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Homies are Accessories: Miley Cyrus, Postfeminism, and Eating the Other

During the summer months of 2013, Miley Cyrus was gearing up to begin promoting her upcoming album, *Bangerz*. What began with a controversial music video, featuring cultural appropriation abounds, culminated with a performance at the MTV VMAs that created headlines for weeks. Miley's performance at the VMAs featured Miley using black bodies as accessories and touching those bodies in violent, sexual ways. Also, the music video for "We Can't Stop" featured Miley appropriating ratchet culture, groping bodies, and transcending heterosexual norms. Miley's use of intimacy as a way to gain access to bodies, to cultures, and to sexuality, are evident through examples from the music video for "We Can't Stop," through still images from the VMA performance, and through images posted publicly on her Instagram and Twitter, grounded in theory offered by bell hooks in *Eating the Other*, and Shannon Lee Dowdy in *Proper Caresses and Prudent Distance: A How-To Manual from Colonial Louisiana*. It is also indisputable that Miley performs through a carefully created and maintained image, and the implications of image, authenticity, and intimacy will be examined through Catherine Driscoll's work in *Girls: Feminine Adolescence in Popular Culture and Cultural Theory*, Miley's own documentary titled *Miley: The Movement*, and through an interview with Miley published in *W Magazine*. Intimate access to Miley via social media will also be examined through the *W Magazine* interview, and through Miley's documentary. I will also define and examine the concepts of postfeminism and postracism through the works of Patricia Hill Collins, Rinaldo Walcott, and Angela McRobbie, to prove that Miley herself is not a unique product, but is rather symptomatic of a globalized, postfeminist, postracial world, or, as Pharell has described her, as a "bi-product of America" (*Miley: The Movement*).