



Karmen Samson

GYM BROS AND DANDIES

The Evolution of Masculinity and
Appearance

Fashion and Personal
Style Studies

Collection Editor

JOSEPH H. HANCOCK II

LIVED PLACES
PUBLISHING



GYM BROS AND DANDIES

Karmen Samson

GYM BROS AND
DANDIES

The Evolution of Masculinity
and Appearance

Fashion and Personal Style
Studies

Collection Editor

JOSEPH H. HANCOCK II



First published in 2026 by Lived Places Publishing

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner for the purpose of training artificial intelligence technologies or systems. In accordance with Article 4(3) of the Digital Single Market Directive 2019/790, Lived Places Publishing expressly reserves this work from the text and data mining exception.

The author and editor have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication but assume no responsibility for any errors, inaccuracies, inconsistencies, or omissions. Likewise, every effort has been made to contact copyright holders. If any copyright material has been reproduced unwittingly and without permission, the publisher will gladly receive information enabling them to rectify any error or omission in subsequent editions.

Copyright © 2026 Lived Places Publishing

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: 9781917503723 (pbk)
ISBN: 9781917503747 (ePDF)
ISBN: 9781917503730 (ePUB)

The right of Karmen Samson to be identified as the Author of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988.

Cover design by Fiachra McCarthy
Book design by Rachel Trolove of Twin Trail Design
Typeset by Newgen Publishing, UK

Lived Places Publishing
P.O. Box 1845
47 Echo Avenue
Miller Place, NY 11764

www.livedplacespublishing.com

Contents

List of illustrations		vii
Acknowledgements		xvi
Abstract		xvii
Introduction		xix
Scope and limitations		xxv
Learning objectives		xxviii
Chapter 1	Beau Brummell: The archetypal dandy	1
Chapter 2	Black dandyism: Fashion as cultural resistance	25
Chapter 3	Crafting masculinity: From dandy to gym bro	39
Chapter 4	Objectification of the male body: Masculinity under the gaze	55
Chapter 5	Social media masculinities: Digital mirrors	71
Chapter 6	Male bodies on display: The spectacle of bodybuilding	89
Chapter 7	Health vs harm: Muscularity on steroids	111
Chapter 8	God of aesthetics: Zyzz and contemporary gym culture	125
Chapter 9	Shifting masculinities: Crisis or opportunity	143
Chapter 10	The Manosphere: Reactionary masculinity in digital spaces	163

Final conclusion	178
Recommended assignments: Fashion and identity ethnography project	182
Notes	185
References	187
Appendix	204
Recommended further reading	207

List of illustrations

- Figure 1.1** The Martial Macaroni (1771) [Etching]. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/395533> **3**
Dimensions: 15.7 × 10.5 cm. Referenced in Frederic George Stephens & M. Dorothy George, Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum (Vol. IV, no. 4711).
- Figure 1.2** Bust of George IV (1814) [Portrait drawing]. Royal Collection of the United Kingdom. Retrieved from <https://picryl.com/media/george-iv-bust-c0003c> **6**
Artist: Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830), portrait painter, collector, and President of the Royal Academy.
- Figure 1.3** Suit (1829) [Wool]. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/79838> **9**
Designer: Newton (British). Object number: 1995.292a–c.
- Figure 1.4** Etching of Beau Brummell (1844) [Etching]. Wikimedia Commons. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BrummellEngrvFrmMiniature.jpg> **10**

- Figure 1.5** Suit (1829) [Silk]. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/79838> **11**
Designer: Newton (British). Object number: 1995.292a–c.
- Figure 1.6** Vest (ca. 1839) [Cotton]. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/90812> **12**
Object number: C.I.38.23.44.
- Figure 1.7** Breeches (ca. 1795) [Leather]. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/90572> **13**
Object number: 1981.12.2.
- Figure 1.8** George “Beau” Brummell (1805) [Watercolor]. Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brummell Dighton1805.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brummell_Dighton1805.jpg) **16**
Artist: Richard Dighton.
- Figure 2.1** The Duchess of Queensberry and Soubise (1773) [Etching]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Duchess_of_Queensberry_and_Soubise_LCCN91727482.jpg **28**
- Figure 2.2** A Mungo Macaroni (1772) [Etching on paper]. Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_Mungo_Macaroni_\(BM_1915,0313.174_1\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_Mungo_Macaroni_(BM_1915,0313.174_1).jpg) **30**

Representation of Julius Soubise. Collection: British Museum. Dimensions: 176 × 125 mm. Image slightly cropped for emphasis.

- Figure 2.3** Making of Dimanche à Brazzaville (2010) [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flickr_-_enric_bach_-_Entrevista_a_Mangrokoto_Bayaya.jpg **35**

Photographer: Enric Bach. Image cropped to emphasize the subject's suit.

- Figure 3.1** Portrait of Emperor Claudius in heroic nudity (discovered 1792) [Marble sculpture]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Claudius_Gabii_Louvre_Ma1231_n1.jpg **43**

Photograph by Marie-Lan Nguyen, 26 January 2019. Dimensions: height 205 cm; width 80 cm; depth 56 cm. Musée du Louvre, Atlas database, entry 17169.

- Figure 3.2** Bronze sculpture, thought to be either Paris or Perseus (ca. 340–330 BC) [Bronze]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EB1911_Greek_Art_-_Bronze_of_Cerigotto.jpg **44**

Artist: Euphranor. Greek National Archaeological Museum, Athens, object number 13396.

Figure 3.3 Michelangelo, *Ignudo* (1511) [Fresco detail].
Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Michelangelo,_ignudo_13.jpg **45**

Artist: Michelangelo Buonarroti. Detail from the Sistine Chapel ceiling fresco

Figure 3.4 Beau Brummell giving directions to his tailor (1855) [Black-and-white drawing]. Harper's New Monthly Magazine. <https://picryl.com/media/beau-brummell-and-his-tailor-3cb14a> **48**

Figure 3.5 Beau Brummell statue, Jermyn Street SW1 (2012) [Bronze sculpture]. Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Beau_Brummell_statue_20191002_113102_\(48831436207\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Beau_Brummell_statue_20191002_113102_(48831436207).jpg) **49**

Photographer: Irid Escent. Photograph dated 2 October 2019

Figure 4.1 *Cover of Men's Health, demonstrating male objectification (2025) [Photograph].*
Photographer: Karmen Samson. **61**

Figure 4.2 *La Grande Odalisque* (1814) [Oil on canvas].
Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jean_Auguste_Dominique_Ingres,_La_Grande_Odalisque,_1814FXD.jpg **63**

Artist: Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres. Louvre collection. Dimensions: 91 × 162 cm.

- Figure 4.3** Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time (ca. 1540–1545)
[Oil on panel]. National Gallery, London. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angelo_Bronzino_-_Venus,_Cupid,_Folly_and_Time_-_National_Gallery,_LondonFXD.jpg **64**
- Artist: Agnolo Bronzino. Dimensions: 146 × 116 cm.
Courtesy of the National Gallery, London.*
- Figure 4.4** Replica of a statue used in the filming of the Bond film Goldfinger (2014) [Photograph].
Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Goldfinger_girl_James_Bond.JPG **66**
- Photographer: Steven Lek. Kunsthal, Rotterdam, during the exhibition Designing 007: Fifty Years of Bond Style, 15 October 2014.*
- Figure 5.1** Black-and-white portrait of a man (2023) [Photograph]. Pexels. <https://www.pexels.com/nl-nl/foto/zwart-en-wit-zwart-wit-man-vent-17898141/> **79**
- Photographer: Marcus Chan.*
- Figure 6.1** The Sandow Trocadero Vaudevilles, Directed by F. Ziegfeld, Jr. (1894) [Lithograph]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Sadow_Trocadero_Vaudevilles,_Sandow_lifting_the_human_dumbbell,_1894.jpg **94**
- Courtesy of Strobridge Lithograph Co., Cincinnati & New York.*

Figure 6.2 A New Sandow Pose (VIII), Eugen Sandow (c. 1902) [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%22A_New_Sandow_Pose_%28VIII%29%22,_Eugen_Sandow_Wellcome_L0035270.jpg **95**

Photographer: D. Bernard & Co, Melbourne.

Courtesy of: Wellcome Library, London.

Source: Physical Culture Magazine.

Figure 6.3 To build a strong, muscular body (1972) [Magazine advertisement]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:How_to_build_a_strong,_muscular_body_advertising_-_Joe_Weider_-_Inside_Wrestling_-_December_1972_backcover.jpg **97**

Joe Weider magazine: Inside Wrestling,

December 1972 (back cover).

Figure 6.4 Cover and back cover of Physique Pictorial (1968) [Drawing]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Physique_Pictorial_Vol_17_No_1.png **98**

Illustration Artist: Tom Finland.

Figure 6.5 Larry Scott, American bodybuilder (1963) [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Larry_Scott_1963.png **100**

Source: Muscle Builder, January 1963.

- Figure 6.6** Arnold Schwarzenegger before defending his fifth Mr. Olympia title (1974) [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arnold_Schwarzenegger_1974.jpg **102**

Source: RMY Auctions.

- Figure 7.1** Grayscale photo of a man seated on a bench (undated) [Photograph]. Pexels. <https://www.pexels.com/nl-nl/foto/grijstinten-foto-van-man-zittend-op-de-bank-1431283/> **119**

Photographer: Anush Gorak.

- Figure 7.2** Argentinean bodybuilding tournament, Mr. Cultura Física 1968, junior category (1968) [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fisicoculturismo_argentino_AFCA_1%C2%AA_lugar_Torneo_Horacio_Patrone_Mr_CULTURA_FISICA_1968_categoria_junior._.altura_1,85_mts_peso_83_kilos_Pose_Triceps_de_Rodillas._.-_edad_19_a%C3%B1os.jpg **121**

Photographer: Horacio Patrone.

- Figure 8.1** “Do you even lift?” forum screenshot (2002) [Screenshot]. Know Your Meme. <https://knowyourmeme.com/memes/do-you-even-lift> **128**

Source: BodyBuilding.com forums, February 16, 2002; users “squirrel,” “bubbaT,” and “Chris C.”

- Figure 8.2** David (1501–1504) [Marble sculpture].
Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%27David%27_by_Michelangelo_Fir_JBU004.jpg **136**
Artist: Michelangelo Buonarroti. Photograph by Jörg Bittner Unna, 28 July 2016. Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.
- Figure 9.1** Poster of women's suffrage March and Mass-Meeting (1907) [Poster]. Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America. <https://picryl.com/media/suffrage-posters-from-schlesinger-library-dce9b3> **152**
- Figure 9.2** Men viewing materials posted in the window of the National Anti-Suffrage Association headquarters (1911) [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://picryl.com/media/national-anti-suffrage-association> **153**
Photographer: Harris & Ewing.
- Figure 9.3** Katharine Hepburn protesting in solidarity with the second-wave feminism movement (2025) [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Second_wave_feminism.webp **154**
Photographer: D. Watson7279.

- Figure 9.4** Woman holding protest signs (2022)
[Photograph]. Pexels. <https://www.pexels.com/nl-nl/foto/vrouw-mevrouw-tekst-geschreven-stuk-12523712/> **155**
Photographer: Brett Sayles.
- Figure 9.5** Grayscale photo of people protesting on the street (2020) [Photograph]. Pexels. <https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-grayscale-photo-of-people-protesting-on-the-street-4614509/> **156**
Photographer: Lan Johnson.

Acknowledgements

Writing this book has been a profound learning experience I could not have completed without the support of many people, and to a few in particular, I'm especially grateful.

First, I want to thank my parents, who have always supported me in every possible way for as long as I can remember. I'm truly grateful for everything you've done for me and for always believing in me.

I would also like to thank my partner, who unwaveringly stood by my side throughout this process. Your patience, understanding, and encouragement were a source of comfort whenever I felt stuck.

Thank you for your love and care.

Abstract

Gym Bros and Dandies: The Evolution of Masculinity and Appearance explores the evolving relationship between fashion, masculinity, and identity through the archetypes of the dandy and the gym bro. Tracing their roots from Enlightenment ideals to contemporary digital culture, it examines how style and the body function as performances of power, resistance, and belonging. Case studies—from Beau Brummell to Black dandyism, from gym culture to the manosphere—highlight how masculinity is continuously reshaped by cultural, historical, political and technological forces. Rather than treating masculinity as fixed, the book frames it as a dynamic construct, opening possibilities for more inclusive, fluid, and healthier expressions of male identity.

Key words

Masculinity studies, fashion theory, identity construction, dandyism, gym culture, hegemonic masculinity, objectification theory, self-fashioning.

Introduction

Much like the nineteenth-century dandy, who appeared in the vacuum of a crumbling aristocratically ordered society, today's young men find themselves navigating a similar cultural limbo. Traditional markers of masculinity have lost much of their authority, yet what is to replace them remains uncertain.

The dandy found his role during the Enlightenment, a period when reason and purpose took center stage. As it pushed aside the lavishness and irrationality of earlier aristocratic ideologies, the common man became increasingly important, along with his purpose in life. The legacy of Enlightened ideas is still retracable in our contemporary society.

The Enlightenment can be seen as a continuous thread throughout the evolution of the modern era of masculinity and appearance. Its ideals of reason, discipline, and self-cultivation laid the groundwork for prestigious ways of embodying manhood, providing heavy anchors for both external presentation and internal identity. From the dandy's refined sartorial codes to the gym bro's rigorous sculpting of the body, each archetype reflects a clear Enlightenment legacy. It is found in the belief that masculinity is something to be consciously constructed and that its power has to be displayed. Even as fashions and cultural contexts shift, this heritage persists, reminding us that the body and its appearance are never neutral but are deeply intertwined with the worldviews of the generations before us.

The current shifts we experience today underline that while masculinity is often imagined as static, it is in fact submissive toward outer occurrences and is a result of these ever-changing and fleeting shifts. Each era and each social change redirects what it means to be a man. Such reshaping is to be discovered in manners of dress, attitude, and physique. The construction of gender is ultimately one of identity, and therefore of fashion. Both gender and fashion operate through similar mechanisms, with the body serving as a reflection of the culture in which it is situated. Through the act of self-fashioning, societal expectations, ideals, and norms are made visible.

For the nineteenth-century dandy, style is achieved through a carefully curated wardrobe. His style resembled that of a personal uniform and was always paired with wit, charm, and an unmistakable measured amount of arrogance. Clothing is the vessel, but the true craft lies in harmonizing attire with personality.

The twenty-first century gym bro, in contrast, uses the body as a medium. Muscles, posture, and physical presence become instruments for self-fashioning. This physical cultivation is characteristically combined with a stoic demeanor. The full visual communicates hegemonic masculine power, and thus physical hierarchy.

In both cases, style transcends fleeting trends, and fashion becomes a medium through which identity is constructed, and masculinity is reinforced. This book explores the two archetypes of the historical dandy and the contemporary gym bro. Not as curiosity, but as pivotal markers in the ongoing evolution of masculinity and appearance.

It begins in Chapter 1 with the archetypal dandy, Beau Brummell. An ultra-stylish individual whose distinctive style helped shape modern men's fashion. While Brummell appeared to be an autonomous individual, he was in fact heavily reliant on aristocratic patronage. His life illustrates how appearance, social position, and personal identity are inextricably linked. Chapter 2 explores how fashion can serve as a tool of cultural resistance through Black Dandyism. Figures such as Julius Soubise and the Congolese sapeurs demonstrate that clothing and behavior are powerful means of negotiating identity, asserting agency, and navigating social hierarchies. Chapter 3 illustrates the parallel between the nineteenth-century dandy and the twenty-first century gym bro. Both archetypes perform masculinity through their bodies: one emphasizes elegance and cultural sophistication, the other physical strength. Masculinity, however, is not only shaped by style or muscle; it is also shaped by how others perceive and judge it. This brings us to Chapter 4, which examines how men are increasingly subjected to external ideals that influence self-perception and behavior. While female objectification often emphasizes passivity and sexual appeal, men are evaluated in a different manner, through strength, dominance, and achievement. In turn, self-worth is tied to performance. This dynamic intensifies in Chapter 5, where social platforms and endless exposure to idealized images magnify comparison and pressure. Here, the pursuit of the "perfect" body becomes less a personal goal and a more social expectation. This trend can be traced back to the bodybuilding subculture of the 1980s. As discussed in Chapter 6, it has since evolved into a form of hypermasculine representation that has arguably intensified, contributing to restrictive and

damaging ideals with profound implications for mental health. These pressures find perhaps their most extreme expression in Chapter 7, where we see how the drive for perfection can lead to harmful behaviors. Most importantly, the chapter addresses steroid use and the rising development of muscle dysmorphia. These issues illustrate how culture, media, and physical ideals define masculinity in narrow, often destructive and reductive ways. Chapter 8 offers a case study of a quintessential “gym bro.” Here we met the “God of Aesthetics”: Zyzz. Zyzz blended physical aesthetics with online communities and inspired many men to pursue body transformation. In turn, he reinforced the pressure of unattainable standards embedded within hegemonic masculinity. Chapter 9 explores how contemporary shifts, such as feminist critique, changing labor markets, and evolving gender norms, have challenged traditional manhood. It also addresses how many men, because of these shifts, have become unsure of their place in the world. This uncertainty has been exploited by reactionary digital spaces like the *manosphere* but simultaneously has opened the door for developing new understandings of what it means to be a man. Finally, Chapter 10 explores the psychological consequences of the pressure of being “a real man.” Boys are socialized to suppress vulnerability, to perform toughness, and to measure themselves against impossible ideals. When support and guidance are lacking, some turn to the *manosphere* for validation. The true resolution of this societal conundrum lies in cultivating emotionally literate, flexible models of masculinity. Only then can men navigate their identities authentically, embracing a spectrum of strength, sensitivity, and self-expression without fear or constraint.

Together, these chapters reveal that masculinity is neither fixed nor monolithic. It is a negotiation, which means that it is at times a struggle. However, as this book argues, it should also be embraced as a site of possibilities. Adopting such a perspective is crucial as engaging in conversations about evolving masculinity has become increasingly difficult. Efforts to reflect on or rethink masculinity are often met with suspicion: some dismiss these conversations as attacks under the label of “toxic masculinity.” Nuanced discussions are then quickly turned into moral judgments, leaving no space for honest self-reflection. Others perceive conversations about masculinity as attempts to defend traditional male privilege or reinforce patriarchal authority. Needless to say, both reactions discourage open engagement and have turned masculinity into a defensive rather than reflective topic. Consequently, honest and constructive dialogue about what it means to be a man has become increasingly rare. This reluctance has left a significant gap in public and academic discourse: whereas femininity, queerness, and other gender expressions are rightfully continually examined and reimagined, masculinity often remains unspoken or approached solely through critique.

This book seeks to move into that gap. Not to redeem or condemn masculinity, but to examine it as a cultural and aesthetic construct that is constantly evolving. It asks the central question: what does masculinity mean in contemporary society? By reflecting on the histories of masculinities as ideological constructs, gendered performances, and fashioned embodiments through the lens of both the dandy and the gym bro, this book explores how men navigate their roles and identities today.

This book offers insights into how we could move toward a modern form of masculinity that is more inclusive, less rigid, and most importantly, healthier for all. It advocates for a masculinity that recognizes the pressures men face, imagines alternatives to traditional norms, and still allows men to stay connected to aspects of masculine tradition.

Scope and limitations

This book offers an analysis of gym bros and dandies as archetypes in the evolution of masculinity and appearance, but it is important to acknowledge its scope and limitations. The perspectives developed here emerge largely from Western contexts, with much of the scholarship drawn from studies situated in the United States and Europe. As such, the lens through which masculinity and style are examined is culturally and geographically specific and therefore limited.

Given this Western perspective, patriarchy inevitably forms the context through which masculinity is defined. It must also be noted that while this book focuses on men, it is just as much a book about all genders. Masculinity cannot be understood in isolation: it exists in dialogue with femininity, with queerness, and with the many shifting expressions of identity that we find in our societies. All genders influence and reshape one another. As the chapters in this book will demonstrate, the performances of “the dandy” and “the gym bro” both respond to and exert pressure upon broader cultural understandings of masculinity, and thus gender itself.

The majority of the existing research on which this book builds has focused on the experiences of cisgender, and often heterosexual, men. While issues of gender, sexuality, and race are deeply

relevant to understanding masculinity, LGBTQ+ and BIPOC perspectives remain underrepresented in much of the current literature. Future research in these directions is both urgent and essential, as it would significantly enrich and complicate the discussion I engaged in throughout this book.

Although the concept of the “black dandy” is discussed in Chapter 2, this research primarily focuses on the Brummellian dandy of George Bryan Brummell. Many sources present Brummell as the archetypal or “original” dandy, a perspective that is widely accepted in existing literature. While I do only partly agree with this stance, my discussion is constrained by the scope and focus of the available sources, which had influence on the course of my analysis.

The later chapters turn toward the digital spaces of masculinity, with particular attention to what has come to be known as the “manosphere.” This is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be fully captured within the scope of a single book, let alone a chapter. In this book, the manosphere is treated very briefly. Within this introduction of the manosphere, a conscious choice has been made not to highlight or name individual misogynistic figures within these online communities. Their notoriety already affords them sufficient exposure, and centering them in this book could contribute to amplifying their voices further. More importantly, the aim is not to fixate on specific personalities but to illustrate and dissect the ideologies that sustain these spaces and motivate such individuals. Hatred and exclusion will always take on new forms. I believe that the only way to counter them effectively is by looking closely at the forces behind them. Thus, this is what I aimed to do in writing this book.

Last, drawing on Merleau-Ponty's insight that we experience the world through the vehicle of the body (Merleau-Ponty, 2012[1945], p. 84), I must acknowledge my own vehicle in writing this book: that of a cis woman reflecting on men's experiences. My body and lived reality inevitably shaped the way I interpret the practices, narratives, and representations of masculinity. While I have strived wholeheartedly to remain objective, to stay curious about perspectives beyond my own, and to sketch an image as true to form as possible, the outcome is necessarily selective. This is perhaps the very essence of having a body as the vehicle through which we move in life.

Learning objectives

1. Analyze and describe the figures of the dandy and the gym bro as historical and contemporary archetypes of masculinity.
2. Evaluate the role of Enlightenment ideals (reason, discipline, self-cultivation) in shaping modern notions of masculine appearance.
3. Compare different cultural expressions of dandyism, including Beau Brummell, Black dandyism, and Congolese sapeurs.
4. Discuss the psychological and social consequences of body ideals, including issues such as body dysmorphia, perfectionism, and validation culture.
5. Identify continuities and changes in hegemonic masculinity across historical and contemporary contexts.