

*Hiearchies of Eating Disorders: Fat-Phobia and Internalized Beauty Ideals in Online Communities*

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Research and discourse on Eating Disorders (ED) have a tendency to perpetuate certain stereotypes regarding women of color, however unintentional or innocuous it may appear. The research conducted, does show that the prominent ED within communities of minorities or of lower social status is Binge Eating Disorder (BED). A Foucauldian discourse analysis of online forums by young women with ED, such as myproana.com, would be the primary method of documenting how these women form a hierarchy of the community's ED, and analyze if it correlates with the social status primarily associated with the Eating Disorder. Within these forums, and ED based communities, a clear hierarchy is formed, with Anorexia Nervosa at the top and BED at the bottom. From the minimal research available on women of color and ED, it is clear that, for Black women at least, BED is the most common—and thus it is my goal to explore any possible correlation if applicable. Because so little exists that focuses on EDs in women of color, this analysis may help to promote more research in race and class dynamics of Eating Disorders, as well on how those factors affect how women view their own bodies.