According to early sociological perspectives, masculinity is a personality trait that follows specific behaviors that are sex-specific and appropriate to signify a sense of "masculine" self. With the satirical film, "Hot Fuzz," we see a play on the different types of masculinities and manhood that are revered, celebrated, and expected in both society and culture. This film not only follows the typical genre of masculine films, but it also shines lights on a few of the different forms of hyperbolic masculinity. Following the lives of a work-driven police officer and his dim-witted partner, the main characters, Sergeant Nicholas Angel and Officer Danny Butterman, display multiple characteristics that link masculinity to a heteronormative perspective. These collective forms of male practice display masculinity as the power over corruption, a system of organization where young men learn to identify themselves as a man, and an act of domination over the subordinate woman.

This paradoxical, "cop action hero" film, gives us a glimpse into the ideals, behaviors, and power that society associates with being masculine. Sergeant Nicholas Angel is "competitive", "athletic", "decisive", "unemotional", "strong and aggressive", and "powerful" (Shary 2013). While in the Police Academy, he excelled at both field exercises and academic work and examinations. He received the baton of honor and graduated with distinction. While in an Armed Response Unit, Angel also received a bravery award, nine special commendations in a year, and his arrest record was 400% higher than any other officer. He also holds the record for the 100-meter dash, is skilled in fencing, martial arts, chess, and has special skills with vehicles in advanced driving and cycling. According to the text, Millennial Masculinity, "Men [in films] should appear more independent, less tied to lovers, their bosses, and the forces of corruption around them" (Shary 2013). In this case, Nicholas Angel is the hero, who is constantly trying to
solve criminal cases and protect the people from violence; all while his masculinity "constricts [his] expression to a narrow compass featuring grief and rage" (Shary 2013). His obsession with upholding the law has taken precedence over his personal relationships, leaving him detached from any lovers that might take his focus away from work. The only evidence of grief that the audience witnesses is when Angel is alone in his house with his plant, but this grief is short lived as he finds his way back on the streets aggressively arresting people before he’s even started his active duty. Angel also takes it upon himself to investigate every issue in the Village he’s been reassigned to, unveils the corruption of the Neighborhood Watch Association, and with a prominent display of graphic violence, he brings justice to the town.

Sergeant Angel represents the power behind being a man, but his counterpart, Officer Danny Butterman, is the exact opposite of what society looks for in a man. Butterman displays a lower-status masculinity, as he "gives the impression of an oversized boy, anxious to please [Angel], but half-expecting failure or disapproval" (Shary 2013). Compared to Angel, Butterman is like a child who is learning how to categorize himself by identifying which terms and behaviors signify masculinity, or in his case, a successful Police Officer. According to the text, Butterman being seen as the child, "continues to signify a number of privileged values: receptivity, curiosity, purity, sincerity, futurity. Simultaneously, however, the child is also associatively encoded with qualities that are reviled by middle-class imperatives and politesse: antisociality, vulgarity, emotionality, amorality, anarchy" (Shary 2013). This type of arrested adolescence is seen with how "[Butterman] is both a man who has grown and a boy who looks forward to growth" (Shary 2013). The audience can clearly distinguish Butterman as a child-like figure as he is constantly asking Angel questions about car chases and gun fights, eating an ice
cream cone or chocolate cake, and relating real life to the things he’s seen in movies. Using the categorization of “cop action hero” films, Butterman uses movies as a guideline to what he thinks friendship and masculinity are. He uses the scenarios within the films for learning how to behave. “Media imagery provides a repertoire of signifying practices that males can draw on to craft manhood acts” (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009). Butterman’s character is an example of how society distinguish the men from the boys.

Although both Sergeant Angel and Officer Butterman don’t necessarily display outright acts of being dominant over their only female co-worker, the movie has a few one-liners that demonstrates crude, adolescent humor towards women and confirms its only female officer as a subordinate character. When first being introduced to Sergeant Angel, Officer Doris Thatcher is presented as a “Police Woman”. Angel quickly corrects the statement, calls her a “Police Officer”, and Butterman responds by saying he knows she’s a woman because he’s seen her bra. This cheap joke is then further established with Officer Thatcher offering to give Sergeant Angel a tour because she’s “been around the station a couple of times,” implying that her sexuality is very promiscuous. The movie then goes on to showcase an epic fight scene with all the men participating is some sort of violence with heavy duty artillery. According to the text, “only men in the genre use motor vehicles and artillery to kill […] These large-scale forms of combat distinguish masculinity, whereas women are more likely to use handguns […] Women’s battles are more emotionally laden and more intimate” (Shary 2013). With Thatcher’s fight scene, the audience sees Thatcher use an even lesser choice of weaponry when confronted by another female opponent. As this female rival approaches with a small knife, Thatcher picks up a hazard sign and hits her opponent in the face, knocking her unconscious. This battle scene is followed
up with another crude joke about some “girl on girl” action, whose sexual implication is geared
towards the male audience.

Although this movie is intended to be entertaining and comical, it represents a true
perspective on how our society demands certain behaviors from our men in order for their
masculinity to be validated. Sadly, these myths of men needing to be unemotional, violent, and
independent aren’t just embodied in films for our entertainment; they’re part of society’s
anticipated behaviors that are deemed normal in our cultures, social institutions, and human
interactions. Because of these masculine stigmas on manhood, society is seeing more men
engaging in crime, resisting management, having poor social-support networks, and unwilling to
seek any type of necessary medical help. These hyperbolic viewpoints on masculinity not only
hurt our young boys and men, they can also potentially affect the way masculinity is perceived,
taught, and manifested by our future generations.

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Overall, you provide compelling
evidence from both readings +
film + connect them well.
A bit more nuance to the
analysis would strengthen this
already strong paper.

