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Policing Sexuality

Policing citizens sexuality is also about policing their gender, race, and class. Veronika Belenkaya writes of a tragic event where a group of lesbian women were beaten and defended themselves, yet faced prison because of it. In this case, and in many others, sexuality was not the only cause of this distress. The original beating may have been about the women turning down a man due to their sexuality, but the police used gender discrimination to place them in jail (Belenkaya). In fact, they were the ones bending the standard gender roles placing a “threat” on society. Furthermore, the male gender was on top, allowing what they said to take precedence. And all of this was the cause as to why the police would punish the women. Their gender made the difference, not their sexuality. On the other hand, Laura Italiano sees the racial impacts on policing. When Brown dressed in a “do-rag and wife-beater T-shirt” her actions started to raise negative attention (Italiano). Do-rags and wife-beaters tend to be worn by African Americans more than any other race. This, in turn, would lessen her credibility more then her sexuality would. African Americans tend to be seen as trouble makers and when she chose to wear such appeal, and brought the stereotypes with her. Lower class individuals have a harder time being civilized according to stereotypes. In the video *Screaming Queens*, the class divide was more prevalent in terms of policing. Sexuality was not always the deciding factor. Upper class individuals were more accepted, and lower class were forced into the Tenderloin. Thus, policing only truly happen to people of lower class as it usually only happened within the Tenderloin. All of these characteristics had a huge impact on policing citizens sexuality.