Emma Haeusel

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BCORE 107 C

Professor Goldberg

Professor Padilla

In the chapter “Rock Hudson’s Body” by Richard Meyer, the author argues that the actor Rock Hudson was always portrayed as a lovable, desexualized, “gentle giant”, and that he would never portray a man that doesn’t exemplify the perfect gentleman. When creating the idea of Rock Hudson, studios and media working with him made him out to be the perfect man (and ideal husband), a man whom women wanted and men wanted to be. In an article by Joe Hyams called “Why Women are in Love with Rock Hudson”, he says, “Rock is never cast as the heavy in movies, never appears drunk, and never, never makes a pass at a girl. His fans wouldn't stand for it.” (263) Rock Hudson was the epitome of an ideal man. Women were so drawn to him because they knew he was a “sexual safety” and he would never hurt or cheat on them. As Meyer writes, “Hudson promised straight women a space of sexual safety­ he would acquiesce to domesticity without insisting on male domination.” (282) Women were never threatened by Hudson’s masculinity or “alpha” personality, because he was a softer, more pliable man. Meyer argues that Rock Hudson had been so far removed from a two-timing, alpha male character, that he could never and would never be portrayed as such.

Two of the scenes from “Pillow Talk” both validate and challenge the ideas laid out by Meyer. In the opening scene of “Pillow Talk” the stereotype that Meyer had placed around Hudson was already challenged. The first the audience sees of the character Brad Allan is of a player, a man who is not only seeing multiple women at once, but using the same thing to “pick up” different women. He is shown talking to two different women in the same morning, using the same song, written “just for them” to seduce and to trick them into liking him more. Gone is the idea that Hudson would “never make a pass at a woman” instead, here is this man who romances more than five different women in one movie. He is shown as having an incredible masculinity to him. In one scene, Jan says he’s 6’6”, while Alma says that’s “6’6” of opportunity”. He isn’t the type of man women would look to for an ideal husband, instead, he is the type of man women would look to for a one-night stand, and that’s what he looks to women for. This Rock Hudson, this show of the “ultimate bachelor” is in direct conflict with what Meyer outlined in his chapter.

In the second scene, Rock Hudson shows an image that seems to agree with and exemplify the very ideals that Meyer said Hudson had. When Hudson is playing Rex, the kind, gentle cowboy from Texas, the audience sees what Meyer was talking about. He is a kind gentleman, and doesn’t want anything from a woman. Rex shows the quiet, subdued man that Rock Hudson was made out to be in the press and in magazines. In the scene where Rex takes Jan up to his room, she thinks he only wants one thing, and that he is going to play her just like Mr. Allan told her he would. Instead of agreeing with the stereotype, Rex seems appalled by the fact that she thought he would take advantage of her, and instead he acts like an honorable man. He is every bit the gentleman Meyer promised. Rock Hudson was portrayed many times as the quintessential “good guy” because of his sexual safety and “soft masculinity”. In the movie “Pillow Talk”, the audience can see both sides of the coin that is Rock Hudson.