

REDHEADS: IDENTITY, COMMUNITY, SUBCULTURE OR CULTURE
A LOOK AT THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL GROUPS INTO
PHYSICAL GROUPS

By

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ABSTRACT

Redheads have been collecting as groups on digital platforms steadily for the last ten years, these groups have manifested into the physical world in the forms of festivals, parades, and marches. Companies and organizations are using redheads to garner attention and to sell products. In addition, companies formed by redheads selling products for redheads have developed online, shipping physical goods to a geographically diverse group of consumers. As this niche market has developed, it created an active community sharing common experiences, jokes, and goals. This development has given light to redheads being an identity, community, and digital subculture. Redheads have not become a physical subculture or culture. There is a difference between the digital and physical world. The digital world can develop into the physical world in both positive and negative ways and the journey of the redhead is a good example of this phenomenon.

Introduction

Redheads are everywhere, and they are small in number but highly noticeable. Their ability to stand out led to the creation of stereotypes thousands of years ago that continue today. The subtle negative comments and lack of understanding of others led redheads to form groups in the physical and digital worlds to meet and discuss their differences. While some redheads participate in these worlds, others are ignorant of or inactive in this space.

Understanding why redheads have felt the need to develop into groups and share their experiences of bullying, difference, and identity is important to understanding the development of redheaded identity, community, subculture, and/or culture. The investigation of the topic as it applies to the digital world is relevant to today's society where many of our interactions happen online. This information will show parents, researchers, branding and advertising professionals, media production professionals, and redhead-focused professionals how to interact and focus their work. This research helps with understanding and possibly shaping the space known as redhead interactions. Redheads have developed as a digital group with today's technology in the physical world they face difference based on their hair color attached to stigmas and stereotypes these have often impacted their childhood upbringing and have led to the gathering in physical spaces to celebrate their red hair and push for change in the media. This thesis hopes to analyze this phenomenon of digital communities. Redheads are identity, community and digital subculture but are not a physical subculture or culture as laid forth in this paper.

To best address this purpose, research questions are as follows:

- Due to online platforms and easier access to long distance travel, people once separated can now meet in person or online. How are they meeting in both digital and real-world

spaces? What kind of interactions are happening in these spaces? Who hosts these gatherings and why?

- How might we define these online worlds? Are they communities, subcultures, or cultures?
- Are redheads an identity, a community, subculture, or a culture?
- Can or should we think of redheads as a minority?
- Is the redhead “movement” simply the commodification and co-opting of an individual’s identity for consumerist goals?
- What is the implication of this research for redheads? For brands? For advertising and PR professionals? For parents?

Literature Review

The literature reviewed is composed of: books, scholarly articles, and studies on redheads; journalism articles; and media including movies, television, and pop-culture websites. Scholarly articles are important for establishing the history, genetics, and interaction of redheads in the academic field. Journalism articles represent news and recent trends with redheads. Pop culture forms television, movies, and website articles are used as examples of stereotypes and describe redheads as either outsiders or insiders. This is an important topic because the representation of redheads throughout history has led to the treatment and interaction today. The representation of redheads continues to impact attitudes toward redheads.

Defining Identity, Community, Subculture, and Culture

Identity, community, subculture, and culture all face an intriguing problem. The terms are often used in research, with some researchers (Yinger, 1960, and Fearon, 1990) arguing the terms

are vague and overused. The problem is these terms are often brought into academic discussion but without a solid foundation or definition to what they mean. Little research has been done on the definitions and use of the terms, in an effort to standardize these concepts.

James Fearon found many different definitions for the term identity in his work. “As we use it now, an “identity” refer to either (a) a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviors, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential” (Fearon, 1999, p. 2). Furthermore he discusses the power of identity because “identities both as things to be explained and things that have explanatory force”(Fearon, 1999, p. 4). To build upon what Fearon discusses for the purpose of this research, identity is an aspect one calls oneself or another person uses to distinguish an individual, often self-claimed and a part of who one is. Identity relates to the individual a group of people can share an identifying trait or an identity but the aspect of a shared identity folds into the next level of a community.

“Community” might be one of the trickiest words in academy today because of its vague and all-encompassing nature. The term of community has evolved over time and is currently in academic spotlight. The current debate asks, “are digital spaces allowed to be communities?”

Rosemary Avance sets out the arguments well in the chapter *Community* from the book *Digital*

Keywords: A Vocabulary of Information:

Because the notion of community has been imbued with ethical and moral implications, claims that community can exist online are met with doubt, debate, and sometimes derision. Some scholars and observers express a reluctance to accept Facebook, Twitter, blogs, or forums as true examples of community, seeing these spaces as primarily

narcissistic expressions of what Manuel Castells calls the “culture of individualism,” emphasizing consumerism, networked individualism, and autonomy; rather than the “culture of communalism,” rooted in history and geography. Critical observers also rightly note that what is often called “community” online is in fact a consumer identity, created by marketers and sutured to users’ understandings of their own behaviors. (Avance, 2016, p. 67)

While some digital platforms are not communities, Avance (2016) asserts that “digital communities are ephemeral, united around a shared interest or identity rather than a particular virtual location” (p. 65). But the debate to define community goes back long before Avance. In 1923, Staurt Queen wrote in *The Journal of Social Forces*, “[Community] is a local grouping of people who share a number of important interests and activities, and who are more concerned about those things which they have in common than about those wherein they differ.” (Queen, 1923, p. 382) Queen also discusses how communities do not to be hostile to outsiders but in their minds denote a difference of being part of the group and not. Queen’s definition of community supports Avance when she says, “We might do well to remember the origin of our term community, which referenced a quality of fellowship before it ever referred to an aggregation of souls. It seems our term has come full circle, as disembodied souls unite in fellowship mediated by the digital.” (Avance, 2016, p. 68) The two agree that a community is a group that shares same set of values or identifying trait or experience, this group relies on each other and shares information. In this way digital platforms can hold communities although their style and format may differ from that of physical communities.

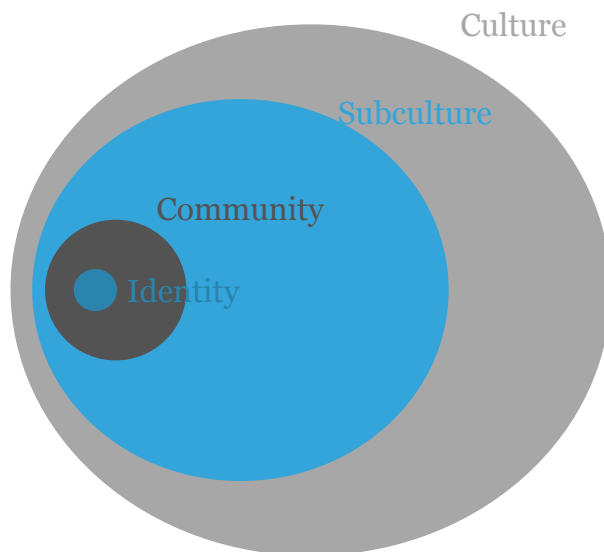
J. Yinger work titled *Contraculture and Subculture* in the *American Sociological Review* focuses on the overuse of the term “subculture”. The term in reality like “identity” refers to three major concepts. One in anthropology of underlying values that ties all cultures together. Yinger explains in *Contraculture and Subculture* the term subculture, “The term [subculture] is often used to point to the normative systems of groups smaller than a society, to give emphasis to the ways these groups differ in such things as language, values, religion, diet, and style of life from the larger society of which they are a part”(Yinger, 1960 p. 626), the third to define “contraculture”. Thankfully since this work has been published, “subculture” and “contraculture” have become separate concepts with the definitions provided as good standard practice in today’s definitions. “Subculture” will be defined as a group sharing set of norms and values accompanied by jokes, mannerisms, hierarchy, set standards of interactions, often including art, literature, and an effort to indoctrinate outsiders and children to the group through a set process.

An entire field of academic study is designated to the collection of information related to culture, anthropology. MacDonald noted, “Culture is not something that belongs purely to the past; it is an integral and inalienable part of what we are today and will become tomorrow. Individuals and institutions constantly create and re-create culture”(MacDonald, 1991, p. 9) Culture is the overarching umbrella that humanity fits into. For the purpose of this study culture will be defined as, the customs, patterns, beliefs and understandings shared, taught, and accepted by a group of people.

Since identity is focused on the individual it is the smallest unit of organization for each aspect. Community is the next level since it can be based in a shared identity. Surrounding community is subculture since subculture is a subset of culture it is one step down from culture

and one step up from community. Multiple communities can be in one subculture but also a single community can be a subculture if they have enough of the described attributes to be an existing subset culture.

Figure 1. Organization of Terms



The Origins of Redhead Stereotypes

The concentration of redheads in northern Europe tied group stigmas to red hair. The Vikings were the primary carriers of the redhead gene across northern Europe to Scotland, Ireland, and Iceland. There is a distinct increase in redheads in the villages they raided and

pillaged (Horne, 2013). The Vikings ensured that raiding, violence, and savageness was attached to redheads.

However, the history of the redhead is not limited to the northern Vikings. Thrace, north of Greece, or in modern-day Turkey on the European side, had a higher population of redheads (Harvey, 2015). Thrace and the Thracians were natural enemies of the Greeks and redheaded Thracians were often enslaved, and became a comedic character mocked in Greek theatre (Wrenhaven, 2013). This is the first historical example of redheads as slaves and as fools to be mocked.

The idea of the redheaded fool was continued and incorporated in theatre with the red fat man, which evolved into the creation of the redheaded clown (Harvey, 2015). Some of the most famous clowns, Ronald McDonald, Howdy Doody, and more recently, IT, have unnaturally vibrant red-hair. The clowns also carry a creepy connotation, which is why they are easily carried into horror films. The clown perception of goofy, unserious, or downright scary has become correlated effectively with redheads, especially redheaded men (Knight, 2015; Harvey 2015).

In Egypt, redheads were both honored and hated. In Egyptian mythology, the god Set is evil and associated with infertility, death and evilness (Harvey, 2015). Those redheads of a lower status would often be associated with Set. However, the sun god Ra was red, so it was popular for the cultural elites to dye their hair red with henna-like dyes to imitate Ra (Harvey, 2015).

Redheads faced the most hatred in medieval time when red hair became associated with the Jewish community. To clarify, being Jewish in medieval Europe under the reign of the Roman Catholic church was dangerous and stigmatizing. With so many redheaded Jewish

people, all redheads became associated with Jewish people during that time (Harvey, 2015). They were considered untrustworthy, ugly, evil, and dangerous (Eldridge, 2006).

These sentiments were continued by Dickens in Victorian era literature, in his characters Uriah in *David Copperfield* and Fagin in *Oliver Twist* are particularly good examples (McDonald, 2005). Redheads are often described as animals or compared to animals. In her work *Red-Headed Animal!': Race, Sexuality and Dickens's Uriah Heep*, Tara MacDonald elaborates on the red-headed animal in Dickens' writing,

As a red-headed animal, Uriah is himself represented as a threatening phallus. Further, this redhead could also refer to the colorful exposure of the shaft owing to circumcision, a practice that was often associated with Jews in the nineteenth century. This imagery suggests that Uriah is not only an erotic figure for David but also that he is positioned as threatening to Agnes 's virginal English body (MacDonald, 2005, p. 58).

The redhead animal association Charles Dickens so clearly describes rises from existing stereotypes of Jews (Eldridge, 2006; Harvey, 2015a). Jews were portrayed as having red hair, animal characteristics, and physical ugliness. They were demonized and considered effeminate (Eldridge, 2006). Redheads were often considered to be in association with Jews in characters of Dickens' own writing, but also in the theater.

The redhead negative stereotypes developed in the theatrical character of the Thracian fool and slave. Furthermore, redheads became a second-class citizen in the form of the wicked Jew. The Thracian population had several redheads, so it makes sense that the Jewish population would take on the characteristics of the Thracian fool. (Harvey, 2015a; Wrenhaven, 2013).

While In contrast, today the beauty of natural Jewish redheads is captured in the photography exhibit, *The Beautiful Ginger Project* by Nurit Benchetrit. In addition, the historical redheaded animal stereotype appears to be fading, as it did not come up as a stereotype in a single interview, and there is less literature on it. While the theatrical redhead fool is still very much in existence, the redhead animal has morphed into the redheaded bully cliché.

Art also reflects the evil stereotype. In art, Judas, Eve, Adam's supposed first wife Lilith, Peter, and King Herod are all often portrayed as redheads, when it is very unlikely they were all redheads (Harvey, 2015; Cohen, 2000; Ernhardt, 2012).

These stereotypes have remained in and slowly evolved into the modern era. For example, the violent tempered redhead can be seen in the wildlings of the North, Ygritte and Tormund, in *Game of Thrones*, Merida from Disney Pixar movie *Brave*, and Isla Fisher's aggressive character, Anna Malloy, in the movie *Tag* or her beautiful but crazy and aggressive character, Gloria Cleary, in *Wedding Crashers*.

The comedic redheaded fool stereotype has remained, but it has adapted from being merely mockable to lovable as well. Stories of Amelia Bedelia, a lovely but not too bright housemaid with red hair, maintain the stereotype, along with *The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt's* title character; Kimmy is a lovable and goofy redhead struggling to fit into the world around her and makes many comedic mistakes through lack of understanding. She is an ideal example of the redheaded fool in today's pop culture. More lovable redheaded comedic characters include *I Love Lucy's* Lucy MacGillicuddy; Harry Potter series' Weasley family, and Conan O'Brien.

The villainous redhead stereotype has also remained. For example, in *Alice in Wonderland*, the Queen of Hearts is often portrayed as a redhead. In fact, the villainous redhead

has become more ambiguous and is often portrayed as an anti-hero instead of a straightforward villain. Melisandre from *Game of Thrones*, Natasha Romanoff as Black Widow in the Marvel Universe, and Mystique from X-men series are all examples of this changing stereotype of the redhead. However, the redheaded hero has also arrived in the form of Elastigirl from the *Incredibles* one and two.

The final stereotype, the redhead seductress has changed very little. From Julia Roberts' character in *Pretty Woman* to Jessica Rabbit in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* and Christina Hendricks' character Joan Harris on *Mad Men*, each character is a modern seductress with beauty and charm.

These characters show a unique difference between standards for redhead women and non-redhaired women. Redhaired women are allowed to express their sexuality and speak their mind more freely. This idea has been perpetuated in characters of all media types including: novels with Anne Shirley of *Anne of Green Gables* and Ginny Weasley from the Harry Potter series; cartoon characters Jessica Rabbit and Pippi Longstocking; television's Lucy Ricardo of *I Love Lucy*, and Joan Holloway of *Mad Men*; movie characters Rose Dewitt Buckater of *Titanic* and Vivian Ward of *Pretty Women*; and theater's Annie from *Annie*. These characters are bold and break female social norms in their own specific ways. Redheaded women are given the benefit of being different in a way that lets them expand their horizons. Gender bias is prevalent in redheaded characters with male characters denied the positive benefits appointed to female characters.

You're a Redhead. You Must be Irish

A question many redheads face is “Are you Irish?” or “Is your family from Ireland?” It would be rude to ask a black person because they are black they must be from (insert African country here). So why do people ask or assume that redheads must be from Irish descent? This may be because Ireland has one of the highest ratio of redheads in the world. However, Scotland and the Udmurt region in Russia have even higher percentages around 12% of the population (Harvey, 2015). Moreover, Scandinavia, Iceland, Norway, Netherlands, France, Germany and Switzerland all have high populations of redheads, with some areas being 5-10% of the population (Harvey, 2015).

Benefits of Being an Ethnic other

Many anthropology studies find that redheads are “ethnic others”, meaning that as a group they are a subset, either they are their own small group that stands alone and/or they are treated differently from the larger group (Knight, 2015; Harvey, 2015a; Harvey 2015b). In the case of redheads, they are often considered part of the Caucasian population, but they are treated differently within that group. They also occur everywhere naturally, so when they occur they are not just Americans or Scottish, German, Israeli etc. they take on an additional classification with their physical attribute. They are no longer just their race or nationality but also something more and many of them are still treated differently because of this trait. In essence, they don’t belong in any one category, so they go in the miscellaneous category of “ethnic other”. Although there are many drawbacks, including bullying, to the ethnic “other” label, there are some advantages, the majority of which are afforded disproportionately to women.

Redhead women are allowed to be bolder, stronger, and break social norms that other women are not allowed to break. Redhead women are permitted to act more like men. They can

be successful in business and more easily considered power players and leaders. “It (Redhair) is now one of the colors that bespeaks resourcefulness, ambition, and power” (MacCracken, 1997, p. 106).

An early example of a redhead female acting in a more masculine role is Queen Elizabeth I. She never married or bore children and kept peace between Catholics and Protestants while maintaining her power. A more contemporary example is Georgette Mosbacher, CEO of Georgette Mosbacher Enterprises and former CEO of La Prairie, author of *Feminine Force and It Takes Money Honey*. While less well known, Mosbacher has been making waves in business since the 1980s and became a CEO when female CEOs were nearly nonexistent.

The advantage of

Redhead Women versus Redhead Men

Redhead men and women are subject to very different redhead stereotypes. The redhead woman is often perceived extremely beautiful, bold, and often hyper-sexualized. The redheaded man is perceived as weak, effeminate, comic, coward or brutish. These gendered differences are no surprise because hair representation of the ideal man and ideal women are opposites.

According to Synnott (1987), “In all four modes of hair care, the norms for men and women are opposite” (Synnott, 1987, p. 383). Since hair is specifically tied to the view of ideal masculinity and femininity, it follows that hair color related stereotypes would also be tied to gender divides.

Hyper-sexed

In 1988, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* was released and searching wife Jessica Rabbit was a cartoon version of a sexy ideal woman. Wildly disproportional with overflowing breasts, a tiny waist, and large behind, she was an extreme of curves and female beauty. Jessica Rabbit is a

perfect example of the hyper-sexualization of redheads. The stereotype is so extreme it invades family cartoon films.

Jessica Rabbit is by no means the first or last redheaded woman who has been over-sexualized. In Dickinson's *David Copperfield*, written in 1850, over a hundred years before Jessica Rabbit, "Jeremy Tambling, editor of the Penguin Classics edition of *David Copperfield*, notes that red hair in the novel may represent 'excessive virility, or too much freedom'" (MacDonald, 2005, p. 54).

These two examples are good examples of the plethora of sexualized redheads seen in films, TV shows, books, plays and commercials. In the 2017 movie *The Greatest Showman*, the redhaired Jenny Lind, tries to seduce P.T. Barnum, even though the actress herself is not a redhead and the historical Jenny Lind was a brunette whom was never accused of having an affair with Barnum. However, when Hollywood sought to sexualize a female character, they changed her into a redhead.

It is understandable why an actress would dye her hair red to be trendy and perceived as edgy and fashionable. Amy Adams discusses how going back to her red hair instead of blonde helped her stand out when she was auditioning for roles (Mizoguchi, 2016). The red hair helps them create a persona of, "fiery tempers, unquenchable libidinous" (Stevens, 2014, para. 1). The history of the hyper-sexualized redhead female can be seen in art dating back centuries. Eve, Mary Magdalene, and Lilith are frequently found standing in portraits nude except for their red hair (Ernhardt & Morris, 2012).

This long-standing stereotype has been further encouraged in modern times by a recent match.com study that created a lot of Internet buzz. The study found redheads had more sex than

other hair colors. The problem with the study was the results were self-reported and natural red hair versus dyed hair was not clarified, discussed later natural redheads and dyed redheads are different. Dyed redheads may have reported more sex because of their perception of who they are as a redheaded, literally buying with hair dye into the redhead sexual stereotype (Harvey, 2015a; Mulshine, 2014). The Match.com coverage included an article titled, “Match.com Pushes Stats about Slutty Redheads in Honor of St. Patrick’s Day” (Mulshine, 2014). The article covers many of the themes of the Match.com coverage, which expressed that a redheaded woman was “rare and prized” and “sexually forward.” One article encourages men that hitting on redhead women is easy because of their sexual desires the men, “won’t strike out.” (Anton, 2014; King and Kasprak, 2015; Mejia, 2015; Mulshine, 2014)

Effeminate Men

The stereotypes of redheaded men is best explained by hair expert Anthony Synnott in his work *Sociology of Hair*. He states they are “good but effeminate, timid and weak” (Synnott, 1987, p. 386). In a 2012 study, Nicolas Gueguen had men and women go to different bars in different wigs. Consistently, when men wore red-haired wigs, they received fewer women making sexual advancements and did worse picking up dates from the bar in contrast to the men, who wore a blonde or brunette wig (Gueguen, 2012).

Photographer Thomas Knight created a Red Hot 100 exhibit that focused on changing the negative perception of redhead men as unattractive (Knight, 2015). When asked about his purpose when creating the exhibit, Thomas Knight noted how it was comical to think of a ginger male action star (Knight, 2014, pg. 47).. He states “(redheaded women are the) ultimate female” but “redhead men are in low esteem” (Knight, 2014, pg. 47). When trying to recruit models for

his exhibit, he called all the modeling agencies in London and requested male redhead models (Knight, 2014, pg. 47).. There were no redhead models to be found (Knight, 2014, pg. 47).. He says now each agency has one or two men on file. He thought creating his exhibit was perfect because it was time; “What is our new obsession with hot ginger men?” “Hot ginger guys were so taboo” (“Red Hot”, 2014, para. 3). Thomas Knight expresses the problem of being redhead man. In the book *RedHot100*, many models comment on the problems of being a male ginger (Knight, 2015). Model Gregoire Tine said, “Being red always has been a factor that made me kind of an outcast at school” (Knight, 2015, p. 19).

Genetic Unattractiveness

Science may be involved in why redheads struggle to get a date and are viewed as less attractive. In addition to the existing harmful stereotypes, according to Greg Stevens of *The Week* redheads face genetic deterrents to their desirability. He notes that evolution has taught humans to pick a mate with a diverse genetic background to ensure survivability and genetic advancement and to him redheads do not qualify as having a diverse genetic background (Stevens, 2014). While it may be true many redheads are freckled and pale, with a greater tendency to develop skin cancer, not all redheads fit this image (Healey, 2016). Moreover, it is often assumed freckles and pale skin freckles are indicators of a single genetic background. While Stevens’ claims have flaws like those addresses above, there are factors that are believable to the mass population as evidenced by a Denmark sperm bank refusing to accept additional donations from redheads (Bleakley, 2011). Redhead donors are still requested in Denmark, Germany, and Ireland but redhead donors are not in demand, especially in Spain and Italy but participants are being turned away because there is too much stock (Bleakley, 2011).

This is further evidence that redhead donors and redhead children are undesirable genetic offspring which is ironic considering redheads have many genetic advantages. Redheads are scientifically proven to produce more vitamin D in lowlight settings, more aware of temperature change, and more perceptive of pain (Harvey, 2015a; Liem, Lin, Suleman, Doufas, Gregg, Veauthier, Loyd, Sessler, 2004; Scott, 2009).

A Short Genetics Lesson

Red hair is caused by a mutation of the melanocortin 1 receptor, most often referred to as the MC1R gene. This gene works in conjunction with the hair color 2 (red) or HCL2 gene that provides red hair (Harvey, 2015a). While most redhead genes are recessive, sometimes, the gene can present other attributes as co-dominant, like freckles (Harvey, 2015a). The red hair mutation formed separately in both modern Homo Sapiens and in Homo Neaderthalis (Bradt, 2007). Red hair is genetically most commonly found on the 45th parallel line globally (Harvey, 2015a). The MC1R gene is not restrictive to Caucasian, freckled pale people: it is possible for natural redheads to be born in any population. Natural redheads have been born black, Asian, and Polynesian, although, the stereotypical pale, freckled redhead tends to be most common.

Redhead Extinction

Despite being well-publicized, redheads are not going extinct. The Oxford Hair Foundation released a study in 2005 that all redheads would be extinct by 2100 (Flanigan, 2005; “Hot’ ...Extinction’, 2005) The study was funded by Proctor and Gamble, a company that sells red hair dye. The idea for the study was that the MC1R gene that causes red hair is recessive and with more interracial marriages the recessive gene would be eradicated causing redheads to become extinct (Flanigan, 2005; Rosenberg, 2009). However, this theory works under the

assumption that the gene will then die out. This is not the case. The MC1R gene may become rare, but it will not die out unless every carrier of the gene dies or fails to have children. Gene carriers are not limited to natural redheads. Brunettes, blondes and black-haired people may inherit and carry the gene despite not phenotypically presenting the red hair trait.

A spin-off internet rumor from the previous redhead extinction theory blames climate change as the cause of redhead extinction (Younger, 2014). The rumor assumes that because the earth is getting warmer, climate change will cause redheads who have pale skin which forces them to avoid the sun to die. This would lead them to the extinction of redheads by the year 2060 (Younger, 2014).

There are several problems with these theories. First, evolution takes a long time and 2060 and 2100 are too short a time frames for redheads to die out. It would mean every redhead currently existing would have to die by 2060 or 2100, and no redheads could be born after 2060 or 2100. This would mean the author of this paper would have to be dead at the young age of 63, along with every other redhead in existence. The theory also assumes that redheads cannot absorb any sunshine without dying because they are all pale.

While redheads are more common above the 45th parallel, they exist all over the world in all types of skin tones, which would not be affected by a change in climate. A change in increased warm climate is more of an issue for pale skin, rather than red hair. The theory is also faulty because any person with pale skin would be savable since the invention of UV protection and sunblock (Flanigan, 2005, Rosenberg, 2009).

Despite the inaccuracy of the internet rumors, there are some genetic truths for redheads being more present in northern lowlight settings (Harvey, 2015a). The mutation of the MC1R

gene allows many redheads to create vitamin D in lowlight settings. This is a unique genetic advantage in northern climates where in the winter there is little daylight. Pale skin allows redheads to absorb more natural light, which prevented ancient redheads from developing osteomalacia or rickets (Harvey, 2015a). The higher amount of vitamin D than their non-red-haired counterparts prevented many redheaded women in this climate from having distorted pelvises from rickets which meant they had much safer and more successful childbirths. The success redheaded females had in bearing children lead to more children and population having the MC1R gene and lead to more concentrated populations of redheads (Harvey, 2015a). The ability to reproduce also helped build the stereotypes of redhead females being more sexual and fertile (Harvey, 2015a).

Red the Color of Attention

Besides the genetics and history of the redhead, the color red is potent in nature, imagery, and language. Red is a sign of danger and poison for many creatures in nature like the black widow's hourglass red belly, the small but exceedingly deadly red poison dart frog, and coral snake with red stripes (Robson, 2014). Red is the color of heat, fire, flames and the sun. Red is reflected in culture with stories like the Scarlet Letter and terms such as: "caught red-handed," "a red herring," "a red neck," "paint the town red," "seeing red," and "red-light district." Today stop signs and stop lights are red causing the initial instinct to pause at the color red and perceive it as a sign of danger, trickery, and unaccepted otherness. Red represents: passion, fire, danger, aggression, sex, blood, dominance, and power. The musical *Les Miserables* put the perception of red well. "Red: the blood of angry men!...Red: a world about to dawn!...Red: I feel my soul on fire!... Red: it's the color of desire!" (Harvey 2015b; Robson, 2014).

Many of the Redhead nicknames are related to fire and temperature. Redheads are said to have “fiery locks,” be “fiercely bright,” “torch,” and “torch-head.” This strong correlation to color and fire folds into larger redhead stereotypes of being “hot-headed.” Red hair and red flames visually look the same. The connection between the attributes of fire being superimposed onto the redhead becomes understandable since red hot flames are reminders of fire, hot, and even hell. The redhead stereotypes become clear as they include the names of things that are red and related to fire in other ways, in addition to their obvious physical appearance like “match-stick” and “hydrant.”

The Embolden Redhead

Redheads are often stereotyped as being independent, rebellious, and bold. The first recorded redhead event, the Redhead Round-Up had a prize for being the boldest redhead. The bold attribute of redheads has allowed for natural redhead women to be more demanding and powerful in business (Harvey, 2015b).

Finally, we assess the transformation of self, from red hair being viewed as a negative aspect of self among children and adolescents to being viewed as a positive aspect of self among adults. (Heckert & Best, 1997, pg. 363).

The boldness of redheads has been attributed to the bullying they receive as children. Many redheads are thrust into the spotlight and endure teasing from the time they are young (Harvey, 2015a; Heckert & Best, 1997). This hazing is almost ritualistic in the lives of redheads and perseverance and lead to embolden the majority of them to no longer fear standing out, but encourages them to thrive in the spotlight. Evidenced more later in redhead interviews, part of

this change comes from the nature of teasing redheads since most bullying happens as a child and tends dissipates as an adult.

Gingerism and Bullying is it Real?

“Gingerism” is defined as the discrimination of redheads. Teasing and bullying of redheads, both subtle and unsubtle, has been ignored for centuries. Before genetics and heredity were understood, having red hair was a sign of promiscuity or sin on the part of the parents. Therefore, red hair was considered a punishment (Harvey, 2015a). At the time this perceived confirmation of sin was an acceptable reason to estrange redheads from existing society through belittling and bullying. Redhead bullying is considered in many arenas a non-issue, it is still an acceptable form of mockery as no one truly meant any harm (Banks, 2009; Edwards, 2013; Moore, 2008; “Assult on Redheads...” 2008, Thompson, 2008, Clout, 2007; Harding, 2013; Roher, 2007). Examples of redhead teasing as humorous and acceptable are seen on many shows such as: *Modern Family*, *Saturday Night Live*, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, *Russian Doll* and *South Park*.

Redhead bullying has been taken to such extremes that teenagers have committed suicide over the overt teasing related to their hair color (“Popular Teenager Killed Himself after Being ‘Bullied’). Despite these tragic circumstances red hair bullying and discrimination is a point of controversy and debate. Los Angeles Time Reporter Sandy Banks wrote,

Public opinion has been all over the map: It's a hate crime, with redheads as victims instead of gays or blacks. It's an innocent prank that went too far. It's the fault of mean kids and inattentive parents. It's the influence of crude television shows and cruel online sites (Banks, 2009, para. 8).

Bullying by schoolyard peers seems to be a rite of passage every redhead child must face. Many redheads have been bullied, but likely not all. Redhead teasing, bullying, or microaggressions as a real form of bullying or discrimination because redheads are not a dedicated race, religion, gender, or geography. They do not constantly fall anywhere on Maynard's fault lines as they most often have very little in common except for their naturally red hair. The lack of seriousness constituting red hair bullying leads to the creation of the notorious "Kick a Ginger Day".

"Kick a Ginger Day" originated when a South Park episode claimed redheads were evil and had no souls. The episode spurred an online campaign of 5,000 people whom on November 20, 2005 launched an active "Kick a Ginger Day." The campaign included a Facebook page and a website that exists today with a live twitter feed (<http://www.kick-a-ginger-day.com/>).

While many people saw the day as an online joke some students took action and have attacked their peers throughout the years. In Los Angeles children were hurt by other children, six children at Wingfield academy in the UK were attacked, a 13-year-old in Alberta, Canada, was punched and kicked, 20 kids in Vancouver schools were sent home after being kicked, a tenth grade boy and two seventh grade girls were also kicked (Banks, 2009; Edwards, 2013; Moore, 2008; "Assault on Redheads..." 2008, Thompson, 2008). The California case, caused by the physical manifestation of cyberbullying, was not considered hate crimes despite students being targeted purely based on hair color.

A family in the UK had to move twice due to their children's bullying over their red hair, "Their children, Jordan, 13, Kevin, Ryelle 10, and Daniel, nine have been punched, kicked and thrown over a hedge" and "Their 11-year-old son Kevin became so depressed that he tried to

hang himself, they claim, and he has since been taken out of school.”(Clout, 2007, para. 5) In England, a 15-year old girl committed suicide over the ridicule and bullying she received over her hair color and another 14-year old boy committed suicide over redheaded bullying (Harding, 2013).

There is even a book logging stories of redhead bullying titled, *Trials and Tribulations of Being a Redhead: Bullied, Taunted and Teased for being a Redhead*. A documentary is being made on gingerism and their website has live stories recording instances of redhead bullying (<http://gingerism.com/>). “Red hair: a Blessing or a Curse” by Joanne S. published in the *Washington Post* notes the difference of treatment and discrimination of redheads (2015).

Despite the mass evidence of bullying and redhead recorded examples to exhibit the gingerism occurring, red hair as a point of bullying is still not taken seriously and is still brought into debate. An article published by the BBC, “Is Gingerism as Bad as Racism?” discusses how ginger based insults are a, ““an unhealthy release valve for stress’ and redheads, as a visible minority not protected by law, have become a target.”(Roher, 2007, para. 31) Redheads are still an acceptable group to tease and mock and they get away with it. (Banks, 2009; Edwards, 2013; Moore, 2008; “Assult on Redheads...” 2008, Thompson, 2008, Clout, 2007; Harding, 2013,; Roher, 2007)

Through bullying, natural redhead children have common shared experience. Many redheads across the literature report being teased, picked on or outcast in some way because of their red hair. Kicking is happening to school children and many mention bullying at a younger age (Banks, 2009). One of the Thomas Knight’s Red Hot model Mark Elliott stated: “I’m proud of being ginger. All the shit I got in school just made me more confident.”(Knight, 2014, pg. 59)

Many redheads in literature also report a positive reaction from adults, however, this does little to reassure them, “positive attention from adults was less important to them than the negative attention from peers.” (Heckert and Best, 1997, pg. 377). This leads many children to have lowered self-esteem and feeling of difference or otherness.

The History of the Redhead Gatherings

The first recorded gathering of redheads about being a redhead was in 1930 Taft, Oregon (Dodd, 1984). The Redhead Roundup was a beauty pageant and festival that only natural redheads could enter to compete (Dodd, 1984). There were competitions for redheads in swimming, rowing, and running (G. Edwards, 2011). Prizes were given to tallest, shortest, boldest, oldest, youngest, and most freckled redhead (Dodd, 1984; G. Edwards, 2011). It is interesting that boldest, a category associated with redheads, was made into a competition among them. One year a candidate won the boldest redhead contest by being a female in the 1930s who stated, “I asked him to marry me” (Dodd, 1984, p. 89). A woman asking a man for marriage at a time that would have been very taboo. The festival stopped in 1942 with the start of WWII (G. Edwards, 2011).

While no longer active, in 1996 one of the first redhead organizations, Redhead International helped publish *The Redhead Encyclopedia* which includes an extensive list of redheads in history, characters, and general information for redheads (Douglas, 1996). Other smaller redhead clubs have come and gone spiking during the late 1980s, disappearing in the early 2000s (Landau, 2004). Many redhead organizations started again around the mid-2000s and continue today.

The Redhead as Enterprise Tool

While perceptions are changing for redheads a market specifically for redheads has developed. Many redhead-centric companies have formed selling red-hair specific products: How to be a Redhead, Redhead Revolution, Ginger Parrot, Ginge London, etc. The niche market for redheads has been largely created by redheads for redheads.

However, many companies are using redheads to sell their products that have little or nothing to do with red hair. Upstream Analysis study stated, “Recent analysis found that 11 percent of the actors who appeared in primetime TV ads were redheads” (Pinsker, 2014, para. 3). Eleven percent is far above the generally accepted two percent of population. Why are redheads so popular in advertising? Simply put, redheads are, “built-in attention grabbers” (Maguire, 2017, para. 7).

In addition to a high prevalence of redheads in advertising, the internet is full of listicles, articles, and YouTube videos related to red hair. *Marie Claire* has five articles related to red hair and how to pick your shade on their website at the time of this writing. Many popular fashion and trendsetting organizations have articles related to red hair including, *InStyle*, *Purewow*, *Marie Claire*, and *Cosmopolitan*, while other sites promote different shades to sell their hair dye products like *Matrix*, “The 21 Most Popular Red Hair Color Shades.” These sites go over the difference of the MC1R gene some feeding into the pale skin stereotypes and others trying to break them, “A seriously misinformed rumor about copper-haired ladies is that they look good in only a few colors (see: emerald green).” (Maguire, 2017, para.9; Matrix; March, 2017; “Tips... Fading”)

Redhead Mascot

Some redheads have claimed the orangutan as their mascot. At Redhead Day UK a booth raised money and awareness for their red-haired friend. The Tywnncross Zoo has “Orangutan Day: Free Entry to for redheads.” In addition, the red fox has found a friend among redheads. Alexandra Bochkareva’s photography exhibit, FairyTale Redheads, features numerous photos of redheads with foxes.

Method

To gain a deeper understanding of redheads and how redheads are perceived in modern society, the researcher took a three-prong approach. First, a review was conducted of the four largest redhead websites and 10 designated redhead events for the cause of their creation, purpose, and reach. Next participants were observed at Redhead Day UK. Finally, redheads were interviewed on their perception of red hair. Each section worked to answer a different aspect of the research questions. Case studies and literature review investigated the dialogue happening about redheads by both redheads and non-redheads, highlighting what makes a group and how they operate becomes clear. The case studies investigation provides a clearer picture of the distinctions between the digital and physical worlds of redheads. This helps answer the questions “Can we consider these online worlds communities, subcultures or cultures?” and “Is the redhead ‘movement’ simply the commodification and co-opting of an individual’s identity for consumerist goals?” participant observation and redhead interviews, combined with information from the previous questions, assisted in answering at which stage redheads are on the scale from identity to culture. These results helped this researcher answer the questions, “By looking at redheads, are redheads an identity, a community, subculture, or a culture?”, “Are redheads a

minority?” and “What is the implication of this research for redheads? For brands? For advertising and PR professionals?”

Case Studies

Redheads have been gathering, forming clubs, holding parades, creating literature and online forums, and building businesses for and by redheads with increasing vigor since the 1980s. Redhead events, companies, photography, websites were analyzed for sense of purpose and sense of community. To determine if redheads are a community or subculture, ten of the Redhead gatherings were analyzed along with redhead websites. Any redhead gatherings that were no longer active at the start of this project or in a language other than English were not analyzed. These miniature case studies will look at: when the meeting was created; why it was created; how many people attend or are involved in the meeting; what is the purpose of the meeting; and does the meeting sell products specifically designed for redheads. The purpose of the analysis was to capture recurring themes and the motivation of these groups as they live in the digital and physical world.

Participant Observation

To understand how redheads interacted together, the researcher attended Redhead Day UK in May 2018. The event took place during Prince Harry’s royal wedding and all was silent as redheads watched one of their own get married. Arriving at the Cecil Sharp House there were orange balloons outside and a ticket booth to check in and receive a gingers rock hand stamp, five-pound redeemable note for Redhead Day UK merchandise with Prince Harry and carrot designed currency, and sticker that said, “I was invited to Harry and Meghan’s wedding but I went to Redhead Day UK instead...”

Upon entering the main room there was a board with a list of the day's activity, rows of chairs setup facing a stage and a screen showing the royal wedding. Booths were set up around the room with redhead related products. While at least two-thirds of the people present were redheads not everyone was a redhead, some came with red-haired family or friends and others were there as redhead allies. At the Redhead Day UK booth you could purchase a shirt with your type of red hair color named. There was a cut-out of Prince Harry to take a photo with and the British Skin Foundation was giving away sunblock and discussing the risk and signs of skin cancer. Crossing the main room there were vendors Ginge London a clothing brand with the word Ginge designed by a ginger and KarmaKola, a company that specifically creates products for creating good karma and ending prejudice, was selling Gingerella and Gingerfella soda.

Wandering downstairs there were more booths with Hot for Ginger doing interviews on redhead bullying, a redhead makeup artist showing how to do redhead makeup, and a ginger coloring book to color famous gingers. There were more vendors: a swimsuit company selling kid size rash guards with strong UV protection; Ginger Parrot booth selling other redhead related products; an orangutan advocacy booth selling orangutan stuffed animals; and the author of the Field Guide to Redheads selling and signing her book. There was information on other redhead organizations including: Redhead Fan Club, Redheads Anonymous, and Redhead Reach.

Upstairs there was a children's area with a Princess Anna impersonator redhead Disney princess.

Back in the main room activities included: Caroline England singing her song "Ginger"; Jacky Colliss Harvey speaking on her book *Red: a history of redheads*; a session by Adam Rutherford, a geneticist, on the redhead gene scarf he had knitted by Knit for Peace showing the genetic code which spanned the stage and entire front row. An interesting note, before Adam

began his presentation he had to verify that there was red in his chin and that he was qualified to be a speaker despite his overwhelming brown hair. Since all the other guest were redheads, there was pressure for him to be a part of the redheads. He also used his time on stage to verify redheads are not about to die out, citing numerous studies and personal research. The British Skin Foundation and Orangutan Foundation talked about their organizations. Then, a group photo was announced.

More than a hundred redheads filed outside for a photo. Chatting, laughing and comparing hair colors. There were all kinds of shirts expressing pride in ginger hair. Little ginger children ran about playing as the adults looked on with affection. Everyone was all smiles as they stood in the shade avoiding the sun, since most of the redheads present were Caucasian. There was one exception to the Caucasian redheads, there were two adorable black toddler twins, one brother had black hair and the other bright orange.

Once everyone had come back inside from taking the photo outside and most of the children left there was Ginger Comedy Hour. On stage, a rotation of four comedians, each with red hair, was entertaining attendees. A common theme, jokes about their red hair. One of the male comedians, with long red hair, had the audience laughing over his hair flipping routine, modeling styles from proud Viking to beach bum. A woman was joking about how she saw a woman with blonde hair on the tube with a red-haired baby. Saying, "I could have just stolen the baby and screamed that this lady took my baby and everyone would have believed me because we were gingers!" After a few musical performances, host Elliot Brown, known for his YouTube show Ginger Snaps, welcomed the special guest.

Gingezilla was a masterpiece. A drag queen, with a beautiful ginger beard, fun musical performance got the dwindling number of redheads on their feet and dancing before the day ended.

The speeches during the day had several common elements. Many spoke about bullying and efforts for both diversity and unity. The atmosphere was warm and friendly filled with smiles and greetings. Everyone had a story to tell. They celebrated and discussed their favorite redheads and through sarcasm they broke down redhead stereotypes. The conversations were as diverse as the group, which was made up of redheads from Russia, Australia, Netherlands, United States, Germany, Ireland, Israel, France, and the UK. They enjoyed being ginger together.

Interviews

To get a better understanding of what redheads think of themselves, their fellow redheads, and redhead stereotypes 15 redhead interviews were conducted separately from the redhead participant observation. Each interview ranged from 25 to 60 minutes depending on the length of the answers the interviewee gave. The interviewees were found through snowball method and referrals. Interview subjects ranged from 18 to mid 70s; encompassed multiple races and ethnicities: including Caucasian, mixed race, American, British, Chilean; genders, geography, education, job fields, and socioeconomic status. The only consistent trait of each participant was their varying shades of red hair, or for those redheads who had lost most of their natural red color, honey white. Each interview's notes were compiled to find recurring ideas and themes. These findings were analyzed to understand how they broaden and added depth to the study.

Findings

The Lucille Ball Effect

Being a famous redhead is controversial. Historically people argue who was or was not a redhead in history. Each person on the following list has been claimed to be redheads:

Table 1. Potential Historical Redheads (Cass, 2003)

Nero	Eric the Red	Thomas Jefferson	George Washington
King Henry VIII	Queen Elizabeth I	Napoleon Bonaparte	Oliver Cromwell
Galileo Galilei	Vincent Van Gogh	William Blake	William Shakespeare
Emily Dickinson	General Custer	Jesse James	Florence Nightingale
Christopher Columbus	William the Conqueror		

While this list is not extensive of all the people who redheads have claimed, it does give the general sense of the people redheads are willing to claim and accept into their legacy. While most paintings depict William Shakespeare as a brunette The Redhead Handbook claims, “The most famous playwright of all time, Shakespeare was supposedly born a redhead.” (Cass, 2003) Understanding what makes these people good candidates for the redhead claim is important because the claims show what attributes are part of the redhead identity. Many of the people listed were warriors, leaders, innovators, adventurers, history changers, because of their bold, unforgiving strong nature. They may be perceived as the wild cards of history. By and large, redheads are happy to claim these fierce characters as their own, regardless of if the claim of their red hair is true or not.

The process of claiming a redhead true or not is interesting and is referred to as the Lucille Ball effect. Lucille Ball was not a naturally born redhead but she built a strong redhead

Figure 2. Redhead Names

Case Studies**Events**

Table 2. Redhead Events Internationally

Event	Location	Years active	Purpose	Event activities	Facebook Reach (to date)	Attendance	Notes
Redhead Days	Breda, Netherlands	2005-2017/2019 2018 was canceled to find a larger location to accommodate redhead demand.	“To bring redheads from all over the world together, allowing them to meet new friends, experience personal growth, have fun and meet their non-redheaded admirers.”	music, food, lectures, and other fun events	126,433 likes 122,014 followers	2,000+	In 2012 and 2013, Redhead day set the Guinness book world record to the most redheads gathered in a single place, 1,672. Parent of Redhead Days Chicago and Redhead Day UK.
Redhead Days Chicago	Chicago, United States of America	2012	“Redhead Days Chicago is an affiliate of the main organization, dedicated to providing socials and gatherings for redheads in and around Chicago, Illinois.”	music, dancing, food, and redhead red carpet	7,307 likes 7,253 followers	4,000 in 2017	
Redhead Day UK	London, United Kingdom	2018, Biannual	“redheads and redhead lovers”	musical performances, lectures, comedians, other performers, vendors and interactive activities	7,047 likes 6,847 followers	hundreds	
Ginger Pride	Belfast, Northern Ireland	2016, two events	celebrating red hair and inclusion of all hair colors.		3,184 followers and likes	500	Postponed until a new venue can be found, site no longer in operation

Event	Location	Years active	Purpose	Event activities	Facebook Reach (to date)	Attendance	Notes
Ginger Pride Rally	Melbourne, Australia	2016 and 2017	Support diversity and inclusion and promote Buderim's Ginger product.	Best dressed ginger, ginger beer pong, photo booth, ginger speed dating, redhead march	NA	1,000	Sponsored by Redhead and Nearly Ginger Association and Buderim's Ginger, a ginger food product company. This is one of few events advertising based and march for redheads not a festival
Irish Redhead Convention	Crosshaven, Ireland	2010-2016	Purpose to have a 'whacky' and fun time, and to shift the attitude of people about redheads. The festival focuses on supporting the Irish Cancer Society.	Crown a King and Queen of the Irish Redheads each festival	36,864 likes 33,791 followers * Second largest following	2,000	Unfortunately like many of the other festivals this event has been put on hold due to the overwhelming size and need for a larger venue
Ginger Pride Parade	Rome, Georgia, United States of America	2011	"Lighthearted way to approach anti-bullying. We celebrate our differences and rarity"	Redhead March, Ginger contest	6,777 likes 6,626 followers	880	Unique event as it is one of the few parades/marches for red hair
Redhead Picnic	Dunbar, West Virginia, United States of America	Last event in 2017	The group gathers to bring awareness to skin cancer and to try to break the redhead world record.	Picnic	1,377 likes 1,383 followers	232	While tiny, this picnic is an example of redheads getting together for fun. But, like so many other events whether it will return is a mystery.
Orangutan Day	Twycross Zoo, Leicestershire, England	2016 and 2018	Awareness to the endangered Orangutan	visit the Zoo			
Redhead Hunt 4 Huntingdon Disease	Orange, New South Wales, Australia	2017 and 2018	Focuses on using redheads to raise awareness	Music, auction and a redhead beard competition		769	

Clearly there is a demand for redhead festivals and events. Unfortunately the demand is too great for small groups to organize and afford. Redhead events are focused on redheads but also use redheads to bring attention to other issues, such as the Irish Cancer Society and endangered orangutan. The redhead power to gather not just online but in the physical world is an interesting phenomenon as redheads figure out how to interact with each other, as they bemoan the same struggles, and laugh over the same jokes. These events founded in the mid to late 2000s show that the online platform of digital world gave them the space to manifest into the physical world. The idea of a redhead festival has caught on worldwide with several happening in a given year all around the globe.

Websites

Table 3. Redhead Websites

Website	Purpose	Start	Content	Products	Notes
Ginger Parrot	“Where redheads and redhead lovers can read about the latest red hair specific news, features and information, tailored to those who are like-minded and like-headed.”	2009	Short articles redhead topics: Beauty, Fashion, Health, Events, Celebs, Photography, and Giggles with videos, competitions. Only comprehensive calendar of all redhead events, exclusive list of famous redheads or redheads who are specializing in their field, happy birthday articles for famous redheads, and collection of interviews with redheaded celebrities	Yes, their own and outside companies Red Hot, Ginge Line, Simply RedHeads Beauty product line, ginger snap card game and other fun products	Ginger Parrot is the most extensive collection of redhead resources and related information of all the redhead related websites

Website	Purpose	Start	Content	Products	Notes
Redhead World	“Redhead World wants to unite redheads of all countries and languages. We are bringing together all redheads (and a few admirers) to the same table to meet each other and celebrate their uniqueness while fighting gingerism. Redhead World brings you the best redhead news and information on redhead festivals all over the world. Our unique tools bring those with red hair closer together.”	2010	<p>Update post on redhead events gatherings and related articles, 18,757 followers on Facebook, redhead calendar community page where redheads talk to each other in about redhead events and awareness.</p> <p>In their photos section, collection of redhead pictures that redheads have added themselves.</p>		The Redhead World website has been shut down but their major organization has been moved to their Facebook page
Red and Nearly Ginger Association (RANGA)	“Peak special interest body for Ginger issues and go to organization for media on current ginger matters. RANGA provides information, forums, advocacy, media, and events all designed to allow our Ginger brethren to be proud of their genetic heritage.”	2009	<p>RANGA supports saving orangutans which is a fun twist on their reclamation of the word ‘ranga’</p> <p>They have their own redhead events, running list of famous redheads, and have dedicated the month of February to gingers calling it gingersaur, created their own superhero Ranga man. “He is a sworn protector of younger gingers, carrot tops, redheads, Fanta pants, rangas, whatever you call them. RANGA Man knows people that tease those with red hair have issues themselves.”</p> <p>TedX video, “Its a Great day for Redheads- The reclamation of RANGA by Joel Cohen.”</p> <p>RANGA has little information on their site for redheads but has a lot of opportunities to ‘gingerize’ as they put it.</p>	Created a make me a ginger app which will ginger the user, sell their own RANGA T-shirts, RANGA also recommend Rehotravel to specific red sites internationally including the Uluru, Pilgrimage to Red China, and Viking heritage.	Unfortunately since the start of this project RANGA organization has faded away with their website no longer in existence.

Website	Purpose	Start	Content	Products	Notes
The Ginger Net	ginger pride and has a hashtag #GoGinger		Specific pages for ginger pets, Hot ginger, Mo' Ginger, Ginger Recipes, Ginger Mixology, Ginger Cats, Ginger Laughs, and Ginger Pride The recipes and mixology pages are ways for them to promote their ginger product.	Sponsored by Buderim ginger a company that sells ginger products: ginger beer, ginger candy, and ginger refresher	The Ginger Net is a commercial empire in disguise. This ginger food company is using the redhead name and identity to promote its products through humorous direct marketing. The site is no longer active instead Buderim's Ginger site can be visited to learn more about the company.
How to be a Redheads	Created by two redheaded sisters Stephanie and Adrienne Vendetti who wanted to create a company that encouraged redhead friendly products and encourage and empower redheads to live confident redhead lives.	2012	Articles and tutorials for redheads on hair, skin, makeup, fashion, and confidence. How to be a Redhead website is a great resource for makeup, fashion tips, and encouragement, but it is limited on the scope of covering all things redhead. The How to be a Redhead brand has to unique features they create a redhead approved stamp for redhead friendly products that have been tested by redheads for 10 days. In addition, they tag everything for confidence with "Rock it Like a Redhead." How to be a Redhead site creates an article in a place in which redheads can discuss prevalent redhead related topics like whether or not to keep the word ginger.	Book "How to be a Redhead" which focuses on the different ways for redheads to dress, take care of their skin, and makeup tips The Vendetti sisters also have a redhead a monthly subscription box, along with clothes, bags, and redhead appropriate bobby pins.	Unlike Ginger Parrot, How to be a Redhead focuses more on redhead beauty, fashion, and products over cultivating a since of community and belonging among redheads. How to be a Redhead has unique products and capitalizes on a unique niche market.

Redhead websites explain the purpose for their existence, how redheads interact, and what is important to redheads. The websites have a strong action of redheads reclaiming words and jokes. Redheads have contributed to the Redhead World Facebook page adding memes and jokes about redheads. The jokes are mostly derogatory towards redheads but are shared and

enjoyed by the redheads themselves. This is an interesting phenomenon that redheads are turning the jokes used against them into their own humor.

In addition, the term “Ranga” and “Ginger” are being actively reclaimed. Something interesting worth noting, is in the last two years the very active space that was the Australian redhead community has vanished or gone deep underground.

Photo Exhibits

Table 4. Redhead Photography Exhibits

Title	Photographer	Photographer comments	Purpose
Redheads	Uwe Ditz	To help other redheads come to the realization they are beautiful and should be proud.	Pride
Redhead Beauty Book	Brian Dowling	“I want these images to show the natural beauty of women with red hair from almost 20 countries. This project was done without make-up artists, special lighting, and excessive Photoshop edits. I want it to be obvious that these photos are real reflections of the models and for people to end their stereotypes of redheads.”	End Stereotypes
Exposition Bretagne Ornaments de Rousseau’	Pascal Sacleux	“Mistreating redheads will never be legally forbidden with laws and monuments and even martyrs. So I think the only sensible things for redheads to do is be themselves.” “To me, there are four categories of red-haired social states: we all were mocked but... 1. The ones who got love at home and were strong enough to either defend themselves or speak back; 2. Those who, despite love at home, really suffered until adulthood but then were OK as adults; 3. Those who suffered at home from no love and had to face harassment; 4. Those who refused to even meet me.”	End Gingerism
FairyTale Redheads	Alexandra Bochkareva	“Redheads are special for me. When I started to make portraits my sister was my first freckled muse.”	Enjoyment
RedHot 100	Thomas Knight	“It’s empowering; owning your perceived flaws and celebrating difference.”	End Stereotypes
Redheads	Joel Meyerowitz	Shot in 1991, the photos range from all backgrounds, ages, races, genders, and sizes. Joel photographed redheads because they stood out and that drew him.	Beauty and Difference
The Beautiful Ginger Project	Nurit Benchetrit	Captured natural Israeli redheads, spending months photographing up to three redheads a day then whittled her exhibit into 150 “gingis.” “Gingers receive different attitudes from society due to their visual characteristics... I’m trying to investigate why gingers are so special and intriguing... I’m trying to express the unique character and beauty of each of the subjects.”	Beauty and Difference

Title	Photographer	Photographer comments	Purpose
MC1R Project	Michelle Marshall	“I want to stir the perception that most of us have of a ‘ginger’ as a white Caucasian individual, potentially of Celtic descent ... As we struggle with issues of immigration, discrimination and racial prejudice, Mother Nature, meanwhile, follows its own course, embracing society’s plurality and, in the process, shaking up our perceptions about origins, ethnicity, and identity.”	Beauty and Difference
Ginger Stories	Nina Dodds	“I have always been a great admirer of bright orange hair and the hues you find in the UK are breathtaking. I couldn’t believe that a nation could be prejudiced against its own citizens on the basis of their hair colour. I mean honestly, how stupid is that.”	End Gingerism

Redheads have taken a special place in front of the camera being captured by many photographers over the years who have been captivated by the unique beauty of red hair. Some wanted to build pride, some wanted to fight stereotypes, some wanted to end “gingerism”, and some wanted to simply capture beauty of red hair. Regardless of motivation, redheads are an important piece of art and wonderful for capturing beauty and difference. The photographic obsession with redheads exhibit clearly that red hair is an identity.

Participant observation findings

Redhead Day UK showed much about how redheads interact when together and what they find important. Throughout the day the fact redheads are at minimum a community became evident. Redheads had gathered to celebrate their uniqueness and share their stories. In addition to sharing struggles and jokes, they championed some of the same concepts: humor, pride, diversity of talents and interests, wariness of the sun from Caucasian redheads, and a love and support for their fellow redhead creature the orangutan. The amount of content dedicated to red hair is impressive and highly indicative of a community.

Interviews

Redheads on Being Irish

Interestingly, even among redheads, when asked stereotypes about redheads many mentioned the hot temper and two interviewees thought it related to Irish descent and stereotypes. Eight participants did not mention Irish or Ireland as a stereotype, but mentioned Irish descent as an aspect of being a redhead in other parts of the interview. Interviewee 1 said she liked the Irish stereotype because it reminded her of her heritage. But, what of the redheads who do not have an ounce of Irish blood?

The stereotype of being Irish is so powerful that it is no longer viewed as a stereotype but accepted as fact among even redheads. Redheads can be found in every corner of the world: all over Europe, in the Americas, Australia, even in Asia and Africa. Many people at Redhead Day UK this researcher talked to came from different corners of the world to celebrate being a redhead; The United States, Israel, Brazil, Germany, and Portugal were represented at the event. Although not all attendees were spoken to, so the possibility of additional countries being present is highly possible. One interviewee was from Chile, which shows the vast reach of red-haired people outside Ireland.

Redheads on Sex

Participants were asked, “Do you think redheads have better sex or more sex than other people?” Contradictory to the Match.com study 13 out of 15 redheads interviewed did not know or believe that red hair had anything to do with having better or more sex. The remaining two interviewees one stated, “Yes, I don’t know. Sure, why not” and the other “more inclined to want sex, but not better.”

Redhead sex and hyper-sexualization was commented on by many of the redheads interviewed who noted the stereotypes of “passionate” three times. There were four comments on

sexualizing: “good in bed,” “sex” and “sexual adventures,” Moreover, two mentioned redheaded fetishes and warned of being careful when dating and another three discussed being “fiery and fiesty.” Redheads seem all too aware of their sexualized status and their tendency to stand out. However, it seems the women feel the pressure more since both warnings about fetishes came from female redheads.

Redheads on Extinction

When interviewed most knew or doubted that redheads were not going extinct (7). Five interviewees were unsure saying, “I hope not,” “I don’t know,” “I wish we don’t,” and “I have never heard of that.” While three others said, “yes, I heard that” and “It makes sense.” While many redheads know they are not fading away the confusion from some shows the depth to which the rumor has spread.

Redheads on the Red Association

In addition, we associate anger and hot-temper with red because someone may go “red in the face” or hot like fire. In Disney-Pixar’s *Inside Out* the character Anger is red. This might explain why the largest stereotype redheads identified in interviews was having a “bad temper,” “hot-temper,” being “fiery,” “quick-tempered,” “fiery temper,” “aggressive,” “short tempered,” “hot tempered,” or “hot headed”. When asked if they knew where the stereotype came from Interviewee 7 said, “red emotion is linked to anger and red is not a positive color” and Interviewee 12 said, “when you get mad you are red in the face, redheads are already red in the face.” The negative association tied to color seems clear to some redheads.

Redheads Buying in Active vs Latent Redheads

Among redheads there are those who are actively aware of their hair color and appreciative of its difference. Active redheads are the those who are aware of the stereotypes and truth of the myths. They are engaged with the redhead world as they will talk to redheads more and are not only interested but want to attend a redhead event. These redheads are likely to say something to another redhead about their red hair and feel the redhead connection more intensely. If they do not currently own redhead products they would be interested in buying or owning them. Two-thirds of the redheads interviewed were active redheads.

The remaining one-third were latent redheads. Latent redheads would not put a priority on their hair color. To them red hair is like any other feature-just hair. They don't think about and are aware it is going to fade. These redheads are not interested in events say they don't feel a connection to other redheads. They recognize the redhead nod much like the Jeep wave (the Jeep wave is a phenomena where owners of Jeep Wranglers and Rubicons will wave or nod at each other in passing while driving without knowing the other person. They are acknowledging yes the other person has a Jeep which makes them in the same club of sorts.) and will nod and smile at other redheads when they see them but they will not go out of their way to wave, or speak with them. These redheads have no interest in redhead products and think marches are a bit excessive. They are aware of the stereotypes associated with red hair and the negative reaction they would encounter if they were to change their hair but red hair is not important to them.

Redhead Connection

Redheads are aware of a connection between them. Most of the redheads interviewed described it as an acknowledgment of understanding when you see another redhead who has gained prominence in the last few years. There is eye contact and a knowing smile. For the active

redheads this is often accompanied by a wave and or a comment on how fabulous the other's hair is. Some of the actives ask other redheads what color they call their shade since this is a unique identifier. Even though they are all redheads they each have individual shades of red and orange.

Interviewee 1 called redheads a "tribal connection." Interviewee two said, "There is real sense we're the same species." Other redheads describe how they know other redheads understand the name calling or the struggle with burning easily (pale skinned redheads). The connection is built on understanding they shared similar experiences growing up. Interviewee four described the connection, "It's happiness, like you found a lost sibling. A spark of happy." A few mentioned how they felt they could trust redheads more because there was a "redhead kinship" and they had found a "kindred spirit." Interviewee 11 said, "you hear about the twin connection that happens even when apart, it's like that." He described his connection to his redheaded daughter as something he does not feel with his non-redhead son.

Even the latent redhead can describe instances where they felt their red-headiness strongly. For one it was going to play a soccer game in another country and there were three redheads on her team and everyone was gawking at them like a "side show." In that moment she felt connected. Another described how the first time he was in the UK he was on a school trip and saw redheads everywhere and was overwhelmed he shouted, "My people!" He received many strange looks but still felt connected.

Among redheads there is a sense of sameness and commonality, which often goes unspoken among redheads. Interviewee 15 said, "it's a slightly unspoken thing."

Discussion

Since redheads have developed into a niche market (as evidenced by several redhead specific companies noted above), are used in advertising, and recognize each other as community and digital subculture, how they are treated and interacted with each other is important. This discussion begins with how they are treated currently and historically and is relevant to parents and teachers with redhead children in their lives; to media writers and producers for the careful use of redheads and their stereotypes; and for advertisers for representation of redheads in their campaigns.

Furthermore, knowing how redheads have developed from historical stereotypes to today's stereotypes plays an important role in the growth of redheads as a group and identity. This group and identity combined with modern technology led to the formation of a community and digital subculture. Redheads are important evidence that the digital world can help develop subcultures. In addition, there is a difference between digital and physical subculture.

Redheads on Gingerism

When I attended Redhead Day UK, I spoke with many redheads and many parents of redheads. There was a common discussion and understanding of being bullied. If someone had not been ridiculed as a child and/or was raised to love their red hair they had to say so. It was not the accepted norm to be treated well as a child for their hair color. Many older redheads could be seen talking to parents of redheads or the redheaded children showing them and teaching them to love their red hair to feel pride in their hair color. A Ginger Parrot representative for Redhead Day UK spoke to me about how she wanted to create a space that once a year these children could come and see that their hair color was something valuable. She wants to give them a safe space of love and belonging to make it easier to face bullying the rest of the year.

In our interview she also spoke about how she did not know or believe red hair could be beautiful until she went to university and was told so. For her, that was an enlightening experience for she had been called a ginger her whole life and to her that was ugly and awful. But the word redhead became a word of beauty. She is currently diligently working to change the negative association of the word ginger by reclaiming the word through the organization Ginger Parrot. Other UK companies are working towards this goal as well with the clothing company Ginge, Hot for Ginger online dating site, and Karma Cola's ginger ale Gingerella and Gingerfella, and the USA Ginger Pride Parade in Rome, Georgia.

The English have a relatively high redhead population. However, their redheads seem to endure more prejudice than in the United States which can be seen by the stronger cases of bullying in their news and the stronger advocacy movements in the UK. This may be because the English have a long-standing history of prejudice with the Irish and Scottish. Both the Scottish and Irish have some of the highest population number of redheads (Harvey, 2015). To the English, a redhead may translate to a Scottish or Irish person or from Scottish or Irish descent which would make them less favorable due to their long-standing history.

The English also have long instilled stereotypes and sayings within their heritage that encourage this prejudice. "Do not let the shadow of a redhead person fall upon you. It might give you bad luck." Old English Proverb (Douglas, 1996, p. 109). "Never lodge at red-haired peoples house, for these, be folks that are to dredge" Old English Proverb (Douglas, 1996, p.109). Thomas Knight expressed how he faced more discrimination as an adult in the UK. He said it was because "Redheads are safe to tease" (Knight, 2015, pg. 6).

“Ginger” is a derogatory term towards redheads. Comedian Tim Minchin created a song titled, “Prejudice” in which he uses humor to bring to light the hurtful name of redheads. Despite the song expressing clearly that “only a ginger can call a ginger, ginger.” There is a joke about using the word ginger is not a plight to redheads. In America, “ginger” has lost its sting and is easily tossed around in common language. Insulting redheads is often seen as a non-issue or in many cases still socially acceptable.

Five of the redheads interviewed responded that they had felt left out because of their red hair, while all mention being called a redhead related nickname at some point during their lives. While not every redhead undergoes the same amount of “soft discrimination,” as interviewee 2 put it, they have all been called a redhead name at one point in time.

When asked if they ever made fun of another person the responses were evenly mixed. Some firmly said no, others said no they tried not to, some said they would stand by and do nothing, others said they hoped not, a few said probably, and three said they had. Redheads seemed to be mixed on being the bully, despite the depiction of redheads as bullies in media. Skut Farkus in *A Christmas Story*, Syndrome in the *Incredibles*, Netflix’s *Edgar Rice Burroughs’s Tarzan and Jane* the school bully Joshua is a redhead, and the popular teen show *Riverdale*’s Cheryl Blossom is known for vicious attitude as she runs the school are all great examples of redheads being depicted as bullies. Based on the responses from redheads on whether or not they were teased it seems far more likely for a redheaded child to be made fun of than to make fun of someone else.

Staying Red

The existing argument is that redhead-based bullying and teasing is not considered a true form of hate crime or discrimination because it is an easily changeable feature. Stevens of *The Week*, who also said redheads are unattractive because of genetics, also states there is good news because, “(Redhair) is something that turns people off. It is fairly easy to change” (Stevens, 2014, para. 6). Natural born redheads can simply dye their hair a different color to avoid bullying. The easy change and often desirability and fashion statement that comes with red hair make the bullying based on red hair an unreal issue (Lynn).

However, being treated differently for hair is not a new or irrelevant topic. Chris Rock’s documentary *Good Hair* touches on the cultural stigmatization based on hair along with other works on the sociology of hair. A great example of the hair base phenomena happened in February 2019, “New York City Commission on Human Rights said targeting people based on their hair or hairstyle, at work, school or in public spaces, will be considered racial discrimination” (Stowe, 2019, para. 1). This law is created and focused on protecting the natural hairstyles associated with the black community, locs, cornrows, twists, braids, afros, etc. often deemed unprofessional. The ban validates two things; that hair is a part of identity and culture, and hair style is a way in which people are judged or treated differently. Student organizations have popped up around the country promoting the love of natural hair and natural beauty (Davis, 2017; Kitchin, 2017; Jamila, 2011). Both the New York City law and student organizations show natural hair should be accepted, appreciated and not expected to change to fit in or avoid stereotyping, discrimination or teasing.

Red hair is natural and no one should have to change a physical feature to be accepted and avoid teasing. Why should natural red hair be any different? For many redheads, this is a

foolish argument because most bullying happens as small children and the expectation would be to prevent bullying of redheads. The thought of dying red hair to assimilate is misguided on several fronts. In order for redheads to truly assimilate parents would have to dye their child's hair at a young age (Clout, 2007). This would effectively tell redhead children that they are not good enough or perfect because they have to change a natural feature and strip them of a part of their individuality.

Embolden Redheads

Many redheads learn to love standing out and being different. The majority of interviewees commenting throughout their interviews they like to be different and their red hair gives them confidence. The bullying at a young age is sometimes believed to lead to having a positive self-esteem and courage to stand and fight for what they want. According to *Ugly Ducking Swan Labeling Theory*, many of the redheads come to appreciate their hair color:

That characteristic which made them subject to negative treatment early in life comes to be appreciated, to be an essential part of the identity of a typical redhead, and a source of some of their positive feelings about themselves (Heckert & Best, 1997, pg. 381).

A third of the interviews conducted mentioned being teased when they were younger for their hair color that same third appreciates their hair more so now and "wouldn't change it for the world" (Interviewee 7).

When asked which stereotype they liked Interviewee 5 said, "I don't mind being fiery." Interviewee 9 said, "It's not always bad to be stubborn because stubbornness is often persistence." Interviewee 14 thought being perceived as fiery or easily angered might be useful. Among the redheads interviewed, every redhead had grown to appreciate and love their hair.

Two-thirds of the redheads interviewed also said they had developed to feel comfortable standing out and being different.

Redheads on their Hair

Every redhead interviewed for this research, even those few who said their hair color was not part of their identity, liked their hair now as adults. A little over a third of the interviewees mentioned childhood teasing at some point. Interviewee 9 theorized that most non-redheads confuse redheads with other redheads. The thought process was there are so few redheads in most people's lives that they easily confuse the redheads in their lives.

When asked, "What happened or how would they suspect people to react if they dyed their hair?" the response from every interview had an overwhelming negative tone. Their anticipated reaction from others would be "shocked," "surprised," "why," "judgement," "freak out," "disappointed," and "My wife would kill me she loves my hair." Interviewees 4, 7, and 9 discussed how their hair stylist, parents, friends all told them not to dye their hair. While Interviewees 2, 3, 6 and 9 discussed why would they want to dye their hair, if they did they would look like everyone else and no longer stand out with their "designer hair."

Even if redheads wanted to dye their hair, which many do not, once they have gotten older dying their hair would not fix the problem of teasing they faced more severally as younger children. In addition, if they chose to dye their hair most do not want to face the overwhelming negative reaction they expect. The other group did not wish to change a part of their identity for themselves and "how they identify me" (Interviewee 14).

A simple bottle of dye does not seem capable of changing a natural redhead into a blonde or brunette because among those who dyed their hair they all returned and stayed redheads. Of

the three interviewees whom had dyed their hair two felt it had been a “terrible mistake” the moment they dyed their hair. The last one who went through every color of hair, “pink, white, silver, blonde, and brunette” still did not feel like herself until she was a redhead again.

Interviewee 9 said the only way she would ever dye her hair would be if she was losing her red color and dyed it red to stay a redhead.

While a bottle of dye does not seem able to turn a redhead into another hair color on the inside, nor does dying one’s hair red make them a redhead. In essence one cannot be considered a redhead by nature if they are not born a redhead. If they are not a natural redhead than they will not take on the traits of redhead or be accepted as a full redhead by the redhead group. The study *Ugly Ducking Swan Labeling Theory* elaborates more on the concept of redhead socialization.

The study stated:

We wanted to focus on individuals who had been socialized as redheads. According to a popular maxim, a person can have red hair (i.e., dyed red hair), but still not be a redhead (i.e., not have experienced the socialization of a person born with red hair). (Heckert & Best, 1997, pg. 366)

Journalist Sharon Jaffa, a redhead, head brings attention to the serious issue of red hair.

She states:

Growing up as a redhead I was lucky enough to escape with just the occasional name-calling having the surname Jaffa was no doubt a double-whammy. But attacking someone on the basis of their hair colour can be every bit as damaging as persecuting someone for their race or religion, and therefore, in some cases, needs to be taken just as seriously.

(Rohrer, 2001, para. 24)

Furthermore Interviewee 6 stated, “But, you can’t dye your hair red then say, ‘I am a redhead’ it doesn’t work like that.” Photographer Joel Meyerowitz made an astute observation when photographing and recording the lives of redheads: “Here are several great points that redheads have a similar backstory of bullying, they have a shared history and sense of victory and that the process of surviving may be related to the reason redheads are perceived as bolder.” (1991)

Redhead Perception Changing

The campaigns, marches, photography exhibits, online forums, and redhead organizations seemed to be having a positive impact in achieving their goal of changing the redhead perception. Three of the older interviewees spoke about how things are different now than when they were young decades ago and how being a redhead is a much more positive thing. Interviewee 13 said, “There is less of a stigma now.”

As previously mentioned, Thomas Knight discussed how when he began his work on Red Hot he called all of London’s top model agency and there were no ginger males on staff. After his exhibit a year later there were one or two models at each agency.

In an effort to be more included, redheads have been looking forward to the redhead emoji for years. The lack of a redhead emoji has been the biggest complaint in redhead circles for some time (Hoise, 2017). A petition for the emoji was even created in Scotland and collected 20,000 signatures (Johnson, 2017). When they received their emoji in 2018 there was much celebration (Hoffman, 2018). Getting an emoji for redheads is a symbol of inclusion and representation and that the stigma attached to red hair is changing.

While redheads still have a long way to go to correct the stereotypes in TV, movies, and books, the social stigma seems to be changing for the better outside these forms. This change has not reached new TV shows like Netflix's *Russian Doll* which has negative comments about redheads in its first season.

The 2018–2019 children movies, *Smallfoot* and *Nutcracker and the Four Realms*, approached redheads differently. *Smallfoot*'s main character is a redheaded male who acts like any other protagonist. He has flaws and went on a journey of acceptance and personal growth. However, he faced no prejudice or difference because of his hair color, he simply had red hair. A role that in cartoons would usually go to a blonde or brunette male.

In *Nutcracker and the Four Realms* the initial villain was believed to be Mother Ginger, regent for the rebellious realm of amusement. Later in the film the redheaded Mother Ginger is revealed to be misunderstood and loyal. In this way, the redhead has begun to be redeemed as a stereotype. Further progress would for the stereotypes to be removed in additional forms of media, beyond children's films.

Knowing how redheads perceive themselves and view other redhead related things: gatherings, parades, products and representation is important to the companies, organizations, and advertisers whom target and use redheads. Understanding their difference as a consumer and how they differ as a subset market especially in the beauty industry is helpful for professionals in this area. So whether that's planning a festival and seeing what has worked and has failed in past festivals, or a redhead based company knowing if redheads are active or latent can help produce better contact with the target audience. Advertising for hair dye, or any other product, should be careful to keep over representation and stereotypes in mind, especially if the digital subculture

will have a backlash. This backlash came from redheads when a set of Christmas cards in the UK, ending in a product recall and company apology (Harvey, 2015a).

Redhead Interview Thoughts of Redhead Events vs Movements

Of the redheads interviewed, the majority would like to go a redhead event to see what it was about and say they have gone. To them, a redhead festival would be fun. Of those who did not indicate a desire to attend an event, only one said they would not go and another said they weren't sure if they would go, a third said he would not go but his wife would take him anyways because she loves redheads.

However, when asked about redhead pride marches and parades the overwhelming consensus was that they would not go (7), that it was weird and excessive (5), and only two might go. So, redheads seem to be okay with hanging out and being redheads but are uncomfortable marching for their red-headedness. The strong opposition indicates that redheads are probably not a minority because of the mix feedback on being an active group.

Redheads on Advertising

When interviewed most of the redheads agreed that companies are smart to use redheads to garner attention, since it shows, "how powerful hair color can be" (Interviewee 7). Their only reservation is that they continue to perpetuate negative stereotypes and stigmas. As long as companies ensure they make redheads like any other person, the redheads interviewed do not have a problem with them being used in advertising.

Redheads as Consumers

Despite the many companies and products target to redheads, of the red-haired people interviewed only three had red haired related products. While six were enthusiastic to buy

redhead related products, another four would buy them if they had a reason to. Three said they wouldn't buy redhead-related products. There is already a limited number of redheads to market to, if only a small portion have redhead-related products and more would buy redhead related products, than redhead based companies need to do a better job marketing to redheads. The six participants who would buy redhead related products but they had no idea such a market existed. Many of the participants were curious to know where they could learn about and buy these products.

Conclusion

The minority arguments

Are redheads a minority? When asked about if they were a minority, redheads had a two-part answer. The first was technically yes they are a minority because they make up such a small number of the world population. However, they felt uncomfortable with the label minority because it has the connotation of being oppressed. While many have undergone name calling, ridicule and even bullying, they do not feel oppressed. Redheads are not limited from getting jobs or going into places because of their hair color and for the most part they are treated like general members of society once they reach adulthood. They don't feel they have been at a disadvantage because of their hair color. They would not call themselves a minority, but a group within a group.

Redhead Identity

Redheads are an identity. People notice redheads because of their red hair and give them names or bully them accordingly. Redheads themselves have chosen it as a factor to gather around have events for. Companies like How to be a Redhead, Redhead Revolution, Ginge

London, Ginger Parrot, Red Hot, etc. have marketed to them based on a physical feature. Even among the few redheads interviewed who did not say red hair was part of their identity they still like their hair color and wouldn't change it. That is the active and latent redhead at work. The fact there are so many photography exhibits about redheads show how red hair is a visual factor that is highly identifiable. Since red hair is a way in which people identify and are identified with, red hair as an aspect of individual self .

Redhead Community

Redheads are a community, they have multiple redhead online platforms in which they discuss, celebrate their hair, and share jokes about redheads. The redhead interviewees would call a group of redheads, “unusual,” “gingers,” “the redheads,” “unique,” and “eccentric.” During the question, “what would you call a group of redheads?” many interviewees would laugh as they speculated about what to call themselves.

Photographer Joel Meyerowitz noticed that redheads, “they also shared with their sense of personal victory at having overcome this early celebrity... They had grown into their specialness and by surviving had been emboldening by it” (Meyerowitz, 1991). Meyerowitz noted how special redheads were in their connection, “Their shared experience had formed a ‘blood knot’ among them” (Meyerowitz, 1991). Another Photographer Brian Dowling noted, “I know my photos don’t represent all redheads, but I hope the redhead community appreciates the message I am trying to share” (“Photography...Book”, 2017. para. 4).

Redhead Building a Subculture

Redheads have many attributes that make them a community and many more that would make them a subculture. There are redhead books written by redheads for redheads, photography

exhibits, websites, Facebook groups, and companies built around marketing to them. Redheads even have songs written for them like “Ginger” by Caroline England. They have organization dedicated to giving them news, festivals built on celebrating their differences, and pride parades and marches to end bullying. They have actively worked to reclaim the words “ranga” and “ginger.” They have even adopted a mascot.

Redheads have representation problems in advertising. They face multiple negative stereotypes, bullying and name calling. These factors had led to a shared sense of connection and a bolder attitude and appreciation for their differences. Due to the stereotypes, the events created are built to encourage pride and to indoctrinate redhead children and their families into understanding the positive nature of red hair which they named, “gingerize.”

Many redheads also have the shared childhood experience of having elderly ladies stop them in the grocery store or at church to tell them how beautiful their hair is and to love it. Two interviewees mentioned this phenomenon unprompted and it’s something this researcher has encountered.

Red hair is a physical trait born with but from this attribute redheads develop characteristic that as a group they acknowledge and accepts together. They claim historic people as redheads that fit the mold of who they define themselves as. They also know red hair is more than just dying your hair a certain color, there is a redhead spirit attached to it (Heckert and Best, 1997; Cass, 2003; Douglas,1996). That is accepted in the Lucille Ball effect. Redheads face the double standard of being told to dye their hair to fit in yet, many fear and anticipate a negative reaction if they were to change their hair. They are caught in a double standard.

Like many subcultures redheads can choose to opt in or opt out by being latent or active. They have acknowledgments, like the Jeep wave that Jeep owners wave or nod to each other when driving, as part of a group. But with all the progress toward being more than just a community, redheads are still just shy of fully being a subculture.

Redheads have a clear digital subculture; the problem is when they do meet as a group there is no standard interaction or expectations. Redheads are not sure to do when they are all together because there are so rarely more than a few of them in a room. They have standard interactions for one-on-one encounters. When they gather, they come together for the purpose of celebration, or to promote change and acceptance. But many redheads have not gone to a redhead event. There is no redhead hierarchy of power or importance as you would expect and see in other subcultures. There is no designated leader of redheads or structure of other redheads being more important than other redheads.

Redheads are a digital subculture and developing physical subculture. In a few more years, when redhead conventions are more standard and interactions and acting among redheads has developed norms than, they will be a physical subculture.

Not a Culture

Redheads are not a culture. Many redheads describe their cultures along Maynard's fault lines of race, gender, geography, generation, socioeconomic status, and religion. When asked about their identity their hair color is a factor but not in their cultural upbringing. Since redheads are scattered all over the world they belong to their predominant cultures first and are not a culture amongst themselves.

Redheads are a unique and beautiful group who, with the resources of today's travel and digital forms, have begun to express themselves and discuss who they are as a group. The redhead stereotypes are not minor or made up, but very real and felt often. These stereotypes are founded in history and misinformation. Redheads will continue to combat these stereotypes as they grow into a full subculture.

Digital vs Physical

Today's world makes it easier to meet people digitally and physically. For redheads this means redhead events and websites created for the purpose of sharing experiences, overcoming problems like gingerism, and building community. When it comes to redheads the standard joke telling has developed online but due to the nature of very few redheads ever being in one space physically they are not sure what to do in a physical environment. This means there is a difference between the digital and physical world. Moreover, the digital can develop into the physical, which is the case with many of the redhead events. On the negative side, Southpark's "Kick a Ginger Day" started digitally and developed physically. In response, redheads created "Kiss a Ginger Day" which began digitally and moved into the physical world. For redhead leaders, the different redhead group creators, event coordinators, companies that host the redhead space digitally maybe aware of what other redheads are thinking and how to best help their community and their companies.

Commodification of Identity

While many of the redhead organizations sell redhead products, commodification of red hair has mixed motives. Some companies are not redhead centered companies, but have used redheads to sell their products like Buderim's ginger, Karma Kola's Gingerella and Gingerfella

sodas and Redhead Hunt for Huntington Disease. These instances would be the commodification of red hair for commercial purposes. While other companies focus on selling products to redheads from other redheads as a way to fill a gap and benefit their fellow redhead including Ginge, How to be a Redhead, and Redhead Revolution. Finally, there are companies and organizations created for the empowerment of redheads without products, or with redhead products as a secondary from their main mission, examples are Ginger Parrot, Redhead World, Redhead Days events and RANGA. While these organizations commodify redheaded identity, the motivation and the purpose of how redheads are used is the determining factors in knowing whether redheads are being featured for out of genuine adoration or solely for fiscal gain.

Redheads and Strategic Communication

As discussed earlier many redheads do not see a problem with redheads being used to widely in advertising. The over-representation is something brand professionals should be aware of as is how the redhead is being represented. The redheads that were okay with the overuse of redheads in advertising are understanding of the need to use color to pop. However, they do not want to be used to perpetuate stereotypes. For example, the M&M campaign from 2013 where the talking M&M character left with a hungry and sexy redhead shows the sexy and aggressive stereotypes. Jesse Tyler Ferguson who plays Mitchell on *Modern Family* did a commercial with Vaya in which they banter about their orange hair. The ad had a redheaded lead and still managed to make a redhead joke. These types of advertisements are what advertising professionals need to be aware of in order to not continue to perpetuate stereotypes. Once aware advertisers, can work to integrating redheads as normal character without attaching stigmas. Since redheads are a community and digital subculture, being aware of their struggles and the use of their identity as a

tool for sales is important. There is a fine line that branding professionals should be aware of when using anyone's identity as a selling point and this line applies to redheads too.

Future Research

Future research can focus on the development of redheads in digital space and the transition from the digital realm into the physical world. Specifically, it could investigate if they manage to overcome the funding and management of events becoming too large, or if they disappear again which has been the trend in organization. How does advertising stereotyping change? How does redhead bullying and the identity as ethnic others change? While redheads are not often the focus of research, there is still much research that could be done to understand this group moving forward. In addition, more research could be done on redhead otherness and socialization of redheads to have the 'it' factor which either allows for fake redheads acceptance or denial by redheads. Furthermore, research could look at why some redheads feel kinship and develop to be active redheads while others develop into latent redheads and the motivation behind that phenomena. Additionally, researchers could compare redheaded women versus non-redheaded women in more depth to see the advantages and drawback of set hair stereotypes of power dynamics.

The contents of this research is helpful to the parents and teachers of redhead children to understand the importance of encouraging and comforting redheaded children and ending redhead bullying. Redheads themselves can utilize this research to learn more about who they are as a group and how other redheads feel and think. This is also useful information for redhead organizations and redhead-oriented companies to better plan interactions with their consumers and build a great customer experience.

Overall, this research will help improve representation of redheads. Media writers, producers, branding professionals, and advertisers can learn how to represent redheads in their work. Anthropologists, sociologists and other researchers can learn from this research to study redheads, which will increase representation through their research. Because in today's vast world, representation matters, no matter how small.

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Appendix

Interview Guide

- Culture
 - Culture: definition
 - What culture would you say you grew up in?
 - Can you tell me a story that would exemplify your cultural upbringing?
 - How would you identify with your culture today?
 - How do express your culture to other people?
- Identity
 - What are some key characteristics of what make you, you?
 - If you had to describe yourself to someone else what would you say?
 - How does your culture play into your identity?
 - Do you think if you were raised in another culture you would identify differently? Why or Why not?
 - Was there ever a time growing up that you felt left out?
 - What were you excluded for?
 - Did you ever get an undesirable nickname?
 - where your nicknames ever associated to a physical feature?
 - Did you ever tease someone for being different?
 - If so who?
 - and what did you tease them for?
 - What do you think causing those teasing associations?
- Red hair
 - - What are some redhead nicknames?
 - What are redhead stereotypes?
 - Do you like the stereotypes if so which ones?
 - Where do you think these associations come from?
 - Would you consider your hair color part of your identity?
 - Why or why not?
 - Do you like your hair?
 - Have you ever dyed your hair?
 - Would you consider dying your hair?
 - What do you think other people would say if you dyed your hair?
 - If you haven't dyed your hair why not?
 - Would you consider red hair part of your identity? Why or Why not?
 - Do you think redheads are going extinct?
 - Do you think redheads have better sex or more sex than other people?
 - Do you feel a connection to other redheads?
 - If so can you describe that feeling?
- Redhead Social movements and Products
 - Redhead products
 - Do you follow any organizations or people because of their hair color?

- Do you own any redhead related products?
- Would you buy redhead products?
- How do you feel about companies using redheads in advertising for attention?
- Redhead Events
 - Would you attend a redhead event?
 - How would you describe your other connections to redheads or redhead community?
- Redhead Minority
 - How would you consider redheads as a group?
 - How do you feel about Redhead pride marches, parades and gatherings?
 - Would you attend?
 - Would you consider red hair a Minority group? Why or why not?
 - What would you call them?

4. Summary

- Summarize conversation
- Ask if there is anything else the participant wants to add
- Ask for questions from the participant
- Ask if it is okay to contact further if anything arises
- Give the participant my contact information
- Thank and close