**Christopher Nelson – Sociology 101**

**Gender Lyric Analysis Assignment (TEMPLATE)**

**Song: Do You Think you’re Beautiful, by the Dance Hall Crashers**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9Sv4JbQe4U**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9Sv4JbQe4U)

Give us one, give us one reason to
Give us one reason to make an impression
Give us two, give us two reasons to
Give us two reasons, we'll start this obsession again

Don't look now, it's telling lies again
Don't you know that the mirror is not your friend?
Unless you're beautiful
And then, it could be the answer to your problems

**CHORUS:**

Do you think you're beautiful?
All cool and irreplaceable
Does it really matter at all?
Do you think you're beautiful?

Pretty girl, the one we idolize
Has she got cellulite or conversational skills
Is she real, did she enhance appeal
To make us love her more, who is the fool if she did?

Do you feel ashamed of who you are?
Do you love the color of your skin?
Did dad pay enough attention?
Or did your brother get more than you?

**Chorus Repeats**

Where should we start?
Beauty queen, magazine, steroids and silicone
Pick apart
Mirror, mirror, who is the fairest of them all?

Wouldn't you rather be smart
Than worry about what it means to get by
If you don't look right

Do you just, do you just tell yourself
That you are beautiful, do you believe it?
Did your mom say the right things to you?
Did she encourage you on your ventures?

Did junior high break you down?
Were the kids so mean that you've never quite recovered?
Or were you popular?
Or were you too busy doing your own thing?

**Chorus Repeats**

**Analysis**

 This song deals primarily with gender-specific beauty standards within American culture. Specifically, the song addresses issues of physical beauty (weight, facial features, etc.) that are positively correlated with the value of women within a patriarchal society. Stated plainly, women are socialized, implicitly and explicitly, that femininity is intimately related to patriarchal beauty standards which must be adhered to. This is referenced in the first verse when it’s stated that a mirror can either be a woman’s best friend or the answer to her problems, depending entirely on how traditionally beautiful she is.

 The chorus, which repeats throughout the song several times, continuously questions these standards by asking ‘does it really matter at all?’ In fact, the song continuously describes beauty standards while simultaneously questioning their validity in relation to other aspects of a woman’s value. For instance, in the lyric ‘*Pretty girl, the one we idolize, Has she got cellulite or conversational skills…*’ the artist is critiquing society by pointing out our worship of physical beauty, while pointing out that we actually devalue non-physical characteristics that would be praised in males (e.g., the ability to hold a conversation). In a verse which follows, the artist adds the element of maternal influence by asking, “…did you mom say the right things to you…’ Taken in tandem, these lyrics speak to the influence of family on the transmission of culture to their children.

Within the same verse, the artists specially address the role of gender socialization and patriarchy in the cultivation of beauty standards when they write, ‘*Did dad pay enough attention…Or did your brother get more than you*?’ Though not explicitly stated, the artists argue that a lack of attention by fathers can socialize daughters into a false value system in which they are taught to value their physical appearance because no other facet of her personality has been praised by the most influential male influence in her life. On a macro scale, this speaks to the existence of a beauty culture within the United States in which there is a high prevalence of eating disorders, cosmetic surgery, and other manipulations of the self.