



**Illinois Wesleyan University**  
**Digital Commons @ IWU**

---

John Wesley Powell Student Research  
Conference

2016, 27th Annual JWP Conference

---

Apr 16th, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

## **The Effects of South Korean Pop Culture on the Country's Standards of Beauty and Success**

Cristina Cervantes  
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Charles Springwood, Faculty Advisor  
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc>



Part of the [Education Commons](#), [International and Area Studies Commons](#), and the [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#)

---

Cervantes, Cristina and Springwood, Faculty Advisor, Charles, "The Effects of South Korean Pop Culture on the Country's Standards of Beauty and Success" (2016). *John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference*. 2.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc/2016/oralpres10/2>

This Event is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@iwu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@iwu.edu).

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Oral Presentation O10.2

## **THE EFFECTS OF SOUTH KOREAN POP CULTURE ON THE COUNTRY'S STANDARDS OF BEAUTY AND SUCCESS**

Cristina Cervantes and Charles Springwood\*  
International Studies Department, Illinois Wesleyan University

As a reaction to a very biased Hollywood, South Korean entertainment industries decided to make a “Korean Hollywood” of their own, consisting of Korean pop music (K-Pop) and Korean dramas (K-Dramas), and called it Hallyu (한류), which translates to “the flow and spread of Korea”, also referred to as “The Korean Wave” in English. As Hallyu increased in popularity, so did the material pressure for the idols and actors to look good for the camera, since appearance plays a large role in their popularity and success. Thus, many Korean celebrities became the “pioneers” in undergoing plastic surgery in South Korea. South Korean entertainment medias used these celebrities and their strong influence to set a new beauty standard and send the message that having good looks can play a large factor into how successful one can be. Since technology, entertainment, and advertising campaigns have become intertwined with everyday life, especially in urban areas, these messages quickly spread, resulting in an increase in plastic surgery among the everyday people. While South Korea is considered to be a materialistically high context culture, meaning image matters more than the description, it is also contradictorily a collective yet highly competitive society with the idea of belonging in a group yet standing out to be on top of others. Therefore, the culture has become a liaison between entertainment media and the plastic surgery phenomenon in South Korea as the media sets an idea in motion, the culture supports it, and the people accept it.

