**Code or Theme Exercise**

Read the following data excerpts and the associated code label/theme name – these come from Ginny and Gareth Terry’s research exploring views on male body hair in New Zealand (Terry & Braun, 2016). The data for this study were collected via an online survey. The broad, initial research question that guided the coding was: What are New Zealanders’ views of men’s body hair?

Decide whether each potential code/theme is a code *or* a theme. Keep in mind that although there is no absolute distinction between codes and themes, codes tend to have a single facet and capture one insight or observation about the data, whereas themes should be multifaceted and capture several insights and observations. Themes should also capture a pattern of *shared* meaning – this can be shared meaning at the data surface (explicitly stated ideas, for example), or shared implicit or underlying meaning (concepts informing an explicitly stated idea, for example).

Reflect on why you have decided that each code/theme is a code or theme. What features of the data, the label/name and brief explanation of the scope and focus of each code/theme influenced your judgement?

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| **Data** | **Code/Theme** |
| “Men are meant to be hairy naturally because of high testosterone”“I think that it is normal for men to be hairier than women”“Men are physiologically different to women, we ought to look different too.” | *‘Natural’ gender difference*: There is a ‘natural’ gender difference (physiologically), and men’s body hair is a ‘natural’ expression of that.  |
| “It is just hair, perfectly natural part of being a man if you happen to have it”“It is natural and manly. Much more attractive than a hairless body”“I think it's pretty natural. Men should have body hair freely without feeling self-conscious” | *Men’s body hair is ‘natural’*: It’s something that is part of men’s bodies, as they naturally are. |
| “My partner trims his leg and chest hair - which I hate him doing! When he does it, he looks like a plucked turkey, and is scratchy”“Overall I would rather a man that had body/pubic hair than someone who looked prepubescent with no hair. I guess for me body hair is a sign of masculinity”“Men without leg hair just seems weird - unless they are cyclists or have a hobby that requires them to remove body hair.”“It's fine, it would looked odd if they shaved it all off, and it adds to their 'manliness'“When men shave their pubic hair it makes them seem sleazy to me, as though they are interested in showing it off.” | *Looks wrong when men remove hair*: It looks wrong/odd/weird when men remove hair (often specific areas and excludes the back). |
| “I think gorilla-like back effusions of hair are rather a turn-off”“Hair on the shoulders and back can seem a bit gorilla like”“Nasty! More hair = closer to being an ape!” | *Animal metaphor*: Animal metaphor used to express distaste/disgust/unattractiveness of male body hair. |
| “Personally, I don’t like it, it causes smell and is ugly”“I dislike it, Think it is disgusting”“I think body hair is relatively pointless in this day and age and in certain areas (underarm/pubic area) is not as hygienic compared to a removal of hair”“Body hair on the chest or back is highly unattractive”“Chicks don't dig the back hair, so no one likes to have it, me included. Bit of a social stigma around it.” | *Men’s body hair is unpleasant*: Men’s body hair is unpleasant/unattractive. |
| “I think back hair is disgusting and men who get this should get it waxed!”“Except head hair, it should all just disappear”“Awful. Should be banned” “I feel men should remove back hair, it's disgusting!” | *Imperative to remove hair*: Men’s body hair is disgusting. Participants express an imperative to remove it, almost as if it were a public health concern. |
| “I don't like too much hair on men - little to medium body hair is ideal. But, at the same time if I saw a guy with no body hair I would think that was weird even if he himself shaved it off etc.”“Men should have some body hair, but should definitely not have too much or too little”“A little bit is ok but having alot is not attractive at all. Especially on areas such as the chest and back.”“Men should have some body hair, but should definitely not have too much or too little” | *‘Ideal’ amount of hair*: A man needs to have an ‘ideal’ amount of hair to be considered attractive. ‘Invisible grooming’? |
| “OK: body hair in moderation. Some chest hair, little abdominal hair. Trimmed armpits and trimmed pubic hair. Shaved: base of penis, and testicles. Removed or trimmed: leg hair, buttocks. Not OK: back hair.”“Back hair, 'excessive' hair on chest, stomach or arms is regarded with disgust” “I believe back hair or excessive hair is definitely on the way out and is not a good look” | *Back hair is ALWAYS excessive*: Back hair of any amount is ALWAYS considered excessive, and therefore should be removed. |
| “I don't like excessive body hair on a man, and prefer if they are trimmed or have the excess hair removed”“Acceptable as long as it's not overly long or bushy, minimal in particular places. Has to be maintained properly”“Don’t let it grow super long and fuzzy, trim back to acceptable length but not shaven”“Never hairless! But definitely maintained. So if a man has excessive hair on his back, shoulders or lots of it in his ears or nose, it's nice to have that removed or taken care of” | Men’s ‘excess’ body hair needs to be managed. |

**Reference**

Terry, G. & Braun, V. (2016). ‘‘I think gorilla-like back effusions of hair are rather a turn-off’: ‘Excessive hair’ and male body hair (removal) discourse. *Body Image*, *17*, 14-24.