

Breaking Down Bromance: An Analysis of NigaHiga's *Bromance* Music Video and *Word of the Day: Bromance* Episode

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In a society where expectations often influence people more than they are aware of, we find a humorous take on society's expectations of men and how they express affection toward one another. NigaHiga's *Word of the Day: Bromance* video and *Bromance* music video poke fun at the idea of bromance and, along the way, provide us with an opportunity to look deeper into this male-to-male relationship. Bromance is a combination of the word brother and romance. It is a term created to capture the essence of a male bond so strong and intimate, it assaults the border between brotherhood and romantic, homosexual relationships. The term coined for relationships between those of the same gender such as this is Homosocial. This paper then looks at bromance as a homosocial relationship and discusses men's struggle to perform according to hegemonic masculinity and express affection at the same time—as exhibited by Nigahiga's videos, now an Internet sensation.

Keywords: Masculinity, Internet video, NigaHiga, Homosocial, Bromance

Gender research has been the focus of entire departments of research institutions and universities around the globe; however, most of the efforts in gender research have been noticeably focused on feminism and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex (LGBTQI) sphere.

There is a current research trend on the importance of gender equality in the development of nations (Gender, 2013; Institute of Development Studies, 2013; O'Dea, 2013). There are also inquiries on the different emerging genders – specifically the equality of opportunities and rights for these genders in different fields. Also, to our fascination, the acronym LGBT has grown to include Q and I and may continue to grow. This is not to say that these institutions' battles for gender equality are over. They continue to fight for equality in nations, such as India and China, as well as in Europe (O'Dea, 2013). But as such research and developments are being made, we seem to take for granted the gender we've made as benchmark for this equality: masculinity.

This is not to say that we are completely devoid of research on masculinity; however, studies on new masculinities have come to focus on feminist studies, such as “women in male-dominated professions (Corocoran-Nantes et al.,

as cited in 7th Biennial International Interdisciplinary Conference, 2012), embodied masculinities in managerial practices (Collinson & Hearn, 1995, as cited in 7th Biennial International Interdisciplinary Conference, 2012) and queer studies and diversity politics” (Peterson, 2003, as cited in 7th Biennial International Interdisciplinary Conference, 2012). Further, despite these advances in masculinity studies, “conflicts and contestations persist around the location of men within women’s studies” (Landreau et al., as cited in 7th Biennial International Interdisciplinary Conference, 2012).

George L. Mosse (1996) asserts the importance of research on masculinity in his book *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity*, saying that people who hope to change society or plan to escape their marginalization must first take into account the stereotype of modern masculinity. Failure in doing so will render “any history of women’s or the gay emancipation movements” incomplete (p.194). It is in these studies on masculinity that we hope to contribute to our understanding of society and “provide some signposts for possible change” (p. 194).

Mosse (1996) builds up to this bold statement through a thorough discussion of the “evolution of the (masculine) stereotype that became normative” (p. 4). He first emphasizes the importance of the masculine stereotype by saying that “manliness was supposed to safeguard the existing order against the perils of modernity” (p. 3), and eventually mentions that “...modern masculinity [is] part of the cement of modern society” (p. 193). He then discusses this masculine stereotype as it influenced and was influenced by the events of history and how it has become the stereotype as we know it today. The events that influenced the development of this stereotype in Europe and North America include the many revolutions, wars, and struggles that the nations had gone through. Men were then expected to engage in duels, exhibit courage in war, possess willpower, and display quiet strength (Mosse, 1996). Mosse also emphasizes that “self-restraint was a key attribute of the masculine stereotype” (p. 15). Even as pop culture icons were eventually given allowance to bend normative masculinity they are still compelled to assert their masculinity, such as when actor James Dean challenged the convention of men being emotionally restrained by crying in public, he still had to assert his masculinity by rejecting his on-screen father who was the image of an effeminate man. By the mid-90s, men continued to assert what they believed to be their manhood, in accordance with the dictates of society.

Judith Butler (1988) discusses that gender is a performance guided by the laws of society, as developed through time. She explains that “gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather it is an identity tenuously constituted in time—an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts” (para. 1).

There have emerged and there are continuously emerging new forms of masculinity as well as new means of performing them—still in the context of society’s expectations of men or hegemonic masculinity. This now brings us

to the modern concept or stereotype of masculinity. For the purposes of this paper, let us treat normative masculinity and hegemonic masculinity as both referring to masculinity performed in accordance to the expectations and laws of society. Also for the purposes of this paper, let us focus on one specific aspect of hegemonic masculinity—relationships, specifically relationships between heterosexual men.

Moore (2012) asserts the importance of relationships, specifically friendships, in masculinity as he stated that “It (masculinity) is a performance conducted by men based upon friendships and gendered expectations of a societal construct” (p. 9). Further, he added that “friendships are in fact part of a larger performance of gender and masculinity that supports societal constructions of hegemonic norms” (Migliaccio, 2009 as cited by Moore, 2012, p. 11). From here we find that men’s relationships are part of their performance of their hegemonic masculinity and are therefore vital to be studied as we seek to understand masculinity further.

One particularly interesting form of relationship is known as “bromance.” Bromance according to the *Urban Dictionary*, is a “non-sexual relationship between two men that are unusually close” (Hellenbach, 2007). Elliot Stegall (2009), in his analysis of bromance movies *Superbad* (Mottola, 2007) and *I love you, Man* (Hamburg, 2009), also defines bromance as either “any relationship between straight males that borders on intimacy typically associated with romantic relationships between those of opposite sexes” (p. 11), or “any non-sexual, intense relationship between men” (p. 11). It is also described as “a blend of the words ‘brother’ and ‘romance’” (Elliot, 2007, para. 2), reflective of the idea that this is an intimate relationship between men that borders on the romantic. The term has entered the lexicon and has been the topic of movies and television series. Locally, there is a film bearing the title *Bromance* (De Ramas, 2013), though the meaning and the discourse presented by this specific film is rather inconsistent with how bromance is generally understood.

One Internet sensation, Ryan Higa, better known as NigaHiga, attempts to define, explain, and describe to his more than eight million subscribers what bromance is. Nigahiga earned his fame through various series of humorous videos uploaded through YouTube and was even proclaimed once as the “King of YouTube” (Gannes, 2009). He began as a young high school student, uploading humorous videos for family members who lived far apart from each other. The videos eventually grew more and more popular over the years. His videos have come to be known for their wit and humor and two of these tackle the concept of bromance relationships.

With his first video on bromance, reaching 13.2 million views, and his second, reaching 20.3 million views to date, he is able to present discourses regarding this kind of relationship. Interestingly, his humorous take on the matter helps deliver these discourses and their implications on masculinity perhaps without the audience realizing it.

The purpose of this paper then is to look at the “acts” or, as a collective, the performance of the males depicted in the videos selected, how they are treated and what this forwards about bromance relationships in relation to hegemonic masculinity. This is done by analyzing the two videos separately. For the first, the video is broken down into the different situations labeled as an expression of bromance and how it is received. For the second, given that it is a music video, the lyrics and the images are analyzed separately to reflect the conflicted nature of bromance relationships and how it is a site of masculine struggle within the expectations of society.

Word of the Day: Bromance

The first of NigaHiga’s bromance videos was published in 2010 and is part of his *Word of the Day* video series (Nigahiga, 2010). In the video, he defines the word bromance as “the expression of affection between two males who are not necessarily attracted to each other” (NigaHiga, 2010). He even gives a mock etymology and history of the word romance. He claims that the word came from the word romance, which he jokingly credited to the Romans. He said bromance started with the Roman soldiers who celebrated victory together after a battle. The video starts with a situation wherein a young man goes into a coffee shop and hugs his friend who is waiting for him. NigaHiga then comes in and says, “Hold it! Do you see what’s wrong with this picture? Two guys hugging!? Ain’t nothing wrong with that when you’ve got a Bromance!” (NigaHiga, 2010)



Figure 1. Ryan Higa, also known as NigaHiga, steps into the scene to express his disapproval. (NigaHiga, 2010)

He also gives eight different instances he labeled as bromance moments, with a big red “Bromance” stamp. The first six are as follows:

1. A young man comforting his friend for the death of his dog
2. Two friends celebrating their victory with a high five after winning in a video game
3. Two friends offering to foot the bill after lunch
4. One young man taking a sip from the drink of the other

5. A group of guys sitting in a car, listening to Justin Bieber's Baby
6. Two guys playing sports. (NigaHiga, 2010)



Figure 2. Two males, giving each other a high five, are immediately tagged as in a Bromance. (NigaHiga, 2010)

All these situations are labeled as relationships depicting a bromance. However, most of these situations may be easily considered as normal expressions in a male friendship in some cultures, such as the Filipino culture the researcher is familiar with as well as the American culture the researcher is very much exposed to. The nonverbal cues are not indicative of intimacy beyond a platonic relationship nor are the dialogues indicative of anything otherwise. Unless, that is, the culture NigaHiga became accustomed to as he grew up in Hawaii, USA dictates that such actions are actually uncharacteristic of masculine males. If so, then on top of these aforementioned situations, the characters listening to Justin Bieber's song while they are sitting together inside a car further raises flags with regard to performances of hegemonic masculinity. This may be because Justin Bieber's image during that time was that of a baby-faced pre-teen, wooing girls his age. To add to this, the popular stereotype of a Justin Bieber fan and listener is a teenage girl, gushing over the crush she is harboring for him. This seemingly diminishes the perceived masculinity of the males seen inside the car listening to the Justin Bieber song. Had it been a song from a more masculine-imaged artist or a more masculine genre, perhaps it would not have stood out; but the Justin Bieber song was clearly placed to make the situation humorous.

Another unusual motion is how eager one friend is to take a sip from the other's drink. Sharing straws maybe acceptable depending on the kind of relationship and the culture within which it was done; but, based on the presentation of this situation and this act in the video, it seems that sharing straws between heterosexual male friends is not a social norm. What then does this say about men and relationships? If even the smallest acts of comfort and affection are considered a deviation from the norm or an act of bromance, the text then implies that the norm for men is to show no affection at all. If so, then these situations and the way they have been reacted to reaffirm the *Boy Code* as

written by United States-based authors Terry Neu and Rich Weinfeld's *Helping Boys Succeed in School* (as cited in Cleveland, 2011). The code, which reflects Mosse's "key masculine attribute" (Mosse, 1996), self-restraint, comes in the form of "do's and don'ts" as follows:

1. Do not cry (no sissy stuff).
2. Do not cower, tremble, or shrink from danger.
3. Do not ask for help when you are unsure of yourself (observe the code of silence).
4. Do not reach for comfort or reassurance.
5. Do not sing or cry for joy.
6. Do not hug your dearest friends.
7. Do not use words to show tenderness and love. (Neu & Weinfeld in Cleveland, 2011, p. 38)

Given this "Boy Code," bromance relationships then are a deviation from the expectations of society. Even more so, then, are the last two situations in the list. The seventh situation illustrates two friends engaged in what seems to be a staring contest when one suddenly caves into a smile that exhibits thrill.

The eighth and last situation is peppered with the Bromance stamp. In this scene, two friends come up to each other and one—played by NigaHiga himself—praises the other's new haircut. NigaHiga then touches his friend's hair and continues to stroke his friend's head. The situation grows uncomfortable and awkward especially after NigaHiga says, "It's so soft. It's like eyebrow hair" (NigaHiga, 2010).



Figure 3. NigaHiga strokes his friend's hair, eliciting an awkward situation. (NigaHiga, 2010)

Realizing how awkward it has become, he stops, turns away, and changes the topic by asking about the weather. The big red "Bromance" stamp then comes into the frame and the video ends with NigaHiga's trademark giggle.

These scenes lean towards a much less masculine act, especially since the scenes and motions hint at a higher form of intimacy, where feelings of giddiness and intimate, prolonged touch are concerned. The scenes also hint at

attraction, which may imply a homosexual tendency for some viewers. These are also greater transgressions of the *Boy Code* and normative masculinity, as may be established by society.

This is reflected by how bromance is treated with disdain and rejection throughout the video, with NigaHiga immediately pointing out that “two guys hugging” is “something wrong” (NigaHiga, 2010). He emphasizes on this further through the big, red “Bromance” stamp imprinted on the screen after one situation (NigaHiga, 2010). The big, red stamp is reminiscent of the “Rejected” stamp used in movies and the tone of his voice as he says “Bromance” is that of aggression, anger, and disdain.

Bromance the Music Video

NigaHiga’s treatment and presentation of bromance changed in a music video he produced two years later. The video is much more approving and basically promotes bromance. The music video of the song entitled *Bromance* (Nigahiga, 2012) was released in March 2012 and features NigaHiga with his friends. It begins with them playing pool when NigaHiga suddenly tells them that he has to go. He begins to hug his friends and they say “I love you” to one another. When NigaHiga turns to hug his friend Sean, Sean moves back and gives them a bewildered look. He asks them, “Why are you guys showing so much affection for one another? It’s weird” (Nigahiga, 2012). NigaHiga and his friends then break out into a song to explain to Sean the concept of bromance.



Figure 4. Sean (right) moves away as NigaHiga tries to hug him. (NigaHiga, 2012)

Both the music and the scenes presented in the music video reflect the conflicts in the very concept of a bromance relationship. To point out these conflicts, an analysis of the music and the lyrics is first presented and then an analysis of the scenes that treats further the discourses in the text.

The Lyrics

The song *Bromance* (NigaHiga, 2012) itself is a rap song, a genre which is traditionally classified as a masculine product of popular culture. Among the

more famous artists under this genre are Snoop Lion, 50 cent, Eminem, and Jay-Z. Snoop Lion—formerly known as Snoop Dog reaffirmed the masculinity of rap as a genre when he said, “In the rap world I don’t know if it (homosexuality) will ever be acceptable because rap is so masculine” (Robertson, 2013). Weitzer and Kubrin (2009) elaborate on this in their paper *Misogyny in Rap Music: A Content Analysis of Prevalence and Meanings*. They explain that the rap genre, among others, reinforces hegemonic masculinity by encouraging themes such as violence and misogyny.

NigaHiga makes references to the popular masculine artists of this genre in the first line of the song. He sings, “It’s like Eminem and Dr. Dre...” and yet he makes an oxymoronic statement by completing the statement as “... if I loved you more I might be gay” (NigaHiga, 2012). His reference to two quite masculine artists indirectly declaring love between them, which borders on homosexuality, presents to us the basic conflict of bromance: that is, maintaining an affectionate, almost homosexual friendship while at the same time maintaining heterosexuality and masculinity.

Similarly, the rest of the lyrics (Nigahiga, 2012) describe or paint a picture of a bromance relationship and its different aspects. Most of the lines of the lyrics of the song can be categorized into three: (1) those reflective of a normal male friendship; (2) those reflective of attachment, which is more characteristic of a female friendship but may be found in a male-to-male friendship as well; and (3) those reflective of a romantic or homosexual relationship. Although some of the lyrics may overlap between categories, they have been categorized according to where they are more likely to be found.

Table 1. Categorized lines from the lyrics of *Bromance* (NigaHiga, 2012).

Characteristic of a Male Friendship	More Characteristic of a Female Friendship	Characteristic of a Romantic/ Homosexual Relationship
Verse 1		
	And when I’m feeling down you know just what to say	
You’re my homie Yeah, you know me And if you ever need a wingman I’ll let any girl blow me off		
		Cause you’re more important than the rest

Characteristic of a Male Friendship	More Characteristic of a Female Friendship	Characteristic of a Romantic/ Homosexual Relationship
	I confess I'm a mess if I'm not hanging with my bff"	
		You know it's true You my male boo Now sing the chorus with me if you're feeling the same way too
Chorus: I love you*		
Verse 2		
Hold me to the promise that I'll be the kind of friend That in the end Will always keep you company" "Because when the world gets tough And times get hard I will always love you I'll be your body guard		
	Cause I'm your bestie And if you test me I'll prove it time and time again I've got your back until the end	
A brother from another mother		
Refrain		
		And now that I've told you how I feel I hope you feel the same way too But if you don't this song is just a joke But if you do, I love you

*stands for lines which are not categorized above but are discussed below.

The lines under the heading "Characteristic of a Male Relationship" have been categorized as so since they point out roles performed in male

friendships, such as being a wingman when picking up women at the bar, keeping each other company, and backing each other up. In addition, other lines made references to terms of endearment and relationships among men, such as “Homie” and “Brother.” It is important that the acts depicted conform with hegemonic masculinity because as the lines of the chorus go, “Nothing really gay about it (referring to bromance relationships),” and “[I love you] in the most heterosexual way” (NigaHiga, 2012). It is reinforced here that maintaining heterosexual masculinity is an important and is a core idea in bromance.

This is, however, not to say that the author of the text is homophobic. In fact, the singer directly points out “Not that there’s anything wrong in being gay” (NigaHiga, 2012).

The author then blurs the masculinity he established through the genre and the opening scene of the music video through the lyrics hinting at romantic intimacy. Through the lines categorized under “Characteristic of a Romantic/Homosexual relationship,” he shows that those involved in a bromance relationship are prioritized over everyone else and offered constant support. The lyrics even go so far to call the other his “male boo” or male girlfriend and directly declaring “I love you” to the other person. What is most striking among the lines indicative of romantic affection are those asking for reaffirmation or declaration that said affections are returned. The apprehension of whether the addressee of the song returns said affections or not, as indicated in the refrain, is reminiscent of infatuations and secret admiration about to be confessed to a beloved who may or may not return a suitor’s feelings.

And lastly, the lyrics under “Characteristic of a Female Relationship” have been categorized as so for the simple reason that they show support, attachment, and commitment without going beyond a platonic relationship’s bounds and maintaining the term of endearment “bestie” or “bestfriend.”

What is interesting about bromance as presented by the text and as a concept in itself is that it does not have to fit itself into one side of a binary opposition, specifically that of heterosexual versus homosexual relationships. It is true that on one hand, you have a masculine, heterosexual stand while on the other, you have attachment and intimacy of a basically romantic or homosexual relationship. But in the middle, you have mediation: a friendship between the same gender that performs heterosexual masculinity but is so intimate, so attached, it is practically romantic. This kind of relationship has been coined as a homosocial relationship.

Exploring Homosociality

Homosociality, according to columnist and blogger Hugo Schwyzer (2011), is the term “scholars use to refer to the power of same-sex bonds” (para. 6). These homosocial relationships, however, are more generally accepted between women, especially considering that society generally allows them to be more affectionate and emotional towards one another. But men, as previously pointed

out, are expected to be stiff in their interactions and their relationships. Scott Fabius Kielsing (2005), in his paper *Homosociality in Men's Talk: Balancing and Recreating Cultural Discourses of Masculinity*, acknowledges that there is “a popular view that men are unemotional, inexpressive, and impersonal” (p. 2). This, of course, reaffirms the quiet, emotional restraint expected of hegemonic masculinity. According to David Gauntlett (2002), men “...need to change” because “emotional communication and the expression of love and vulnerability are important” (p. 7). He adds that this expectation for men to be stiff and unemotional in their dealings with one another as part of hegemonic masculinity is a form of enslavement or a way by which men have been cheated by society. For this reason, Kielsing (2005) insists that men must find “indirect” means to achieve closeness among themselves. Whether these acts are similar to how women express affection for each other or not—Kielsing and Gauntlett are at odds. Gauntlett (2002) claims that “men don't need to become ‘like women,’ but can develop a new form of masculinity which places ‘a greater value on love, family and personal relationships...’” (p. 7). Kielsing (2005), on the other hand, claims that there are “favorable speech events,” where “the men do express homosociality overtly, and at times use linguistic features which have been more closely identified with ‘women's styles’ of interaction” (para. 1).

Intertextuality through the Scenes of the Bromance Music Video

Bromance, as presented by NigaHiga in this music video caters to both means: those more characteristic of a feminine relationship and those specifically male acts of expressing affection. This may be where the music video is in conflict. While the texts, as previously mentioned, carry lines characteristic of feminine relationships, the video presents references to feminine acts of closeness but also creates new acts of masculine closeness.

Before discussing the conflict in how bromance affections are expressed, I will first establish the areas where the audio and the visual agree. Both the video and the lyrics are consistent with the references to and establishment of a masculine genre and masculine nature of the video and its artists.

As previously mentioned, rap is the genre of the music and thus, even the opening scene as they break into song is typical of a rap music video: a shot of NigaHiga and his friend, Chester See standing in a scenic seaside area, with the sun setting in the background. They are clad in leather jackets, dark shirts, and dark jeans, all blown back by the wind.

In addition to these, the scenes set in the club, as NigaHiga stands as his friend's wingman, and inside a stretched limo, where NigaHiga and Chester See are hanging out, are also reminiscent of music videos and movies with scenes set in these areas.

These references to masculine gendered texts emphasize the masculinity



Figure 5. NigaHiga and Chester See sing against a scenic background. (NigaHiga, 2012)

of the music video, which, as previously said, is also reflective of the nature of bromance relationships; though, there are some masculine scenes NigaHiga altered to reflect the mediation of this masculinity with affection. In one of the scenes, the stretched limo conveying NigaHiga and Chester See stop in front of a group of attractive young women. NigaHiga motions them to come into their direction but as the camera turns to the girls, NigaHiga's other friends jump from behind the line of girls and run to the limo. This reflects a deviation from the expectation that NigaHiga is signaling to the girls to go over to the vehicle. Instead, loyalty towards and preference for friends over these women was exhibited, exemplifying again, a bromance relationship and an act conflicting with hegemonic masculinity.

To show the feminine expressions of affection as the lyrics did, the scenes of the music video shift references from male-oriented to female-oriented texts. In one scene, NigaHiga is pushed on the swing by one of his friends while an annoyed Sean watches. This act of one pushing the other on a swing is reminiscent of romantic films and relationships such as that in the ending of the romantic comedy *Penelope* (Palansky, 2006). One of the scenes also features a group of friends having a pillow fight in what seems to be a slumber party. This is also a reference to chick flicks with girls bonding through sleep overs and



Figure 6. NigaHiga and Chester See call over what seems to be a group of girls. (NigaHiga, 2012)

having pillow fights such as that in the movie *Hot Chick* (Brady, 2002). These scenes are used to establish a homosocial relationship between two characters and to reflect a deep, unusually effeminate bond among the guys.



Figure 7. NigaHiga's male friends run past the girls into the limo. (NigaHiga, 2012)

NigaHiga used these references and intertexts to relate to his audience's *a priori* knowledge about which genre these scenes can be found and what these scenes say about the characters interacting within that scene.

NigaHiga used some original scenes as well. These are to show the acts he did not show through the lyrics that is, a higher, modified masculine form of expression without bordering on feminine or homosexual affections. In one, he breaks into the bathroom while Sean is sitting on the toilet bowl; in another he and his friends are happily urinating on a row of bushes. These scenes are humorous, exaggerated scenarios which can only be afforded by materials falling under a comedic genre of male bonding so intimate, it breaks down even the awkwardness among guys when they are relieving themselves next to each other. These are also acts not usually expected among male, female, or homosexual bonds. This is a means exclusively for men who are quite comfortable with one another.

Towards the end of the video, Sean understands and accepts bromance relationships and hugs NigaHiga back. But while they are hugging, Sean's hand moves down NigaHiga's lower back. The friends are shocked by this and push Sean away. Angrily, they ask, "Why'd you put your hand on his lower back?!" and accuse him with, "You've changed" (NigaHiga, 2012). All together they walk away, with one suddenly patting another in the butt and no one minding. Sean is left behind looking even more bewildered.

The end is also particularly interesting because it implies a limit for bromance relationships. The group's anger about Sean's touching NigaHiga's lower back may be a reference to romantic films where the male lead holds the female lead close to him by keeping his hand on her lower back. Ending the music video with anger against this move but acceptance of butt slapping reaffirms and strengthens the idea that try as we might to explain it, bromance relationships are complicated because of the unwritten rules and codes between



Figure 8. NigaHiga's shocked face as Sean's hand moves down to his lower back (NigaHiga, 2012)

and among those engaged in it. This also reaffirms the idea that bromance is also governed by acts that are part of a male identity performed within the context of a heterosexual friendship.

Conclusion

As an overview of the music video, the lyrics are inconsistent when it comes to the nature and kind of relationship it is implying. On one side it is a masculine friendship; on another, it is an effeminate friendship; and finally, it also depicts for us a romantic/homosexual-natured relationship. These are exemplified for us by the acts of the characters and the “stage” or setting in which they are performed. The music video is also inconsistent in its references to traditional pop culture scenes, shifting between masculine media products and feminine ones. The music video also brings in new scenes. All these scenes portray and make references to various possible acts by men to express affection for one another. But the inconsistency of the lyrics and the music video is consistent with the inconsistent nature of bromance relationships. The music video as a whole is reflective of the conflict of bromance relationships in that it hopes to be consistent with hegemonic masculinity and yet it struggles to express itself without contradicting the traditional masculine nature. Whether those in a bromance should choose a feminine, homosexual, or new form of masculine-homosocial expression, the music video does not make a stand.

Looking back on the two videos together, there are some things that are especially noticeable as well. First, the change in reception to bromance relationships from complete disdain in the first to strong support and promotion in the second may reflect society's fast-changing nature. Perhaps, in that short span of time, society has allowed this slight bend in the definition of normative masculinity. Second, as far as hegemonic masculinity and performance are concerned, the agents in the videos performed both acts in line with hegemonic masculinity and those that are against it in which they border too close to the emotionality and intimacy of femininity and homosexuality. Perhaps Gauntlett (2002) is right about men changing and adapting. Men, as a form of

struggle against the expectations of society, continue to grow out of the stiff perception of them and into far more expressive and affectionate partakers of their personal relationships. More importantly, these acts of bromance—seeing how they run contrary to normative masculinity and yet flourish—are part of men’s struggle against hegemony. The question now is will this struggle as seen through the acts of present-day heterosexual males, which are contradictory to hegemonic masculinity result to an alteration in the normative or hegemonic masculinity of the future? Historical accounts suggest that it is possible but it will be difficult, because the ideal masculinity influences and is influenced by society as a whole.

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