that they need subtitles to understand what the person is saying” (Haynes, 2014, p. 257). This suggests that they are so unintelligible that there is a need to “literally spell out” what they are talking about (Rennels, 2015a, p. 51) which could create a reason to ridicule them based on something out of their control (Eriksson, 2015).

The scene cuts to an interview-style, medium shot of Chubbs standing outside; not in the kitchen: **“Mama’s been talkin’ about working with Aunt Doe-Doe at the bakery. So, we’re gonna make her somethin’ sweet to show our support.”** *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* seems to follow a different film style compared to *2 Broke Girls* and *Shameless* as it shows a mixed form of shots; changing from the situation the family is in to an interview-style shot discussing the purpose of the scene. These formal shots seem to be more produced when compared to other shots. Despite the different ways this show is shot, which is partly due to the genre of television it is from, this show fits into this analysis because the narratives touch upon similar themes in the

other two shows. Furthermore, the meanings that are uncovered may be more impactful towards the audience because a reality show claims to be a more “real” representation.

Even though what Chubbs and Honey Boo Boo are doing for their mother in this scene is very kind and supportive, the subtitles are overshadowing their actions by emphasising not only what they say, but visually illustrate how their sentences are constructed. For instance, when Chubbs speaks, the subtitles show a lack of grammar and informal speech patterns, such as her tendency to drop the “g” in some words. This may contribute to the dominant ideological understanding that working-class, specifically Southern Americans, cannot speak English correctly as they are uneducated (Rennels, 2015a).

Furthermore, by unveiling deeper meanings connected to their accents and speech patterns, an intersectional analysis can be conducted to bring forth more traits that contribute to their complex characterizations. For instance, on top of the subtitles, they are female, working-class characters who are overweight and eat poorly (See Appendix I). Brought together, these representational codes can be understood as a way of marginalizing and producing a stereotypical image of working-class women. On the other hand, intersectionality unveils their complexity as Southern, working-class girls by not only meeting as siblings in admiration and love for their mother, but also by coming together to make her a treat which produces a different representational meaning to this situation.

The scene continues with Chubbs back in the kitchen measuring out ingredients and placing them into a Ziploc bag Honey Boo Boo is holding: **“I love sugar! One Tablespoon of butter.”** The shot changes to a medium long-shot of both girls, showing Chubbs opening a bottle of vanilla but struggles to open it with her hands. She brings it to her mouth so she can use her teeth (See Appendix I). This seemingly innocent action can garner deeper, connotative meanings

which may contribute to the family's overall representation. For instance, Chubbs behaviour can relate to inappropriate whiteness because she is not conforming to what would be considered ideal, ladylike behaviour in this situation; using her hands or asking for help; an instance of independence (Rennels, 2015b).

Next, Honey Boo Boo changes her Southern accent to something similar to a posh and proper upper-class person while saying: "**Two blah blahs. And that'll be it.**" Not only is she using this accent in a mocking way, but by using the accent, it appears she is insinuating baking is an activity for the upper-classes, thus "othering" herself. Through her actions and comments, she is marginalizing and excluding herself by exposing the differences between what she perceives to be characteristics that represent the upper-classes and her own class (Canales, 2000).

Similar to earlier in the scene, the scene cuts to Chubbs outside in an interview-style shot: "**And then instead of stirrin' it, we stick it in our armpit and we squish it up to make it nice, warm, and soft.**" Cutting to an interview style medium shot of Honey Boo Boo, she is sitting in a white chair in what looks to be her room as there are trophies in the background, drawings taped on the walls, a pink lamp, and clothes sticking out of a dresser. With her eyes wide in excitement and a smile on her face, she says: "**Time to make the fudge!**"

Cutting back to the kitchen in a medium long-shot, Pumpkin enters the kitchen, leaning against the fridge, wearing a leopard print blouse with grey sweatpants; no logos. Ziploc bag now under her arm, Honey Boo Boo exclaims: "**This is me making armpit fudge!**" She begins to flap her arms up and down, stomping her foot on the kitchen floor with a very concentrated look on her face as she bites her lip (see Appendix J). In the background, silly music begins to play and armpit farting noise are added to accentuate her arm motions.

The scene cuts to Pumpkin in a medium, interview-shot outside saying: "**Alana and Jessica were making armpit fudge. So, I decided to step in and do my own thing. Butt crack fudge.**" Back in the kitchen, Pumpkin is shown holding a bag. The scene then cuts to a close-up of her shoving it in the back of her pants (Appendix K). Switching to a medium long-shot so the three sisters can be seen, Pumpkin begins to dance around and, like Honey Boo Boo, squishing noises are added to accentuate her movements.

Bringing elements, such as behaviour, facial expressions, language, and editing techniques together, and looking at them through a political economy lens and Hall's notion of ideology, there is a potential to reinforce viewers preconceived notions regarding Southerners and working-class families. In combination with the girls' actions, and added goofy music and noises, it may be understood that through the producer's power, they are trying to construct an environment which welcomes the girls to be laughed at and ridiculed. Furthermore, by putting a bag of ingredients in their armpits and butt cracks, it can be connected to inappropriate whiteness as the girls are not performing the socially constructed notion of ideal behaviour which "would provide access to upward mobility" (Rennels, 2015a, p. 276).

From a different perspective, this scene is a complex expression of the girls being content with their actions and who they are as Southern, working-class children. They are framed as having fun, which is exemplified at the very end of the scene when Pumpkin begins to laugh at herself while she is dancing around with the Ziploc bag in her pants; a bonding moment.

Overall, and similar to the analysis of *2 Broke Girls*, there are multiple forms of oppression and instances which attempt to naturalize behaviours and attitudes associated with the working-class. For instance, Max from *2 Broke Girls* and the sisters in this show engage in behaviours that can be interpreted as nonconforming by the dominant ideology; the sisters are

shown making armpits and butt crack fudge; similarly, Max is shown pointing her pencil at a customer and chewing gum with her mouth open. Both can be understood as contributions to the overall understanding of the working-class and layers that create each unique character.

***Here Comes Honey Boo Boo Scene #2***

The next scene (28:07-29:50) starts with a long shot of a blue storefront sign that says “Cake Box” before quickly cutting to a medium-long shot from inside the store looking outside. Mama June comes to open the front door, letting out a groan as if she does not want to be there. Entering the store, Mama June’s voice is heard describing what she will be doing in the scene: **“We’re here in Griffin, Georgia at the Cake Box, trying to see if I can cut it as a baker.”**

As Mama June walks in the bakery, her sister, Doe-Doe is smiling while standing behind the counter: **“Nice to see you made it.”** Mama June responds with another groan and a shake of the head, which solidifies the understanding that she does not want to spend her day at the bakery. The scene cuts to a medium shot of Doe-Doe laughing and smiling at her sister’s reaction, which is her common facial expression.

Like the previous scene when Chubbs, Honey Boo Boo, and Pumpkin were shown in an interview style shot, Doe-Doe is also shown in this shot to explain how she thinks the day will go. Inside the bakery, standing in front of shelves, she says: **“I’m a little worried about June making it through the day because she has to stand on her feet all day.”** It quickly becomes evident that Doe-Doe, and “all the [other] middle- to upper-class people who appear on the show”, are not treated like the family as they do not have subtitles (Rennels, 2015a, p. 276). It is assumed that viewers can understand what the upper-class characters are saying, even if they have Southern accents like Doe-Doe, but cannot understand working-class characters. Analysing

this even deeper, this can be a unique form of marginalization, by “othering” certain characters because of their class differences (Krumer-Nevo & Sidi, 2012).

The scene cuts to a medium-long shot of inside the bakery which looks very clean with white tiled walls and organized baking equipment. Standing in the center of the frame, Doe-Doe is wearing a white shirt that is covered by a navy-blue apron and black pants, while Mama June has on a blue shirt, a pink apron with a black pocket, and black pants. Like the uniform worn by Max in *2 Broke Girls*, they are very plain and are not embellished in any way (see Appendix L). The sisters then begin to make their way into the kitchen area, which has stainless steel appliances, cake pans, and measuring devices above and below a stainless-steel countertop.

The scene cuts to a medium, interview style shot of Mama June standing outside: "**Doe-Doe thought it would be best that I don't interact with customers today, so I'll be workin' in the back.**" Interpreted as an example of the middle-class gaze, Doe-Doe believes that Mama June will not act to the constructed middle-class standard while interacting with customers. As a result, Mama June is deemed as lesser value by being told that she is “suited to specific forms of labour”; unseen and unheard at the back of the bakery doing a manual job (Lyle, 2008, p. 320).

Through an intersectional lens, the ways that Doe-Doe talks about Mama June and the way Mama June talks about herself brings to light her characters complexities through forms of oppression and agency that might otherwise be missed. For instance, through Doe-Doe’s tone of voice, it almost seems as though there is a lack of compassion for her sisters’ disability and having to stand all day “because one of her feet was mangled, which happened [due to a] workplace injury” (Friedman, 2014, p. 84). Mama June is also facing classism because her sister does not feel she is suited or proper enough to interact with customers.

Combining the above, and the fact Mama June is an overweight female, like her daughters, her characterization becomes even more complex because she ignores her sisters' lack of confidence in her which shows Mama June's strong and determined desire to re-enter the work force. Without looking at this scene through an intersectional lens, Mama June's complex character would not be illustrated.

The scene continues by cutting back to the bakery's kitchen where Mama June is shown filling up a pitcher of water and pouring it into a bucket on a measuring scale which causes her to say: "**Sounds like I'm pissin'. The sound makes me wanna pee.**" Deemed as inappropriate language at work by the dominant ideology, this instance forges the distinction between inappropriate and ideal whiteness which is emphasized in the subtitles. They highlight her inability to filter out words that are not suitable for work which creates a juxtaposition between her and her sister who is shown as the model for ideal whiteness by being polite.

The scene cuts to a medium shot of a stainless steel industrial stand mixer with all the ingredients in the bowl. Mama June says: "**This is a hard task**" as she tries to lock the stand mixer in place. Lifting the lever, Mama June lets out another groan of exasperation as the mixer seems to be very heavy, suggesting she might not even be suitable for this seemingly simple task (Lyle, 2008). After finally locking the mixer, Mama June says: "**She said, 'Shut the guard'**" under her breathe to herself. Shutting the metal guard and turning on the machine, all the ingredients spray out of the mixer which causes her to jump back in surprise and swear out loud. Some of the ingredients land both on the floor and on her apron which is emphasised as the light batter contrasts with the black apron pocket.

Analysing Mama June's language and behaviour a little deeper, it is not shown whether she is given proper training to complete these tasks. Like *2 Broke Girls*, we cannot know the

messages producers wanted to convey for sure, or, in this case, if she was trained, but, from how this scene was framed, it seems like Mama June may have been set up to be laughed at. Not only laughed at because of her reaction to her mistake, but the difficulty she has locking the mixer.

As the scene ends, Doe-Doe is off frame and can be heard saying “**Oh, my God, June**” while laughing. Like the previous scene when Pumpkin welcomes the audience to laugh with, or more appropriately, at her while she is dancing around the kitchen making fudge, her mother seems to be framed as also welcoming herself to be “an object of [middle-class] ridicule” by allowing Doe-Doe to laugh at her misfortune (Lyle, 2008, p. 354). Analysing this from a different perspective, it can be interpreted that Mama June does care what people think about her while she is trying to re-entering the workforce. This then portrays a message to try new things without embarrassment, or encourage those who are on disability, such as Mama June, to try and work again.

In sum, throughout the two scenes, Honey Boo Boo, Chubbs, Pumpkin, and Mama June are represented in similar ways. Through a political economy lens, these scenes can be understood solely as producers creating a limited representation of the family, which is a limited Frankfurt School style approach. Without knowing their intended messages, to some, these scenes can denotatively and connotatively be understood as siblings acting like children in a kitchen and a woman trying her hardest to re-enter the work force, or children acting inappropriately in a kitchen while their mother acts in a similar fashion. Through the meaning making process and an intersectionality lens, these scenes exemplify the many ways viewers can place their own meaning on situations to create cultural maps and uncover how complex these characters really are (See Appendix M).

### ***Shameless* Scene #1**

Finally, the first scene in *Shameless* begins in a small kitchen which is open to an eating area (7:20-7:36). Covered in yellow wallpaper, the kitchen is in the shape of an “L” and has all white cabinets and white laminate countertops. One side of the “L” is up against a wall with a sink while the other side juts out into a small peninsula which houses a stove.

The scene begins with a medium shot of Fiona, wearing a gray t-shirt over top of a dark blue, long sleeve shirt and black jeans, looking dishevelled with her hair in a messy bun (see Appendix N). She is standing next to Liam’s highchair, who is wearing a green, long shirt and dark pants, cleaning off his face while Debbie, wearing a blue shirt that is covered by a light grey sweater and blue jeans, is next to the peninsula on her laptop (See Appendix O).

The clothing that Fiona, Debbie, Liam, and, later, Carl are wearing are like the clothing worn by Max from *2 Broke Girls* and Mama June and her daughters from *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*. They are all wearing very basic, dark, and aged clothes with no logos, which may be from a thrift store or hand-me-downs as they may not have the disposable income to purchase new clothes. For instance, Fiona’s dishevelled look can be understood as such because of her hectic mornings; she must wake up her siblings, make them breakfast, and get them off to school before she goes to work. Looking at the connotative meanings taken from these small details, such as clothing, can contribute to the overall representation of the working-class.

Fiona walks from her brother over to the peninsula and taps on Debbie’s computer screen, casually saying: **“Debs, wipe the memory on the computer. Take it down to Mr. Sam’s pawn shop and see how much you can get for it.”** Fiona begins to push the chairs at the peninsula in while picking up dirty dishes. It is understood that Fiona is cleaning up after her siblings because their parents are not around. This forces Fiona to take on the parental role which

includes making them breakfast, cleaning up after them, and having the authority to tell her younger sister to pawn her laptop (Appendix P).

The camera changes to a medium close-up of Debbie's face as she says: **"What? No."** This shot shows the irritation and anger Debbie begins to display, not only through her tone of voice, but through her facial expressions; she tilts her head and furrows her eyebrows. It can be interpreted that she is becoming angry because her sister is telling her to pawn her newly acquired connection to people who can afford certain electronics. This interaction can, on one hand, be understood as a display of inappropriate whiteness as Debbie is talking back to the figure of authority in her family and is unable to keep her emotions controlled (Eriksson, 2015).

On the other hand, this same scene can be analysed in an entirely different way; Debbie is going against the "normative understanding of how people should act" as a potential expression of agency (Markus, Uchida, Omoregie. Townsend, & Kitayama, 2006, p. 103). By going against the dominant ideological reaction, which may have been to meekly listen to her sister without talking back to her, Debbie's characterization expressed her own opinions by wanting to keep the laptop, thus going against the power her sister holds in the family and showing her complexities.

The shot changes back to Debbie as Carl, wearing a light grey shirt that is mostly covered by an oversized red and black plaid long sleeve shirt with black jeans, stomps into the frame from behind her, showing his unhappiness regarding what he just heard (Appendix O). Like both of his sisters, his eyebrows are furrowed, not happy that he must sell his electronics. Carl asks: **"My Xbox too?"** Similar to the analysis of Debbie's reaction, Carl's non-verbal communication further conveys to Fiona and the audience his true feelings on the situation, even though they might be interpreted as being inappropriate and out of control (Rennels, 2015b).

The shot quickly changes back to Fiona's face, more irritated than before, as she barks back at her brother: **"Everything."** The shot changes back to Carl and Debbie's faces, they are standing side by side at the counter as Carl says: **"Grammy bought us that stuff,"** flapping his arms up and down to signify how frustrated he is.

In this frame, Carl continues to display forms of non-verbal communication through his body language and attitude, which, as explored by McQuail (2010), contributes or "adds [to his] verbal communication" and overall representation (p. 565). Carl's non-verbal communication can be interpreted as him being unhappy which is also illustrated in the other shows. For instance, Max from *2 Broke Girls* uses a pencil to point at the patron that is giving Caroline a hard time, and Mama June from *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* continuously groans while she is completing tasks at the bakery.

Furthermore, Carl and Debbie's emotional outbursts contribute to the production of a specific kind of meaning: stubborn and angry about their social class. Their outbursts are not only a resistance to dominant behaviour, but can be linked back to their upbringing; their parents are not in their lives and have not taught them how to "conform to dominant cultural standards" involved in ideal behaviours (Rennels, 2015b, p. 277). Indeed, while analysing this scene I do take into consideration the notion of agency, however, I am arguing that there is no fundamental basis of parenteral discipline on the children, such as teaching them the socially constructed notion of *ideal* behaviour, thus are not respecting the authority of their older sister.

Moving forward, the shot quickly returns to Fiona as she begins to walk to the sink with dirty tableware while saying: **"Yeah, well we have no money since Monica stole the squirrel fund and we need to eat."** In this sentence, Fiona accentuates the word "eat", not only to place importance on it, but to also express her irritation as her siblings continue to complain. Her

accentuation on the word can also mean something else; she may be emphasising the impoverished condition of her family as they have no money, but still need to find a way to make money so they can afford to eat.

This notion is comparable to how Max in *2 Broke Girls* needed to use coupons so she and Caroline could afford food. By making this connection between working-class characters in different shows and genres, on one hand, normalizes the struggles working-class people may go through by not being able to afford daily essentials, but, on the other hand, can be an attempt to connect these struggles to one socio-economic group.

As mentioned, the scene in *2 Broke Girls* where Max uses coupons to buy groceries can be interpreted as being framed as taboo through Caroline's language and body language, this scene can also be interpreted as framing pawning as taboo by connecting viewers previously conceived notions on the activity. However, even if some believe pawning is not being framed as taboo, Fiona's lines may help frame it as being the next logical step to gain financial stability. Her rationale is solidified through Kenttä's (2016) research which argues that "women primarily pawn due to family needs" which is her exact reason for using the service (p. 65).

Furthermore, to contextualize Fiona's last line, the squirrel fund is a collection of money contributed by all the children to pay for bills as their parents are not around. In other words, "[the children's] earnings are evenly collected in a tin can called the 'squirrel' fund, [which] emphasizes the raw, animalistic way the family operates; doing whatever it takes to get by" (Smet, 2012). In the previous episode, this fund was stolen by their estranged parents so they could go on a drug and alcohol induced binge. With the money gone, Fiona, dishevelled and a mess, needs to find a way to save more money to pay the bills and afford food.

As the scene ends, and her words sink in, the shot changes to a medium-long shot of Debbie and Carl's attitudes turning from angry and irritated to defeated as they cannot win against their older sister. Their defeated attitude becomes apparent as Debbie shuts the lid of the laptop and Carl flops his arms down to his side (see Appendix O).

Through an intersectional lens, Fiona, Debbie, and Carl's arguments about money, and the systemic issues that surround it, is not the only form of judgement this family faces in this scene. The Gallagher siblings are marginalized through their parent's actions and addiction because this situation may not have occurred had they not spent the money to party. Furthermore, Fiona, the young, female parental figure, must find a way to rectify this circumstance which allows the audience to judge her on her decisions.

Bringing all of this together and looking at this scene through the lens of intersectionality, it becomes apparent that the Gallagher children experience compounding forms of oppression which shows a unique and complex version of their class and family identity. Fiona's strong characterization also shows that she can think on her feet when something bad happens and the family has a strong enough bond that they will follow her, even if it was reluctant at first.

In sum, represented through the sibling's body language, attitude, and language, this scene exemplifies neoliberal ideologies as hardships are being framed as compounding "individual failures;" it is the family's, primarily Fiona's, fault that the money was taken (Rennels, 2015a, 273). Analysing the scene deeper, the family can also be interpreted as not wanting to ask for help due to pride or ability to receive public assistance during their times of financial struggle which forces them to pawn their electronics.

### ***Shameless Scene #2***

Moving forward, the next scene (12:17-13:23) begins with a long shot of Carl and Debbie

exiting their back door and onto a wooden porch (Appendix P). Debbie, wearing a blue jacket with its hood up to cover her head, is picking up things that they will need to take down their pool while Carl, holding a small hatchet, is wearing a gray hat and a long, dark green jacket with a fur hood. It can be noted that all the working-class characters in all the series analysed, not including Caroline from *2 Broke Girls* who is in a unique situation, were shown wearing very similar clothing; simple shirts and pants that lack logos or considerable embellishments.

Carl begins by saying: **“Mr. Sam at the pawn shop’s a douche. Wouldn’t trade me an I-pad for a Ruger.”** Through Carl’s tone of voice, it can be interpreted that he is annoyed at Mr. Sam for not selling him a gun. Like the previous scenes, Carl is producing meaning through his attitude and what he is saying. By connotatively deconstructing his attitude, which can be glazed over, it reveals connections between his characterization and deviant behaviour commonly associated with lower-classes, such as using firearms. This connection, alongside similar images from other shows showing lower-class characters conducting deviant behaviour, has the potential to stop the flow of changing representations (Hall & Jhally, 1997).

What also can be interpreted from Carl’s characterization is that perhaps his other underage friends have gone to pawn shops in the past and have traded-in for a gun. By analysing his use of the word “wouldn’t,” there is an insinuation that Mr. Sam did not want to trade an I-Pad for a gun as it would not have been a good deal for him. If Carl had used the word “couldn’t,” this would mean Mr. Sam could not legally sell him a gun. Through the language that is used, it can be interpreted that there could have been a chance that in their lower income area, a pawn shop would sell an underage child a gun, but only for the right price.

The shot changes to a medium shot of the pair as Debbie sarcastically responds to Carl’s remark: **“No ones gonna let you have a gun, Carl.”** Through her tone of voice, she says this as

if it was obvious that no one was going to sell him a gun which causes Carl to roll his eyes. Stepping in front of Debbie, Carl lets out a big sigh, saying: **“Little Hank gets to have one.”** Like Carl’s first comment, what he is saying not only has the potential to contribute to the naturalization of deviant lower-class behaviour through his rationalization for wanting a gun by stating another neighbourhood kid has one, but also can be an ideological strategy of representing the lower-classes as being deviant.

Immediately Debbie says: **“Because his dad hijacked a bunch of military cargo”** as the camera changes to a medium long shot of the pair descending the stairs. Almost at the bottom of the steps, Debbie says the following line a little louder than her previous ones, trying to get the attention of someone farther away: **“We gotta empty the pool out Conrad.”** Similar to Chubbs from *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, this is the second instance Debbie uses informal speech patterns in this scene which allows for connections between the working-class and speech patterns. As different television shows in different genres represent speech of lower-class characters in similar ways, it normalizes these patterns in a way that makes their language seem as *given* or *natural* within society. By combining words, dropping certain letters from words, and using slang regularly, it may cause viewers to understand this group as being uneducated.

The shot changes to a medium shot of steam rising from the aluminum pool the siblings are about to drain which shows how cold it is in Chicago in the Fall. Standing in the pool rubbing his skin as if he is cleaning himself, is a naked, homeless man using it as his bathtub. Another homeless man, wearing a dark gray hat, a red and dark gray scarf, dark brown sweater, and very tattered and frayed blue jeans, is sitting at the top of the pool stairs. Talking to Conrad by name, the man in the pool, Debbie is not mean to him through her tone of voice, she talks to him very nonchalantly and comfortably as if this is a common occurrence. This also insinuates to the

viewer that they may also have a friendship. Through an intersectional lens, there are multiple ways to look at their interaction which can reveal their complexities as individual characters and friends. On one hand, their interaction shows the audience another side of homeless people; they are not necessarily mean, as understood by the dominant ideology, but can be friendly.

On the other hand, this interaction can welcome the audience to compare themselves to different classes through Hegel's (1998) notion of the "other." Drawing upon Krumer-Nevo and Sidi's (2012) view of the "other", viewers are invited to juxtapose themselves with these characters as a "[form] of discrimination used against individuals on the basis of their belonging to marginalized groups" (p. 300). Even though the siblings are not judging Conrad for using their pool as a bathtub, this interaction allows for viewers to use their own middle-class gaze to form opinions; this behaviour is repulsive and unacceptable.

Changing to a medium shot of Debbie standing by the pool with her arm outstretched so her brother can take the garden hose from her hand, she says: "**Here, go screw this end of the hose into Tony's spigot so we can siphon the water out.**" Continuing to have her arm out, the shot changes to a long-shot of Carl staring at the hose. In the background, the fully clothed homeless man steps down from the pool stairs while the Conrad uses the ladder to exit the pool. This shot emphasizes Conrad's seemingly repulsive behaviour and body through the producer's decision to show him leaving the pool (see Appendix Q).

Ignoring his sister, the camera changes to a medium shot of Carl facing the pool with the hatchet in his hand. He begins to touch the end of the hatchet, saying: "**Or we could just do it this way.**" As he completes his sentence, Carl puts two hands on the hatchet's hilt and swings it back to hit the outside of the pool. The camera changes to a close-up shot, which emphasizes Carl hitting the aluminum body of the pool multiple times. Carl's behaviour is yet another

display of Rennels (2015a) concept of inappropriate whiteness as his action is so shockingly out of line and out of control that the audience is invited to laugh or be in shock.

His non-conforming and inappropriate whiteness behaviours become authenticated as the shot changes to Debbie jumping back in surprise. Her eyebrows are raised and mouth is open which causes her to yell: **“Carl!”** The scene ends with the siblings staring at each other, water pouring out of the pool. Perfectly content with what he has just done, Carl shrugs and says: **“I’ll just patch it up this summer. See ya!”** This causes Debbie to exhale strongly which causes her shoulders to lower in defeat as she wanted to close the pool properly.

This scene can also teach us, the viewers, to expect and laugh at behaviours that do not conform to what the upper-class has deemed appropriate. It is humorous to see Carl take the easy way out by smashing a hole in his pool, but by looking at its deeper meaning, it may suggest that his behaviour should be understood as deviant due to his smug and unapologetic reaction to the destruction of property.

Carl’s behaviour, Debbie’s informal speech patterns, and the way Debbie interacts with the homeless men, are three intersecting forms of oppression shown in this scene. Even though these examples can be interpreted as separate examples of class discrimination, they can also come together to show how complex classism is through different forms. This example show how intersectionality has the ability to unlock unique versions of class by showing the number of complex ways can be represented. Furthermore, these instances of class representation not only can be interpreted as a form of agency but also show how unique their identities are because the Gallagher siblings do not follow what viewers assume they will do in this situation.

Overall, all the scenes analysed contain examples of characters performing aspects of neoliberalism, inappropriate whiteness, the “other”, and middle-class gaze which have the

potential to influence the meaning making process and meanings viewers place on characters and the working-class. In other words, it can be assumed that certain behaviours are more commonly associated with certain characters as they are continuously represented.

For instance, from all the shows, Caroline's character, for the most part, is represented as having an inoffensive attitude and behaviour that does not go against the perceived status quo, while Max, when she tells the diner patron off and Caroline to calm down about the coupons, and Debbie and Carl, when they express anger towards Fiona in defiance, can be understood as not conforming to dominant behaviour standards. On the other hand, their behaviours can also be a characterization and expression of free-will and agency. It is evident that working-class characters can be both characterized as representing dominant ideological understandings of their class *and* go against them by expressing agency which makes them complex representations.

Furthermore, some working-class characters are shown using similar speech patterns, such as lewd language from Carl in *Shameless*, Mama June in *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and Max in *2 Broke Girls*. There are also differences between the characters language in all three shows. For instance, the family from *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* have a Southern accent and are from the working-class but are shown with subtitles, similarly the Gallagher's have a Chicago accent and are from the same class but do not have subtitles. This may mean that not all working-class characterizations are represented the same (see Appendix R).

## **Discussion**

This discussion section goes over the key information and findings drawn from the above analysis. To begin, through my visual and textual analysis of working-class representations in *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and *Shameless*, I look at the ways main characters represent categorical codes: behaviour, attire, attitude, language, interactions, and class

comparisons. By doing so, I reveal instances that undermine and reinforce dominant ideologies and the normalization of images that are *seemingly* connected to the working-class. I was surprised that these apparently innocent television shows were no longer innocent and should not be taken at face-value when they were deconstructed using different theoretical lenses.

For instance, through a feminist lens, I was surprised to find that there were subtle social class comparisons, specifically exemplified between Max and Caroline in *2 Broke Girls*. Even though the pair were part of the same social class, Max wore her uniform in a more provocative way that emphasized her chest, while Caroline embellished hers with pearls, which signified her old class. Until this analysis, I would not have noticed the nuances between the pair and their deeper meanings

Through a Cultural Studies lens, I was also surprised at some of the connotative meanings I uncovered. For instance, through some of the coded categorical elements, I looked at the different ways Max, from *2 Broke Girls*, and Fiona, from *Shameless*, confronted the struggle of affording food. In *2 Broke Girls*, this lens allowed viewers a new way of connecting with the idea of couponing. Combining what Max says with her attitude, facial expressions, and body language, she allows viewers to look at couponing in a different way than Caroline's outlook; something regarded with disdain. In *Shameless*, through her language, stressed attitude, and body language, Fiona explains to her younger sibling that they need to pawn their electronics in order to have enough money to eat. With this lens, it allows for alternative understandings to be unveiled regarding how working-class families pay for food in this modern world.

Finally, using an intersectionality lens I was surprised by the main characters complexities which were shown through their forms of agency and oppression. For instance, Caroline, in *2 Broke Girls*, has a unique characterization because she comes from an affluent

family which allows for a complex version of the working-class. While talking to the diner patron in the first scene, she taps into her past while still acknowledging her position at work. Next, in the second scene of *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, I unveil that Doe-Doe was oppressing Mama June through her speech patterns, class, physical ability, and weight. However, Mama June showed her characters' complexities by accepting her faults and empowering herself by pushing through to get the job done. Finally, in the first scene of *Shameless*, classism, addiction, and Fiona being a female parental figure came together as representational codes to illustrate how complex families are and their ability to come together in tough situations.

Furthermore, the characters of each show predominantly represent dominant ideological aspects; however, they also characterize agency which results in their complex, intersectional representations. I also noticed the exemplification of Hall's understanding of representation as being constitutive in the shows. This means that only until the characters have been represented can they be analysed and unpacked for their denotive and connotative meanings. In these shows, each character's representation carried different attributes and meaning that could only be discovered once it was depicted and analysed.

For instance, complexities were expressed in *2 Broke Girls* through the girls' characterization, such as the ways they would stand up for themselves. Even at her most vulnerable, Caroline continues to have strong values of standing up for herself, with the help of Max, against disgruntled customers. This has taught us qualities of love and kindness; friends, even if they originally come from different sides of town, are able to have each other's backs in tough situations.

Similarly, even though the characters in *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* may have been put in situations for them to be laughed at, they also taught us about love and kindness. Represented

in a unique way, the siblings love towards their mother is shown through their kindness and willingness to create handcrafted treats. These same attributes are represented through Mama June's inclination to help her sister at the bakery and experience what she does daily. Their underlying message can be understood as teaching us to have fun in each situation, even if it may trouble dominant understanding.

Finally, *Shameless* has taught us about family togetherness. Despite having little funds, sometimes being represented as out-of-control, and being against a world filled with systemic adversary against the poor, the Gallagher siblings stand together as a family to find ways through challenges. The siblings have taught us that no matter what happens, family is the most important thing to have, even if it is hard to understand that electronics need to be sold to eat or not agreeing with how to take down a pool.

Despite instances where the characters were represented as going along with dominant ideological standards of the working-class, they also broke down these walls through unique forms of agency. Unlike employing a Frankfurt School lens which analyses class representations as being positive or negative, and black or white, these instances were unveiled using a combination of lenses which took into consideration each character's representational complexities. Indeed, this is not to say a Frankfurt School perspective is wrong, but it needs to be taught to future generations and scholars that there are different perspectives or meanings of representations that can mean a number of things depending on which lens is being employed. In this thesis, I have revealed connotative expressions of agency, friendship, love, and messages of families hidden in the above shows through this ideology.

In addition to feminism and Cultural Studies, I have also mapped out the complexities of class and gender representations using Marxism, intersectionality, and political economy.

Imagine the other complexities of representation that can be discovered when looking at gender and class, or gender, race, and class through different lenses. Think for one moment that I did the same analysis and framework, but through a Frankfurt School lens. Would putting on certain lenses make my analysis more or less correct? No. It would have made my analysis different as I would have focused on other aspects in the same scenes, resulting in different conclusions.

Overall, there are limitless ways to analyse the same scenes, but being directed by my research questions, I needed to use certain lenses. Through the power of frameworks, I looked at different situations in each episode through specific perspectives and by adding different layers through theoretical lenses, I made my object of research complex, thus allowing me to analyse and uncover further complexities. Ultimately, my thesis reveals that these episodes are no longer just about two girls working in a diner, sisters making fudge in a kitchen, or siblings taking down a pool, they are social political discourses unveiled through specific lenses.

I conclude that working-class characters are represented similarly to what other television studies scholars have explored; programme creators seem to follow similar guidelines when creating popular television shows and representing this class. By making connections between the categorical codes and other scholarly research, it helps support my conclusions.

For instance, working-class characters commonly exhibit behaviours that went against naturalized societal rules. This was a similar conclusion made by some Television Studies scholars like Rennels (2015a) who deduced that behaviours were “highlighted through stylistic choices” (p. 45) and “authenticated, through the help of what they said, [to] naturalize a form of whiteness that is presented as bad.” (p. 63). Similarly, Eriksson (2015) found that “programmes [tried to] set standards for what is acceptable, ‘normal’ behaviour, often by ascribing negative values to working-class behaviours, deeming them to be dysfunctional or tasteless” (p. 21).

These connections can also be made when discussing other categorical codes such as language. I conclude that working-class characters commonly swore and use informal speech patterns, a determination echoed by other scholars. For instance, by analysing speech patterns, I conclude that characters commonly using slang connected to a low level of education. This was mentioned by Ellis and Armstrong (1989) as “word reductions and ‘R’ deletions...are strongly characteristic of a speaker being non-middle-class” such as the word ‘aint’ (p. 164).

In sum, through different lenses and categorical codes, I unveiled some surprising connotative meanings that I would have not otherwise understood or exposed. Theoretical lenses made my object more complex which allowed me to look at multiple meanings that were generated from each frame or scene. I believe by taking into consideration the alternative meanings or multiplicities of meaning is important and should be taught to younger generations as it will allow for a more understanding society as meanings cannot be fixed. Furthermore, it was interesting to note the similar conclusions made by myself and other scholars which validated my conclusions and the connections I made.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

During Stuart Hall's 1997 guest lecture at the University of Westminster in London, he perfectly articulated ways individuals classify the world by stating: "classifications [are] not the only way but one of the principal ways in which we go about giving meaning to things until we know roughly what class of things it is, roughly what it belongs with, and roughly what it's different from. Chairs are like stools because you sit on them, and both are different from tables, which you put things on, although you can sit on tables at the doctors. Our systems of classification are very complex, but without some notion of 'this belongs with that, that is different from this,' we wouldn't be able to have a conceptual map, we wouldn't be able to map out the world in some intelligible way" (Hall & Jhally, 1997, p. 10).

In this thesis, I have deconstructed the representational meaning of class, specifically working-class, female characters on the prime-time television shows *2 Broke Girls*, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, and *Shameless*. Keeping with Hall's teachings, individuals create unique conceptual maps, which come from the ways they traverse society and give meaning to objects or representations (Hall & Jhally, 1997). I have looked at ways these shows attempt to use their ideological powers to stop the flow of these maps in an attempt to fix or subvert certain representations and dominant ideologies of the working-class.

In Chapter 1, I state the rationale behind this topic as I noticed the depictions of working-class people and the popularity of shows they were represented in were increasing. Next, I defined the terms social class, working-class, and "prime-time" as they are key concepts used throughout my thesis, and concluded with a synopsis of the shows I focused on.

In Chapter 2, I outlined the changing understanding of representation and its meaning through a Marxist, Frankfurt School, and Cultural Studies lens. Going over the meaning making

process, I then looked at the ways conceptual maps create terms that were used to analyse my television shows. This chapter concluded by introducing my research question and objectives.

Chapter 3 outlined my methodological strategy which looked at the historical use of a mixed method, phenomenological, discourse analysis approach. Concluding, I introduced the research tools used to choose the episodes and organize my categorical codes.

Flowing into Chapter 4, I conducted my analysis by implementing my methodology through a discussion regarding how each episode represented the categorical codes, both denotatively and connotatively. I did this through concepts which explained systems of representation and the common reinforcement of dominant ideologies which seemingly normalized certain actions and behaviours in the episodes. In my discussion section, I went over conclusions that surprised me and connected my findings to those of other Television Studies scholars to validate my claims. I argued that different television shows, in different genres, represented working-class characters as following the dominant ideological understanding of their class. On the other hand, there were also characterizations of agency; working-class characters that went against the dominant ideology in a non-conforming way. Overall, I conclude that depending on the lens that was used, the television shows represented the working-class in both limited and boundless ways.

### **Challenges, Limitations, and Recommendations**

Beginning to reflect on this thesis, I faced some challenges and limitations along the way. The main challenge was when analysing the episodes in terms of class representation as I did not want to reduce characterizations to something simplistic or restrictive by just comparing them to dominant ideological understandings. Even though classifications are important in the generation of meaning, we must remember not to give these classification power over us by using them in a

reductive way and focusing on assumptions. To avoid this, I kept in mind the Cultural Studies notions that classifications and meaning can be commonly understood, but are always fluid and continuously changing (Hall & Jhally, 1997). I wanted to illustrate how complex and contested not only the notion of class was, but how each representation of the working-class could be understood connotatively in different ways throughout various television genres.

I also faced some limitations that were outside of my control, such as the number of episodes I was limited to. I cannot say for certain that my conclusions are a popularized discourse as I analysed episodes following similar patterns of representation, but it is a methodological limitation of my thesis. Not only did my methodology and research questions force me to look at certain aspects of the shows which meant that large portions of each episode were disregarded, but I was also constrained by time. Even though I would have liked to look at more episodes, the episodes that were chosen reflect the phenomenon I set out to analyse.

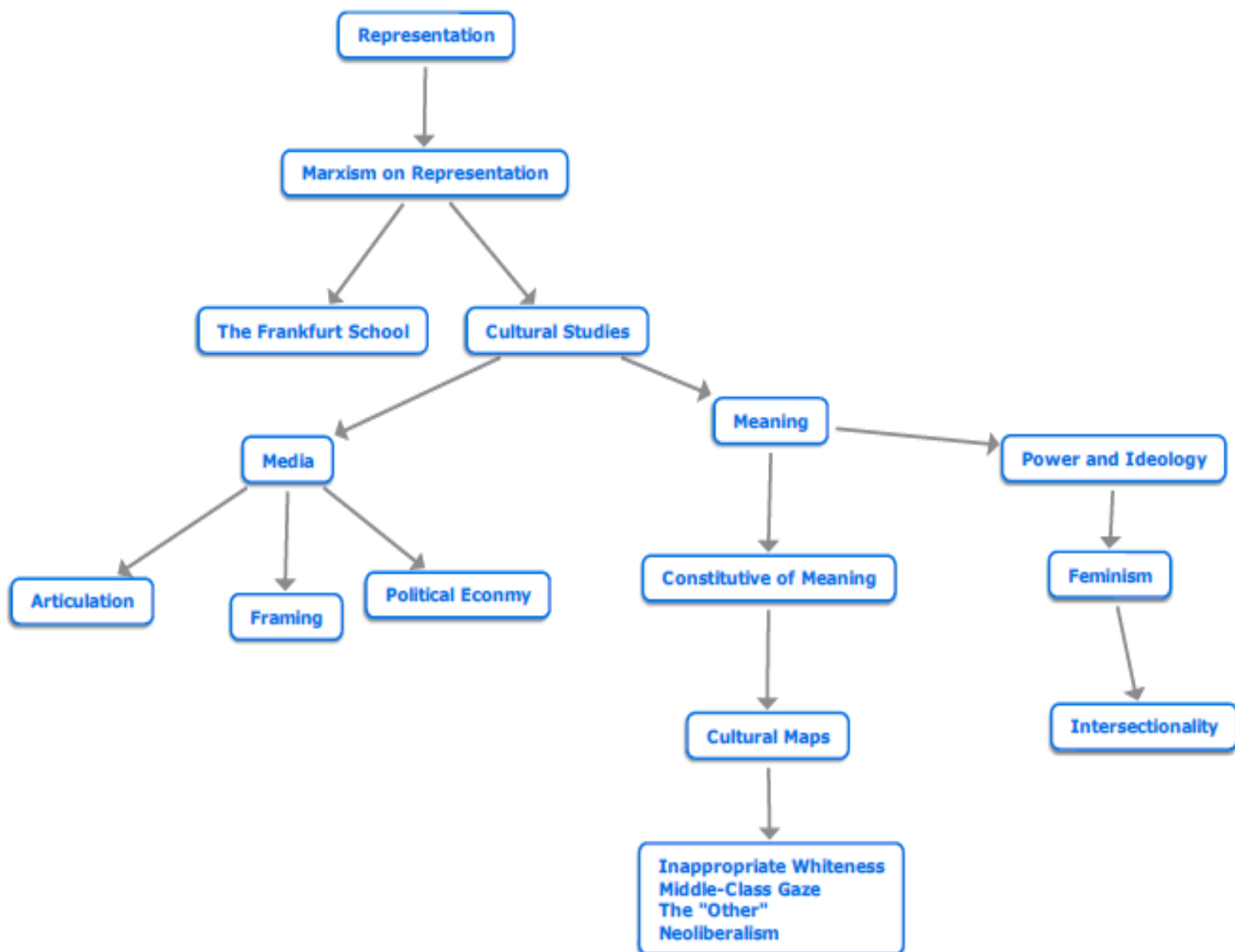
This is not to say my analysis lacks substance or relevancy, but rather that it is a small snapshot that introduces the topic and welcomes further research. For instance, even though I conducted my research using a mixed-methods approach that used phenomenology and a visual and textual analysis to analyse my object through a combination of lenses, I understand there are many methodological ways that would have allowed me to examine this same research object through other lines of inquiry. Had I focused on different theoretical lenses, such as Cultural Studies, Critical Race Theory, intersectionality, and political economy, my thesis would have focused more on race and social class rather than gender and social class; complexifying the object of research in a different way. I did not touch upon the intersections of race and social class due to my format and research questions.

I understand the limitations of my thesis, and believe that the next step of ratifying them will be to open them up and integrate them in future research. I invite Media and Television Studies scholars to analyse and investigate the representations of working-class characters on popular television by taking into consideration the understanding of meaning through a Cultural Studies lens. Using this lens may not only welcome the articulation of limitless ways of representation so an analysis is less restrictive, but can introduce a different understanding of a small snapshot of culture and society.

Additionally, as the shows I focused on look at the representation of working-class, white women, I invite scholars to broaden and extend this examination by looking at more of a racially diverse group of people. This can be done by focusing on different aspects of the lenses that were used in this thesis, and welcoming other lenses and methodologies that work better with uncovering different ways racially diverse characters are represented in their own social class.

As I conclude my Master's thesis, I wish to continue this conversation regarding the representation of social classes and gender on popular television shows. I wish for studies that welcome a multitude of meanings so we can understand the different connotative and denotative ways viewers understand representation. I also want this conversation to continue because life in this modern age is increasingly difficult for everyone. From the rising cost of living, decreasing job security, and increasing debt, the lives of people, specifically the working-class, should not be made harder by television shows trying to construct them as being a certain image. We, as a society, must work together, in life and while writing scholarly works, to oppose these stereotypes and consider the multiplicity of meanings in this world.

## Appendix A – Conceptual Map



**Appendix B – Categorical Codes Example**

EXAMPLE Television Programme: Here Comes Honey Boo Boo						
Classifications	Body language (behaviour)	Attire	Attitude (verbal/nonverbal)	Language (swearing, grammar, accent)	Interactions with other characters	Class comparison
Time of Occurrence						
00:00-01:52						
01:53-02:15						
02:16:2:30						

## Appendix C – Research Randomizer Results

### Here Comes Honey Boo Boo – Season 4, Episode 1 “3 Generations & 1 Pork Rind”

**RESULTS**

1 Set of 52 Unique Numbers  
Range: From 1 to 52

**Set #1**

39, 40, 17, 30, 49, 35, 25, 1, 45, 36, 29, 33, 23, 48, 51, 20, 7, 41, 15, 14, 5, 10, 46, 24, 19, 4, 32, 8, 37, 27, 9, 47, 31, 16, 6, 43, 28, 12, 52, 21, 50, 13, 38, 34, 18, 2, 11, 22, 44, 3, 42, 26

Note: By using Research Randomizer, you agree to its [Terms of Service](#).

1 52

Do you wish each number in a set to remain unique?  
Yes

Do you wish to sort the numbers that are generated?  
No

37	11	"Poop"	February 27, 2014	1.44 <sup>[63]</sup>
38	12	"You're Be Nineteen"	March 6, 2014	1.99 <sup>[64]</sup>

**Season 4 (2014)** [ edit ]

No. in series	No. in season	Title	Original air date	U.S. viewers (million)
39	1	"3 Generations & 1 Pork Rind"	June 19, 2014	1.73 <sup>[65]</sup>
40	2	"Yodega"	June 26, 2014	1.51 <sup>[66]</sup>
41	3	"Bingo Face"	June 26, 2014	1.74 <sup>[66]</sup>
42	4	"Top 10 Summer Moments"	July 3, 2014	1.04 <sup>[67]</sup>
43	5	"Forced Family Fun!"	July 10, 2014	1.34 <sup>[68]</sup>
44	6	"Civil War"	July 10, 2014	1.50 <sup>[68]</sup>
45	7	"Vowel of Silence"	July 17, 2014	1.18 <sup>[69]</sup>
46	8	"Brain Rest"	July 17, 2014	1.33 <sup>[69]</sup>
		"This Couch"		

### 2 Broke Girls – Season 1, Episode 13 “And the Secret Ingredient”

**RESULTS**

1 Set of 124 Unique Numbers  
Range: From 1 to 124

**Set #1**

13, 4, 67, 71, 65, 69, 11, 36, 86, 29, 73, 49, 28, 90, 60, 8, 99, 70, 117, 40, 2, 30, 32, 45, 55, 72, 52, 14, 59, 39, 34, 111, 66, 93, 9, 103, 7, 105, 120, 19, 95, 53, 23, 100, 38, 96, 63, 24, 22, 56, 78, 33, 94, 37, 80, 79, 44, 118, 112, 57, 74, 31, 101, 87, 1, 108, 115, 123, 5, 15, 46, 41, 27, 48, 26, 42, 54, 3, 20, 89, 18, 51, 68, 58, 91, 124, 109, 81, 98, 82, 119, 97, 121, 25, 35, 104, 50, 102, 83, 43, 88, 77, 47, 76, 12, 6, 85, 107, 122, 116, 16, 21, 84, 110, 92, 75, 62, 17, 114, 106, 61, 64, 113, 10

Note: By using Research Randomizer, you agree to its [Terms of Service](#).

8	8	"And the Secret Ingredient"	Ted Wass	Liz Feldman	November 7, 2011	2J6358	11.43 <sup>[11]</sup>
9	9	"And the Really Petty Cash"	Ted Wass	Morgan Murphy	November 14, 2011	2J6359	11.77 <sup>[12]</sup>
10	10	"And the Very Christmas Thanksgiving"	Jean Sagal	Michael Patrick King	November 21, 2011	2J6360	11.33 <sup>[13]</sup>
11	11	"And the Reality Check"	Fred Savage	Molly McAleer	December 5, 2011	2J6361	12.75 <sup>[14]</sup>
12	12	"And the Pop-Up Sale"	Fred Savage	Michelle Nader	December 12, 2011	2J6362	12.50 <sup>[15]</sup>
13	13	"And the Secret Ingredient"	Julie Anne Robinson	Michael Patrick King	January 2, 2012	2J6363	12.10 <sup>[16]</sup>
14	14	"And the Upstairs Neighbor"	Thomas Kail	Michael Patrick King	January 16, 2012	2J6364	11.40 <sup>[17]</sup>
15	15	"And the Blind Spot"	Ted Wass	Michelle Nader	February 6, 2012	2J6365	11.47 <sup>[18]</sup>
16	16	"And the Broken Hearts"	Ted Wass	David Feeney	February 13, 2012	2J6366	10.48 <sup>[19]</sup>
17	17	"And the Kosher Cupcakes"	Scott Ellis	Liz Feldman	February 20, 2012	2J6367	11.37 <sup>[20]</sup>

## Shameless – Season 2, Episode 11 “Just Like the Pilgrims Intended”

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18	6	"Can I Have a Mother"	John Dahl	Macy & Steven Schachter	February 12, 2012	2J5956	1.44 <sup>[22]</sup>
19	7	"A Bottle of Jean Nate"	David Nutter	Nancy M. Pimental	February 19, 2012	2J5957	1.41 <sup>[23]</sup>
20	8	"Parenthood"	Daisy Von Scherler Mayer	Mike O'Malley	March 4, 2012	2J5958	1.60 <sup>[24]</sup>
21	9	"Hurricane Monica"	Alex Graves	Alex Borstein	March 11, 2012	2J5959	1.31 <sup>[25]</sup>
22	10	"A Great Cause"	Mimi Leder	Etan Frankel	March 18, 2012	2J5960	1.16 <sup>[26]</sup>
23	11	"Just Like the Pilgrims Intended"	Mark Mylod	Story by: LaToya Morgan & Nancy M. Pimental Teleplay by: Nancy M. Pimental	March 25, 2012	2J5961	1.51 <sup>[27]</sup>
24	12	"Fiona Interrupted"	John Wells	John Wells	April 1, 2012	2J5962	1.45 <sup>[28]</sup>

### Season 3 (2013) [\[ edit \]](#)

*Main article: [Shameless \(season 3\)](#)*

**Appendix D** – *2 Broke Girls* – Max and Caroline’s Attire  
(02:43)



**Appendix E** – *2 Broke Girls* – Max’s Attire  
(00:07)



**Appendix F** – *2 Broke Girls* – Customer looking at Max  
(00:26)



**Appendix G** – *2 Broke Girls* – Max, Caroline, and the cashier's attire  
(07:04)



Appendix H – 2 Broke Girls – Categorical Codes

2 Broke Girls: "And the Secret Ingredient" (0000-21:1)						
Classification	Body Language (behaviour)	Airne	Attitude (verbal/nonverbal)	Language (swearing, grammar, accent)	Interactions with other characters	Class comparison
Time of Occurrence						
0000-00:57	<p>Caroline is often smiling. Max chews gum with her mouth open and often uses her pencil and pad of paper to point at customers.</p>	<p>Caroline and Max are both wearing the same uniform, mustard yellow dress with red piping that falls just above the knee. Caroline has the dress zipped up, wearing heels, and a large pearl necklace. Max has the front of the dress zipped down enough so some of her cleavage is showing. Max also has most of her hair swept behind her to have nothing blocking the front of her dress.</p>	<p>Max has a sarcastic and uncaring attitude as she is often seen in this scene chewing gum with her mouth open. When interacting with characters, she is unprofessional and rude to the customer through her tone of voice. Caroline is opposite of this as she is very apologetic and kind to the customers and other staff she interacts with. Her attitude is positive up until this point, Caroline becomes irritated and snarky as she talks to him, similar to Max's attitude.</p>	<p>Caroline: One steak sandwich and a cheeseburger with Muenster Cheese. Max: We're out of Muenster. Caroline: Oh, since when? Max: Well, let's see, the diner opened in '82. So, '82. Caroline: Hi, sorry but we're out of Muenster. Customer: Seriously, dude? I wanted Munster. Caroline: Sorry, we have Cheddar, Swiss or America. Customer: I hate Cheddar and Swiss blows. Caroline: Well, then American? Customer: American cheese? What am I, at grade school? Max: Yeah, go to the principal's office. I can't have another idiot up my ass right now. It's at capacity. Caroline: Max, I got this. Would you like to see the menu again? Customer: This is crap, okay. I wanted Munster. Caroline: Well, I wanted to be running a Fortune 500 company instead of waiting on a toxic man-child like yourself. But, we can't always get what we want. So, order something else, put it in your pie hole and get on with your damn life. Max: Welcome to Waitress. We've been expecting you.</p>	<p>Caroline and Max interact with each other at the beginning of the scene when Max tells Caroline that they do not have any Muenster Cheese. Later on in the scene, Caroline is interacting with an angry customer</p>	
0702-08:34	<p>Confused. Placing one item in the bag at a time. When the cashier told the pair the price of their groceries, Caroline was shocked and surprised as her eyebrows were raised. Next, Caroline is taken aback and actually moves away from max's hand as she tries to give the coupons to Caroline. She becomes disgusted when she finds out Max uses coupons and has a face of disdain and disgust when taking the coupons from Max's hand. Max becomes angry as Caroline is making a big deal about the coupons and that it is for poor people.</p>	<p>Max and Caroline are both wearing their work uniforms while standing out the checkout. Caroline has heels on and an undone jacket with a large scarf covering her chest. Max also has a jacket on with a scar underneath it to cover her chest. The cashier is wearing a blue t-shirt covered by a red vest. She has her hair tied on top of her head and large gold earrings.</p>	<p>Caroline is in shock and disgusted at the fact Max uses coupons. While everyone around her, max and the cashier, do not react, as if it is normal</p>	<p>Caroline: Should there be someone to do this for us? Max: Oh, he's probably in the aisle cleaning up after the candy gang Cashier: All right now, your total is \$70.49 Caroline: Wow, that seems like a lot Cashier: Well, I don't make the prices no do I? Max: Here give her the coupons Caroline: The coupons? Max: Yeah, here" Caroline Max, you use coupons? I had no idea. Max: You're looking at me like I'm on To Catch a Predator Caroline: We don't need to use those, I have my tip money right here Max: What are you talking about. I have coupons. Here, take them" Caroline: I... I have... I can't, I don't want to. I've fallen to far, I can't fall any further. Don't make me. Coupons are for... Max: Poor people. Like us.</p>	<p>Max and Caroline are interacting with each other, as well as with the grocery store cashier.</p>	<p>By asking where the person was that was going to bag their grocery's for them compares the upper class grocery experience to the lower and working class. Furthermore, Caroline's reaction to Max using coupons also compares the upper and lower class experience.</p>

**Appendix I** – *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* – Chubbs using her teeth to open a bottle (24:21)



**Appendix J** – *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* – Alana with the Ziploc bag under her armpit (24:54)



**Appendix K** – *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* – The close-up shot of Pumpkin putting the Ziploc bag in her pants  
(25:03)



**Appendix L** – *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* – Mama June and Doe-Doe's attire  
(28:22)



Appendix M – Here Comes Honey Boo Boo – Categorical Codes

Here Comes Honey Boo Boo: "3 Generations and a Pork Rind" (00:00-42:31)						
Classification	Body Language (behaviour)	Attire	Attitude (verbal/nonverbal)	Language (swearing, grammar, accent)	Interactions with other characters	Class comparison
Time of Occurrence	Honey Boo Boo, Pumpkin and Chubbbs are in the kitchen. Chubbbs to open the bottle of vanilla. First the tires with her hands and then brings the bottle up to her mouth to use her teeth. Throughout the scene, Chubbbs is shown measuring out ingredients and placing them into the Ziploc bag Honey Boo Boo is holding. Later in the scene, Honey Boo Boo is shown with the bag under her arm, in her armpit, squishing it. When Honey Boo Boo has the bag under her arm and she is making 'armpit fudge', she has a very concentrated look on her face as she is biting her lip. She then begins to stop her foot on the kitchen floor. Once Pumpkin takes the same Ziploc bag, she shoves it in the back of her pants and begins to dance around from side to side.	Alana is wearing a white t-shirt with a pink bow in her hair. Chubbbs is wearing a white t-shirt with pink strips and blue jeans. Finally, Pumpkin is wearing a leopard print blouse with light grey sweatpants.	Honey Boo Boo, Chubbbs, and Pumpkin seem to be excited to make fudge for their mother as they are eager and excited to bake. Furthermore, they are all seen smiling as they are in the kitchen. At the end of the scene when Pumpkin has the bag in her butt crack, she is laughing at herself while she dances.	"Go in the fridge and get the butter, and the cream cheese. Mama's been talkin' about working with Aunt Doe-Doe at the bakery. So were gonna her somethin' sweet to show our support" Chubbbs "I love sugar! One Tablespoon of butter!" Honey Boo Boo. "Two blah blahs. And that'll be it." Honey Boo Boo "And then instead of stirring it, we stick it in our armpit and we squish it up to make it nice, warm, and soft!" Chubbbs "Time to make the fudge! This is me making armpit fudge" Honey Boo Boo "Alana and Jessica were making armpit fudge. So, I decided to step in and do my own thing. But Crack fudge" Pumpkin	Alana and Chubbbs are interacting in the kitchen together. Later on in the scene, Pumpkin comes in to the kitchen to interact with the pair.	As Honey Boo Boo is changing her accent from her Southern accent to something like a posh and proper upper-class person. This occurs when she says "I love sugar! One Tablespoon of butter Two Blah Blahs. And that'll be it." Not only does it seem to be mocking the upper-class, but she is comparing their baking and method of making fudge as well.
24:03-25:30	As her sister greets, her as she walks into the bakery, Mama June groans and shakes her head, not only because she had to wake up early, but because she has to be there as well. Doe-Doe begins to smile and laugh at her groan. Throughout the entire scene, whenever Doe-Doe is shown, she is smiling. When Mama June turns the industrial stand mixer on, she jumps back in surprise as some of the ingredients spray out onto her and the floor. She looks from the mixer to people behind the camera to the mixer again. Mama June then looks at the mess on the floor as her sister laughs at her mistake.	Doe-Doe has blonde hair, a white shirt that is covered by a navy-blue apron and black pants. While Mama June is wearing a blue shirt with a pink apron with a black pocket and black pants. When Mama June turns on the stand mixer and the ingredients spray out, the light batter contrasts greatly with the black pocket on her apron.	When Mama June turns the corner to enter the bakery, she lets out a large groan. As her sister welcomes her into the store, Mama June groans again. Later in the scene when she is locking the mixer so she can turn it on, she lets out another groan in exasperation as the mixer is heavy and she is out of breath. Finally, Doe-Doe laughs at her sisters misfortune when some of the ingredients make it onto the floor when they sprayed out of the mixer.	In this scene, Mama June is heard swearing and has a thicker accent compared to her sister. She also continues to have subtiles when she speaks while her sister does not. "We're here in Griffin, Georgia at the Cake Box, trying to see if I can cut it as a baker" Mama June. "Nice to see you made it!" Doe-Doe "I'm a little worried about June makin' it through the day because she has to stand on her feet all day." Doe-Doe "Doe-Doe through it would be best that I don't interact with customers today, so I'll be workin' in the back" Mama June. "Sounds like I'm pissin' The sound make me wanna pee" Mama June "This is a hard task" Mama June. "She said, 'Shut the guard'" Mama June. As the Ingredients spray out of the mixer, Mama June swears which is censored. "Oh, my God, June" Doe-Doe	Mama June and her sister, "Doe-Doe" in the bakery kitchen.	Mama June is being compared to people, not only in the workforce, but people who are a higher class. Furthermore, by comparing Mama June to her sister, it reinforces the differences between the pair which are emphasized as Mama Junes mistakes and incompetence is being made fun of and laughed at.
28:07-29:50						

**Appendix N** – *Shameless* – Fiona cleaning dishes while Debbie is on her computer (7:24)



**Appendix O** – *Shameless* – Carl looking defeated, Debbie angrily shuts the laptop lid (7:35)



**Appendix P** – *Shameless* – Carl and Debbie on the back porch  
(12:17)



**Appendix Q** – *Shameless* – The homeless men leaving the pool as Debbie is trying to give Carl  
the garden hose  
(12:35)



Appendix R – *Shameless* – Categorical Codes

		Shameless: "Just Like the Pilgrims Herd" (0302-50:18)				
Classification Time of Occurrence	Body Language (behaviour)	Attire	Attitude (verbal/nonverbal)	Language (swearing, grammar, accent)	Interactions with other characters	Class comparison
7207-736	<p>As Fiona begins to speak to Debbie, she is wiping off Liam's face then walks over to the kitchen island to clean up the dishes from breakfast. She whips out the extra food from the bowls while she is speaking to her sister. When Debbie is told to clean the memory from the computer, she tilts her head to one side and furrows her eyebrows. Also, from the tone of her voice she is becoming angry that her sister is not only telling her what to do, but talking away the computer. In response, Fiona gives her an angry look for walking back. This behaviour also contributes to their non-verbal attitude.</p> <p>Fiona walks from one side of the island over to the sink while carrying many bowls and plates.</p> <p>At the end of the scene, both Carl and Debbie look defeated as Debbie angrily states the lid of the laptop hard enough so it can be heard and Carl flops his arms to his side.</p>	<p>Fiona is dishevelled as her hair is in a messy bun on the top of her head. She is wearing a grey t-shirt over top of a dark blue long sleeve shirt, black jeans and a watch on her right wrist.</p> <p>Debbie is wearing a blue shirt that is covered by a light grey sweater and blue jeans.</p> <p>Karl is wearing a light grey shirt that is mostly covered by an oversized red and black plaid long sleeve shirt with black jeans.</p> <p>In his nightgown, Liam is wearing a green long sleeve shirt and dark pants.</p>	<p>When Debbie is told to clean the memory from the computer, she tilts her head to one side and furrows her eyebrows. Also, from the tone of her voice she is becoming angry that her sister is not only telling her what to do, but talking away the computer. Similar to Debbie's attitude, Carl is also angry with his sister and he stomps into the kitchen with an angry look on his face. Fiona expresses her irritation at her siblings talking back to her throughout the scene such as when Carl questions about his Xbox. Fiona backs back at him: "everything" as her eye brows become furrowed together as well. At the end of the scene, by accentuating the word "eat", she shows her irritation and places importance on the word. She accentuates certain words to place importance on them "EAT." At the end of the scene, Carl and Debbie's attitudes turn from angry and irritated so sad as they can not win against their older sister.</p>	<p>"Dads, wipe the memory on the computer. Take it down to Mr. Sam's pawn shop and see how much you can get for it." Fiona</p> <p>"What? No." Debbie</p> <p>Carl walks into the kitchen from the living room</p> <p>"My Xbox too?" Carl</p> <p>"Everything?" Fiona</p> <p>"Grandma bought us that stuff?" Carl</p> <p>"Yeah, well we have no money since Monica stole the squirrel hand and we need to eat." Fiona</p>	<p>Fiona, Debbie, Carl and Liam</p>	<p>There are interactions between those who ascribe to working-class and those her are part of the lowest class as they are homeless. As Debbie speaks to them she is not rude in any way. Through there interaction, viewers begin to compare their lives with the homeless people and how they bathe themselves.</p>
12:17-13:23	<p>At the beginning of the scene, Debbie and Carl picks up some tools. When Debbie tells Carl that no one is going to let him have a gun, Carl rolls his eyes. When Debbie tells Carl to take the garden hose, as she extends her arm towards him with the hose in her hand, Carl touches the end of the hatchet he is holding, swings it backwards, and brings it forward to hit the side of the pool. At the end of the scene, Debbie exhales strongly expressing her frustration in Carl's action. During this she lowers her shoulders and brings her hands down in defeat.</p>	<p>Carl is wearing a grey hat and long dark green jacket that has a fur hood on the back. Debbie is wearing a blue jacket with its hood up to cover her head. As their clothes underneath their jackets start to peek out, the pair are wearing the same clothes as they were in the previously analysed scene. One of the homeless men is naked, while the other is fully clothed, wearing a dark grey hat, a red and dark grey scarf, dark brown sweater, and very tattered and frayed blue jeans.</p>	<p>At the beginning of the scene, through his tone of voice, Carl is annoyed at Mr. Sam for not selling him a gun. Debbie responds to this sarcastically as she is providing an answer to his obvious remark. Also noted, is Carl's eye roll at his sisters remark. As Debbie talks to the two homeless men, she does not have a mean or mad attitude as she kicks them out of the pool. She does this very nonchalantly as if this is a common occurrence around their neighbourhood. As the scene ends, Debbie becomes angry at Carl for putting a hole in the pool. She yells at him and sighs as that was not what was supposed to happen.</p>	<p>"Mr. Sam at the pawn shop's a douche. Wouldn't I trade me an iPad for a Ruger." Carl</p> <p>"No ones gonna let you have a gun, Carl?" Debbie</p> <p>"Little Hank gets to have one?" Carl</p> <p>"Because his dad hijacked a bunch of military cargo." Debbie</p> <p>As they walk down the stairs: "We gotta empty the pool out Conrad. You guys gotta get outta here." Debbie</p> <p>"Here, go screw this end of the hose into Tony's spigot so we can siphon the water out." Debbie</p> <p>"Or we could just do it this way." Carl</p> <p>"Carl?" Debbie</p> <p>"I'll just patch it up this summer. See ya!" Carl</p>	<p>Carl and Debbie interact with each other. Debbie interacts with the two homeless men (one is named Conrad).</p>	

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