Objectification: The Reinforcement of Rape Myths

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The purpose of the present study aims to determine if objectifying media portrayals of women increase rape myth believability amongst millennial males.

Participants (71 millennial males) were recruited from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs’ Fall 2015 semester students. The experiment was distributed via an electronic survey, in which millennial males were randomly assigned to one of 3 groups: a control group in which Martha Burt’s (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale was distributed, a “horrific rape scene” group in which a scene was shown followed by the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, and a “glorified rape scene” group in which a scene was shown followed by the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. Overall, findings determined that men did not differ in their believability in rape myths based on the severity to which women were being objectified. Future expansion to adopt an integrated objectification theory is discussed.

*Keywords*: objectification, rape-proclivity, rape myth
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Patterns in human relationships have been recorded since the beginning of civilization. In most cases, it is found that one member of the partnership takes on the role of the more dominant of the two. The majority of the population adheres to the tradition of a male/female relationship wherein the male would automatically take on the dominant role. These role assignments can be credited to the cavemen of the prehistoric era. Here, males were compared closely to threatening animals, with their hairy bodies, broad shoulders, and muscular features. And in a survival of the fittest world, whoever is the most threatening is the leader- or the most powerful.

Flash-forward to year 2015 where, though equal rights for women is a high priority on the political docket, men still highly dominate as leaders in almost every sect of civilization, from political leadership to business tycoons, even religious leadership. When such power is awarded to one group of people over such an extended period of time, it can be seen that this group of people develops a sense of entitlement to what they want, perhaps at any cost.

It is extremely important to identify the cause of the ever-growing rape culture within the subculture of millennial males in Western society. Now that we as a people no longer have to count on the musculature of the male body to ward off vicious attacks from threatening animals, why is it that society continues to automatically assign males as the more dominant sex? And more importantly, have modern media contributed to the lack of protection of women against these now entitled males?
Realistically, there should be a steady increase in intelligence in society as civilization adapts to societal changes and evolution. Just as we look back at history and are astonished at what our ancestors have witnessed in North America’s early years, we have grown to realize the horrors that occurred during the genocide of the early Americans or Native Americans. We see it again in 1619 when the first African slaves are brought to Jamestown. And again in the early 1900s with women’s suffrage. The United States, then, stands for freedom in the mid-1900s during World War II. We look back at these uncivilized events in our history and wonder how humans being could cause such pain and agony to another group of people, and that how at that moment in history, another group of people saw it as suitable. So what in our history is happening now, of which our future children will be embarrassed?

Fredrickson and Roberts’ (1997) Objectification theory provides an essential framework for understanding societal norms around idolizing a woman solely for her looks, rather than for the many qualities and characteristics that makes each woman individualistic. Although this theory will be discussed more extensively in the literature to follow, it is important to understand its primary basis moving forward. Essentially, Fredrickson and Roberts’ (1997) theory states that because women are so often portrayed as a collection of body parts rather than as an entire person, women often become dehumanized and viewed by society as sexual objects, something for men and women to venerate. Because of this constant dehumanization, the influence of rape culture continues to grow. Primarily, this growth is attributed to the increase in violence against women; because they are seen as objects and not humans, it becomes societally easier to treat women without feeling. Thus, if a woman is sexually violated, the perpetrator often
times does not see this as problematic because women are sexual objects, not humans with feelings who can be hurt.

For example, the dehumanization of the female population has been an ongoing problem within various cultures around the world. Perhaps the most prominent cause of this problem is how media are continuously portraying women to an audience of men, women, and children. Even more problematic is that media are primarily controlled by six major corporations, all of whom are controlled by white, heterosexual men. In 1975, a feminist by the name of Laura Mulvey developed a theory titled, “the male gaze theory.” Mulvey’s (1975) male gaze theory states that because the production of media and the majority of art are controlled by men, society is only able to see what is produced through the eye of a male. Further, this theory argues that women are primarily represented in media to provide visual pleasure to heterosexual men (p.1), much like Fredrickson and Roberts’ (1997) objectification theory. Because the bodies of the women are so frequently not shown as a whole, it takes away from their human identity, and places them into a category of objectification. Rather than admiring the entirety of the female form, media are often targeted at segmenting only the “sexiest” parts, or worthy parts, of the body.

To further exemplify the prominence of the male gaze theory in media, three advertisements will be discussed to portray the dehumanization of women. To begin, an advertisement created by Dolce & Gabbana blatantly portrays the idea of gang rape. (See Figure 1). Within the ad, a woman is lying on her back on a white table being pinned down by a very masculine male, while at the same time being surrounded by three other aggressive and masculine men. Although the woman is fully clothed, she is still being
subservient to the wants of men. As the woman lies helplessly on the table, three strong men encompass her surroundings while hungrily gazing at her, while the other pins her to the table with no escape. The ad shows the woman as someone who is powerless against males, thus making it strongly representative of gang rape.

Fig. 1: Dolce & Gabbana Advertisement

The next ad to be discussed was created for LYNX body wash and shows the core of a dirty woman’s body. In this ad, a woman’s chest, stomach, hips, and legs are shown covered in mud with a statement that says, “Wash Me” across the stomach. Through cropping out the woman’s head, her body is now able to be symbolic of sexual fantasy for whoever’s eye it meets. Also, it is now okay for men to reference her body as if it were an object rather than belonging to a woman, because it is represented solely as a sexualized image. (See Figure 2).
Moreover, an advertisement was released by Kit-Kat that strongly alludes to rape fantasy, further dehumanizing women to the most severe level. The advertisement shows a woman’s head on the left hand side of the ad, while making a sexual face and gesture. On the right side of the ad, there is a red background that states, “Sometimes Four Fingers Just Isn’t Enough”, with the Kit-Kat logo placed underneath the tagline. Because the image is made to adhere to strong sexual references, it further allows for the objectification of women to become more prominent and acceptable throughout society. The statement to the right of the image alludes to the fantasy of men giving women rough sexual pleasure that is enjoyable at her expense. Again, the woman’s body is cut off right before the chest only revealing her upper sexual pose and expression. This represents her
as an object of sexual fantasy, rather than as a human being, allowing for people to treat her without regards to her feelings. (See Figure 3).

Fig. 3: Kit Kat Advertisement

![Kit Kat Advertisement](image)

When media are constantly portraying women as sex objects, it creates a multitude of problems in establishing societal norms, values, and beliefs. Media have been objectifying women for centuries, making it seem as though it is the natural course to make them the lesser sex who are primarily here to serve with looks. In 1886, the ever so popular women’s magazine, *Cosmopolitan*, was conceived as a literary magazine that supported and carried patriarchal ideologies. Unfortunately, the magazine continued to stay close to its roots. In the 1960s *Cosmopolitan*, or “Cosmo”, began to adopt the blatantly offensive image it carries today: how to make women more sexually desirable to men.

Since adopting this theme, *Cosmo* has prided itself on finding the month’s hottest female celebrities to be the star of its ever-changing covers. More often than not, the
women on these covers are put into poses to highlight their sexuality, often times resulting in objectification. *Cosmopolitan* is meant to appeal to the average reader, but when the women represented throughout the magazine are not average, women begin to habitually self-monitor themselves, which results in an unreachable idealized body shape that is viewed by society as the “most desirable.” When these body shapes are not reached by women, it leads to the indirect causes of increased shame and anxiety.

Additionally, *Cosmopolitan*’s magazine covers portray modelesque women whose core values revolve around sexuality. For their audience members, they are the ideal women to become: women who use physical properties to impress men, and who need to compete with other women.

It is because of constant media portrayals like those mentioned above that rape culture are increasing in Western society. Rapists are not viewing women/men as people, but rather as things that are there for them to have sex with. If a person is viewed as an object of desire, then a rapist will lack any type of remorse, because again, they are not hurting someone, but are rather using *something*. From this type of thinking come the creation and endorsement of rape myths.

Using Fredrickson and Roberts’ (1997) original theory of objectification alongside Martha Burt’s (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, this study aims to determine if objectifying media portrayals of women increase rape myth believability amongst millennial males. By analyzing the correlation of objectifying media and rape myth believability amongst millennial males, Fredrickson and Roberts’ (1997) objectification theory will be used to help determine if a woman’s reaction to sex will influence the audience’s perception of her willingness to participate.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To begin, Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) delivered a theoretical framework to provide an understanding of objectification theory. Specifically, it describes the experiential consequences of being female in a culture that sexually objectifies the female body. Objectification theory is the foundation for beginning to understand why people encounter being treated as just a body, or a collection of body parts, valued predominately by its use to others. Additionally, it suggests that females are acculturated to internalize an observer’s perspective as their primary view of themselves. As a result, women develop poor self-imaging, which can lead to habitual body monitoring, which in turn can lead to increased opportunities for shame and anxiety. Although not all women experience sexual objectification in the same way, the heterogeneity shared among them within society may lead to shared psychological experiences, creating its own subculture of women (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997). Moreover, mass media play an enormous role in objectifying women by flaunting a plethora of women’s body parts through a wide array of social outlets, thus taking them out of a sociocultural context, and placing them into a purely physical one. Therefore, according to the theory, mass media are largely responsible for the indirect causes of increased shame and anxiety in women in lieu of being objectified.

Now that the concept of objectification theory has been discussed, one must understand what is meant by the term, “rape proclivity.” Rape proclivity can simply be defined as one’s tendency to hold a desire to rape. In 1981, Malamuth examined this
concept through a series of studies to attempt to find the presence of rape proclivity among seemingly “normal” individual males. During this attempt, male college students were asked how likely they would be to rape a woman, if it were certain that they had no chance of ever being caught (Malamth, 1981). About 35% of college males on average indicated some likelihood of raping (Malamth, 1981). Three steps were taken during this study to assess the validity of the indicators of rape proclivity.

First, the literature used in the study was reviewed to identify males with distinguished rape proclivity from the general population (Malamth, 1981). The males with strong rape proclivity who were identified showed greater acceptance for rape myths, and had comparatively high sexual arousal to rape depictions (Malamth, 1981). Rape myths are defined as, “false but widely held beliefs regarding rape, rape survivors, and perpetrators” (Burt 1980; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2012). For example, women fantasize about being raped, or because a woman was wearing certain type of outfit, she wanted to be raped (Malamth, 1981). The next step taken was to analyze the correlation between the likelihood of raping and the responses found to characterize a rapist (Malamth, 1981). The data showed that men who reported a higher likelihood of raping were more similar to convicted rapists than the men who reported a lower likelihood (Malamth, 1981). For example, both the convicted rapists and men with a higher likelihood displayed more believability in rape myths, and had higher sexual arousal to rape depictions (Malamth, 1981). Finally, the third step to assess the validity of the indicator of rape proclivity was to examine the relationship between the likelihood of raping and aggressive behavior. Men who reported a higher likelihood of raping also
reported as having greater aggression against women within a laboratory setting (Malamth, 1981).

Through taking these three steps, the validity of likelihood of raping ratings was found to be consistent with claims that numerous men have a natural proclivity to rape (Malamth, 1981). Another factor that may have influenced the men to score high on rape proclivity is the guidance from mass media on rape education to the public. To better examine this finding, the college men who had a higher score on the rape proclivity scale should have been interviewed on what influenced them to pick a particular response. The overall purpose for conducting this study was to create the foundation for a theory that properly portrays the understanding of, and ability to prevent, further rape crimes and lower sexual aggression.

Successively, Burt (1980) conducted a study aimed at testing “hypotheses derived from social psychological and feminist theory that acceptance of rape myths can be predicted from attitude such as sex role stereotyping, adversarial sexual beliefs, sexual conservatism, and acceptance of interpersonal violence” (p. 217). Both attitudinal and rape myth acceptance scales were created for the purpose of this research.

In the context of this research, sex role stereotyping is measured under the definition of the relationship of attitudes toward women, and how they correlate with existing rape attitudes or definitions (p. 217). Further, adversarial sexual beliefs refers to the belief that sexual relationships are manipulative, in that both parties involved will be “sly, cheating, manipulative, [and] opaque” towards one another, and will lack the basic principle of trust (p. 217). Then, the notion of sexual conservatism is defined as, “the restrictions on appropriateness of sexual partners, sexual acts, conditions or
circumstances under which sex should occur”; primarily differing from sex role stereotyping in that it focuses solely on sexual behavior, and not on social roles (p. 217). Lastly, Burt (1980) uses acceptance of interpersonal violence as an attitude that believes “force and coercion are legitimate ways to gain compliance and specifically that they are legitimate in intimate and sexual relationships” (p. 217). The same procedures were also used in developing the Rape Myth Acceptance scale, which consists of widely believed rape myths such as, “A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex” (p. 223).

The aforementioned attitudes were hypothesized to create a foundation for understanding the relationship between sexual violence and rape. Participants included both males (n=241) and females (n=357) (p. 228). As predicted, males and females produced similar findings among the previously mentioned attitudinal scales and the rape myth acceptance scale. It was discovered that “many Americans believe in rape myths, [and that] their rape attitudes are strongly connected to other deeply held and pervasive attitudes such as sex role stereotyping, distrust of the opposite sex (adversarial sexual beliefs), and acceptance of interpersonal violence” (p. 229). Over half of the sampled individuals reported thinking that “50% or more of reported rapes are reported as rape only because the woman was trying to get back at a man she was angry with, or was trying to cover up an illegitimate pregnancy” (p. 229).

Although this study is older, it has been the premise and foundation for countless studies measuring rape myth acceptance and believability. Because of this, this research is paramount in aiding for the study at hand. Both the attitudinal scales and Rape Myth
Acceptance scale will be used to measure rape myth believability amongst millennial males in cause of constant portrayals of objectifying media.

Subsequently, Lee, Lee, and Lee (2012) then examined the perceptions of rape among police officers, and how these perceptions affected their attitudes towards women, rape survivor myths, and myths about the impact of rape. Rape myths have been shown to significantly influence perceptions regarding rape. In 1996, “Kopper sampled 534 college students in the United States and found that those with a high acceptance of rape myths were more likely to attribute blame to the survivor and circumstances, less likely to hold the perpetrator responsible, and more likely to believe that the assault could have been avoided” (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2012).

The above study was conducted using cross-sectional data from 236 male police officers in South Korea. This study does not account for other cultures, but is rather used as an illustration to help relay the overall purpose of the study. The results indicated that attitudes toward women and rape myths were positively related to rape perceptions (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2012). Police officers who were found to have stereotypical attitudes toward women and had believed more in rape myths were more likely to be supportive of rape myths in rape scenarios (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2012). Further, results also indicated that attitudes toward women and rape scenarios were indirectly related to rape survivor myths (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2012). However, police officers that attended an educational program on sexual awareness were less likely to be encouraging of rape supportive attributions in rape scenarios (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2012). It has been found through numerous studies that when males attend a sexual assault education program, they are more likely to reject the
acceptance of rape myths, and rather look at the situation through a more realistic point of view than those men who have not attended the class.

Much like college students in the United States, male Korean police officers also attribute more gestures of acceptance toward rape when a strong belief in rape myths is present (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2012). It has also been hypothesized by feminists such as Machel (1998), which the reason for a high believability in rape myths is due to the structure of a patriarchal society that portrays unequal power relations between men and women, which causes the justification for rape and other forms of violence against women. Ergo, these results suggest that objectification does not have a short-term effect on rape proclivity, and in some cases, can even attribute to the increased desire to carry out objectifying attributes.

Expanding from the aforementioned studies, Fagen and Anderson (2012) then performed an experiment using 20 in depth interviews to test how masculinity informs men’s experiences that have unwanted sexual contact with women as adults. The Sexual Experience Survey (SES) was used to measure the victimization of men, and is the most commonly used survey in rape investigations and sexual coercion (Fagen & Anderson, 2012). The version of the SES in this study was modified to ask questions about the victimization of men, whereas the original SES assesses only the victimization of women. Sexual victimization is one of the few topics that neglect to report on men’s experiences.

Because of this ongoing neglectfulness, researchers have been prevented from further exploring men’s unwanted sexual experience, which, in turn, has increased the objectification of women. One main theme found from this research was that the men interviewed put limitations on women’s sexual advancements in order to increase their
feelings of masculinity. The limitations the men set on the women’s sexuality can also be seen as a type of sexual gatekeeping. Within this study, sexual gatekeeping has been perceived as a passive role for women, but may be more of an aggressive role for men. Thus, sexual gatekeeping further emphasized stigmatized gender roles within American culture, which helped to preserve the primary sexual scripts held by men and women. Because masculinity has not had to revolutionize itself, it has a very precise meaning for what the definition of a man should be.

Therefore, because “masculine” males take the dominant role in heterosexual relationships/sex, a man’s perceived sexual objectification can be violated if the woman tries to initiate the sexual outcome. Due to this fear of having one’s masculinity renounced, men place limitations on women’s sexual advances. Because men carry this fear, the objectification of women is further displaced upon them by men so they are able to feel secure with their own masculinity.

Moreover, Hammond, Berry, and Rodriguez (2010) conducted a study in which the influences of rape myth acceptance, belief in a just world, and sexual attitudes on attributions of responsibility in a date rape scenario were examined (p.242). Specifically, the study aimed to build on previous research regarding “stranger rape by investigating the influence of rape myth acceptance, sexual attitudes, and belief in a just world on lay participants’ evaluations of evidence in a date rape scenario” (p.244). A regression analysis design was used, with the majority of participants (68 male, 104 female) being under the age of 21, and self-identified as White (p. 245). The participants were recruited from a medium-sized Catholic university in the United States (p. 245). The name of the specific university was not provided. Students volunteered to participate in the study, and
were led to believe they would be filling out questionnaires administered to potential jurors (p.246). However, the students were in fact given materials that would assess their acceptance of rape myths, their sexual attitudes, their endorsements of just-world beliefs, and their perceptions of a case (p.244).

Results from this study suggested that pre-existing beliefs about rape myths may be a significant factor when attributing individual responsibility to date rape scenarios. There was supporting evidence for the relationship between sexual attitudes and rape myth acceptance, but sexual attitudes were not found to predict participants’ judgments of responsibility (p. 249). Additionally, this study found the beliefs about rape myths to be different amongst male and females (p. 249). Women held significantly more conservative sexual attitudes than males (p.249). However, this could be attributed to the fact that the researchers used students enrolled in a Catholic university as their participants.

Exposing rape myths during a trial could potentially allow the legal system to help shape societal perceptions about rape. From this knowledge, pre-existing beliefs about rape and victimization may be able to be changed, which may then result in a less biased, and more just society. However, until rape myths are acknowledged as a problematic phenomenon within Western society, it will be impossible to achieve positive change.

Furthermore, Harper and Tiggemann (2007) examined the effects of media images on self-objectification. An experimental design was used, with a total of 90 undergraduate Australian women aged 18 to 35 as the participants. The participants were randomly assigned to view magazine advertisements either featuring a thin woman, a thin
woman with at least one attractive man, or advertisements in which no people were featured to act as the control group (p.651). Participants who viewed the advertisements featuring the thin, idealized women reported higher self-objectification with an increased weight associated anxiety (p. 657). They also showed a sign of negative mood attributes and body dissatisfaction compared to the participants who viewed the controlled advertisements that did not feature any people (p. 657).

Additionally, the results demonstrated that women can be explicitly exposed to self-objectification through the body of another woman, even when it is not directly related to their own physical appearance (p. 657). Many sociocultural theories provide the theoretical framework for understanding body dissatisfaction in women, by hypothesizing that the reason behind the dissatisfaction comes from a mass array of social influences, with mass media being the most prominent and powerful.

Perhaps the most widely known form of media contributing to self-objectification within women is the beauty magazine. Throughout these magazines, “beautiful” women are constantly portrayed as being extremely thin, causing robust women to constantly objectify themselves in order to be physically appealing to the outside world. In addition to this, because beauty magazines do not provide a variety of all the available body types women occupy, they are further emphasizing the norm of what a beautiful woman should look like within Westernized and Australian societies. “The results of the present study indicate that the body and its appearance become more salient points of reference for women in describing the self after this form of media exposure. Thus, self-objectification is introduced as a “variable that should be examined further in future research on media effects” (Harper & Tiggemann, 2007).
Moreover, Kozee, Tylka, Augustus-Horvath, and Denchik (2007) examined the aspect of objectification theory that theorizes that sexual objectification occurs through interpersonal interactions between partners, family, friends, acquaintances, and strangers, as well as through media outlets. According to Kozee, Tylka, Augustus-Horvath, and Denchik, the objectifying gaze (the evaluation of women’s bodies through the eyes of a heterosexual, white male), is a central contributor to an extreme form of interpersonal sexual objectification, which includes the prevalence of unwanted explicit sexual advances. They conclude that the interpersonal sexual objectification scale is strongly related to sexist degradation and moderately related to self-objectification, appearance anxiety, and body shame.

This journal was interesting for its study of the external consequences that objectification can cause towards women. Again, often times when women work in sexually objectifying environments, they are perceived as being more accepting of sexually explicit advances.

Then, Bandura (1977), developed a theory known as, “Social Learning Theory” in order to help explain why people behave in the way that they do; specifically, he aimed to identify how “modeling influences produce learning principally through their informative functions and that their observers acquire mainly symbolic representations of modeled activities rather than specific stimulus response associations [Bandura 1969a, 1971a]” (p. 6). These modeling influences are ruled by four interrelated process: 1). Attentional processes: members of different social groups will attract different levels of attention from observers (p. 6). 2). Retention processes: if one is to reproduce a model’s behavior that is no longer present, the person must have a memory of that behavior in symbolic
form (p. 7). Motoric reproduction processes: symbolic representations guide overt actions (p. 8). Reinforcement and motivational processes: “A person can acquire, retain, and possess the capabilities for skillful execution of modeled behavior, but the learning may rarely be activated into overt performance if it is negatively sanctioned or otherwise unfavorably received” (p. 8).

From Social Learning Theory, Bandura (1977) contradicts previous theories by stating:

psychological functioning involves a continuous reciprocal interaction between behavior and its controlling conditions. The major weakness of this type of formulation is that it treats response dispositions and the environment as independent entities…the environment is only a potentiality, not a fixed property…. behavior partly creates the environment and the resultant environment, in turn, influences the behavior (p. 38-39)

This theory then becomes instrumental in the current research because it aids in explaining why objectifying images of women (environment) may in turn result in negative attitudes and misconceptions towards rape throughout Western society (behavior).

Further, in 2015, Vogel and Keith presented a longitudinal study that examined the effects of vicarious peer victimization, or the victimization of a close friend, and how it affected adolescents and violence, using Social Learning Theory, General Strain Theory, and Homophiliy as the foundation (p. 834). In the study, it was stated that, “adolescents [ages 12-17] may be exposed to violence through more indirect means, such as hearing about violence from significant others, witnessing violence in their
communities or schools, or observing violence in their homes” (p. 834). The study aimed to find empirical support for each of the following hypotheses, “H1 (Social Learning): The direct effect of vicarious peer victimization on violence will be mediated by changes in peer behavior. H2 (General Strain): The direct effect of vicarious peer victimization on violence will be mediated by negative emotions. H3 (Homophily): The effect of vicarious peer victimization on violence will be mediated by factors associated with peer-group selection” (p. 840).

Participants were recruited throughout various high schools, and were chosen to participate in the current study based upon them having significant, consistent peer interactions throughout each of the 3 time frames (1993-1994, 1995-1996, and 1996-1997) (p. 840). All together, 4,714 respondents were used for data collection (p. 841). Overall, findings indicated that peers who “experienced violent victimization were 28.8% more likely to engage in violence at Time 3 compared to peers who were not victimized” (p. 844). From these findings, this study was able to conclude that negative peer behavior can, and is often transmitted throughout peer social groups, especially when one of the peers has been violently victimized, causing a strong reinforcement of negative, violent behavior (p. 850).

Then, in 2010, Moffitt conducted a qualitative case study “of women’s experiences in a sexually objectifying environment” (p. iv), in particular, the restaurant “Hooters”. Observational data and interviews with 11 women were analyzed using the constant comparative method, bringing to light nine major themes: “reasons for involvement, ambivalence, counterfeit intimacy, sexual objectification, resistance strategies, power, negative relationships with women, changes over time, and judgment”
The results of this study indicated the primary reasons for women becoming involved in, and remaining in sexually objectifying environments. These reasons were due to financial need, job flexibility, or desire, despite the women becoming increasingly aware of the “gendered power dynamics” (p. 62).

As demonstrated in this study, media portrayals of objectification affect women’s beliefs just as much as men’s as to how they should portray themselves in everyday life. With both genders feeding into the societal creation of “how women should look”, it is hard to believe that they are both not feeding into how women should “act”, which may further be contributing to the possible increased rape myth acceptance throughout Western society.

According to Aubrey (2007), objectification theory can be used as a framework to explore what role sexually objectifying media plays in body self-consciousness. The study measured the effect of sexually objectifying media (television and magazines) on negative body emotions and sexual dysfunction in male and female undergraduates. Aubrey (2007) issued a series of surveys and questionnaires to 384 undergraduate students asking about their exposure to media content and body acceptance levels (p.8). The study found that there is a positive relationship between exposure to sexually objectifying media and body shame, appearance anxiety, and self-consciousness during physical intimacy (p.14). The results skewed slightly higher for the male research subjects, meaning that they were slightly more affected (in a negative way) by the sexual objectification of men in the media (p.14). Aubrey (2007) concluded that perhaps this was due to the fact that women have become more adjusted to sexually objectification in the media than men (p.18).
Further, in 2012, Gail Dines, an anti-pornography feminist, explored how “porn images are part of a wider system of sexist representations that legitimize and normalize the economic, political, and legal oppression of women” (p. 512). Women have been oppressed for many years, which has therefore created a large foundation for radical feminists to arise and present a myriad of arguments that go against typical patriarchal society. This is known as the “radical feminist paradigm—...a set of theoretical positions that grew out of listening to the stories of thousands of women who are not credentialed, who do not publish in academic journals, and whose experiences are all too often dismissed as anecdotal” (p.513).

Beginning in the 1970s, radical feminists began to examine how/if the sex industry was harming women in conjunction with social science practices (p. 513). Unfortunately, their findings indicated that the sex industry was indeed causing harm to women. “Women in the sex industry were found to be disproportionately drawn from the lower and working classes, and from communities of color; to have limited access to housing, health care, and education; to have experienced higher rates of childhood sexual abuse and PTSD; and were at much greater risk than the general population for STDs, rape, and murder (see, for example, Farley, 2006; Jeffreys, 2008; Kramer & Berg, 2003; Raphael & Shapiro, 2004)” (p.513). From these findings, radical feminists continued their studies to provide further evidence of how the sex industry is perpetuating the notion of gender inequality, and is continuously promoting violence against women.

In today’s society, the most commonly sought after porn is “Gonzo porn, which is defined by the industry as having “wall-to-wall” sex scenes” (p. 514). The most prominent studios in the sex industry produce mainly Gonzo porn, with horrifying
portrayals of “gagging (with the penis), slapping, name calling (“cunt, “slut,” “cumdumpster,” “bitch”), hair-pulling, pounding anal and vaginal penetration, spitting in her face, ATM (in which the penis goes into the anus of the woman and then, without washing, into her mouth), and ejaculation into the mouth and eyes, and on the breasts” (p.514). Over the years, porn has become increasingly more violent. Thus, with Gonzo being the most popular form of porn, it reinforces severe violence towards women, and the patriarchal physical aggression that declares one sex dominant over the other.

Additionally, in 2005, Jean Kilbourne discusses how in a modern society, women are constantly objectified through advertising, thus resulting in unrealistic partner and self-expectations for both men and women seeking physical fulfillment. For example, many advertisements only show young, beautiful, and physically fit models as society’s “average” women. “Inevitably, this affects our self-images, making us feel less desirable, less sexy” (p. 120).

Furthermore, because of the overtly sexual nature of advertisements in media, younger girls and women are beginning to gravitate towards “sexier” self-imaging. “Sex in advertising is about a constant state of desire and arousal-never about intimacy or fidelity or commitment” (p. 120). Because of this, adolescents are often confused about casual hookups and committed relationships. When media are constantly portraying sexual encounters as milestones to be reached by “beautiful” people, the concept of intimacy becomes obsolete. This then becomes the cause for a downward spiral for unhealthy sexual relationships between men and women from adolescence into adulthood.
Moreover, Sprinkle, End, and Bretz (2012) conducted a 2x2 factorial design that examined the differences of the short term effects of sexually degrading lyrics and music videos on the aggressive behavior of men in relation to rape myths and sexual stereotypes (p.31). The format of a media memory study was used, consisting of 187 media undergraduate students that were randomly assigned to one of four conditions (p.34). To ensure the music videos and lyrics were significantly degrading, a 7 point Likert scale was used to measure the vulgarity of the lyrics of the songs, and then songs that were ranked 4 and above on this scale were chosen to be shown to the participants and were considered to be sexually degrading (p.35).

Out of the eight music videos that were ranked, seven of them had mean scores over the midpoint (4) in relation to their images and lyrics (p.36). The music video that was not perceived as being sexually degrading was removed from analysis. The second criterion for the music videos was that there had to be a significant correlation between the visual images and the lyrics (p.36). For the seven music videos that were selected, each produced a significant correlation between the lyrics and the visual images as portraying sexual degradation (p.36).

Finally, a paired t test was conducted to ensure there was not a significant difference between the lyrics and visual images in relation to sexual degradation. Two out of the seven music videos were rated as having non-differentiating content between the lyrics and visual images, and where therefore used as the two music videos in the primary study. The study concluded that there were no significant differences in participants’ aggression toward women after watching the sexually degrading music videos. There was
also not a significant difference in participants’ endorsement of rape myths or sexual stereotypes after watching the music videos (p.36).

Additionally, it is also important to note that in order to create an integrated theory of objectification, both physiological and psychological aspects must eventually be examined. Chivers, Seto, Lalumiere, Laan, and Grimbos (2010) conducted a study examining the assessment of sexual arousal in men and women, and provide a method to assess and evaluate the treatment of sexual dysfunction. Understanding the measures of arousal is paramount to the valuation of this study, making it pertinent to cognizing the reasons for which it occurs. Various physiological parameters have been used to measure sexual arousal. However, the most precise physiological measure of sexual response in men is to use the penile plethysmography to note changes in penile erection. Through the penile plethysmography, changes in penile circumference are measured using a gauge placed around the shaft of the penis.

Another form of measurement through the penile plethysmography is to assess the changes in penile volume using gas displacement in a sealed cylinder, which is then placed over the entire penis. When indicators of increased penile circumference or volume are noted, the results can be interpreted as evidence of greater genital sexual arousal. “Regarding discriminative validity, penile responses can distinguish heterosexual and homosexual men, men who are sexually attracted to prepubescent children from those who are sexually attracted to adults, fetishists from non-fetishists, rapists from non- rapists, and sadistic men from non-sadistic men” (e.g., Blanchard, Klassen, Dickey, Kuban & Blak, 2001; Freund, Harris, Rice, & Trautrimas, 2003; Sakheim et al., 1985; Seto & Kuban, 1996; Chivers, Seto, Lalumiere, Laan, & Grimbos, 2010).
Increased penile responses can also distinguish sexually functional men from those who have sexual dysfunction. Sexual arousal to stimuli depicting sexual violence is an important predictor of sexual reoffending among sex offenders, which provides predictive validity for the assessment. However, although sexual arousal has only been measured in a laboratory setting, it was shown that penile responses to sexual stimuli were related to increases in sexual behavior the day following the laboratory study.

Currently, research on objectification solely stems from an internal, existential point of view. Media are extremely influential in encouraging objectification throughout society because it is a main driver of capital investment. Yet, the results of these constant portrayals of objectifying images are often overlooked, and can often times become detrimental to a society as a whole.

*H1: Millennial males who view objectifying images in a “horrific” rape scene will have lower rape myth acceptance than millennial males who view objectifying images in a “glorified” rape scene.*
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants were recruited through convenience sampling at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Although both males and females of all ages were able to participate in the experiment, all of the participants used for data collection in the experiment were millennial males between the age range of 18-29 years old (N=71). Respondents who were female, and males who fell outside of the aforementioned age range were consciously removed from the sample. Millennial males are often perceived as innovators when it comes to marketing. Often times, they are most receptive to the messages put out by various types of media, making them the ideal sample population for studying the effects of objectifying media on rape myth believability. Even more compelling for this reasoning is the fact that males commit the majority of rapes, making them the most susceptible to rape myth believability. Twenty-seven of the male millennial students were randomly assigned to watch a “glorified” rape scene, followed by Martha Burt’s Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, while 22 students were randomly assigned to watch a “horrific” rape scene, followed by Martha Burt’s Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980, p. 222-223). The remaining 22 students were assigned to a control group, in which a rape scene was not shown, and only Martha Burt’s Rape Myth Acceptance Scale was distributed. Participants used computers of their choice for all activities related to this experiment (an online survey distributed through Survey Monkey).
Materials

All participants received an informed consent form prior to participation. (See Appendix B.) Additionally, participants were randomly assigned to one of the three aforementioned experimental conditions. Approximately two minute rape scenes from “The Last House on the Left” (“horrific”), and “The Accused” (“glorified”) were shown to participants based on their randomization. In addition to watching the videos, the participants received a modified version of Martha Burt’s (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (RMAs) (See Appendix C), which consisted of 19 items regarding various rape myths and situations, and 16 items regarding sex role stereotyping, adversarial sexual beliefs, sexual conservatism, and acceptance of interpersonal violence. The original RMA scale also included questions regarding “own sex role satisfaction”.

However, in the current study, questions from the “own sex role satisfaction” scale were eliminated because their content was less relevant to the present research. Additionally, questions were removed from each of the above scales for the same reasons. The original questionnaire proved to have excellent reliability for each of the mentioned categories (“Sex Role Stereotyping: Cronbach’s alpha=.800; Adversarial Sexual Beliefs: Cronbach’s alpha=.802; Sexual Conservatism: Cronbach’s alpha=.811; Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence: Cronbach’s alpha=.586; Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Items: Cronbach’s alpha=.875”) (Burt, 1980, p. 222-223).

Eleven of the rape myth items were statements about women and rape, with 10 of those questions alluding to the fact that the woman was responsible for her own rape. These 11 questions were recorded on seven-point Likert-type scales, with poles ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The remaining seven items asked questions.
“Two ask the respondent to estimate the percentage of reported rapes that are not really rapes. Five response options would be provided: “almost all, about \(\frac{3}{4}\), about half, about \(\frac{1}{4}\), almost none” (Burt, 1980, p. 400). The remaining five questions asked about the likelihood of believing a claim as rape as a function of the type of person reporting the rape (best friend, teacher, etc.) The response items would be, “always, frequently, sometimes, rarely, never” (Burt, 1980, p. 400). Items from the RMAs were individually scored on a seven-point scale.

When participants finished the study, they received a Debriefing Statement which revealed the true purpose of the research. (See Appendix D.) Particularly, I was interested in seeing how a woman’s reaction to sex through mass media influenced rape myth believability among Millenial males within Western society. Because the study aims to determine if objectifying media portrayals of women increase rape myth believability among participants, information about rape myths and objectification were withheld so that participants’ responses to the survey were their true beliefs based on the scene they may have been asked to watch. If participants were not asked to watch a scene, this information was withheld so I could gauge general beliefs about rape myths without biasing their thought process.

**Procedure**

A link was generated from Survey Monkey by the Principle Investigator and then distributed to students via UCCS faculty through a recruitment email. (See Appendix A.) If students chose to participate in the experiment, they may have been offered extra credit at their professor’s discretion. Males between the ages of 18-29 were randomly assigned to one of the three previously mentioned groups, which determined the course of their
participation. Females between the ages of 18-29 were automatically directed to Martha Burt’s (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. The data from millennial females did not have any effect on the current experiment, and was not used in the overall findings. All other participants (females, and males that exceeded the age range of 18-29) were thanked for their participation and were redirected to the end of the study.

The first experimental group individually viewed the “horrific” two minute rape scene. After the viewing, each individual received Martha Burt’s (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (RMAs). Examples of the items are as follows: “A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies she is willing to have sex. When women go around braless or wearing short skirts and tight tops, they are just asking for trouble” (Burt, 1980, p. 400). The participants were encouraged to select the first answer that came to mind, but were ultimately not given a time limit to complete the study. However, it was estimated it would take approximately 30 minutes. The second experimental group then viewed the “glorified” two minute rape scene, and proceeded to fill out the same qualitative questionnaire regarding various rape myths, as presented in the first group. Finally, the third experimental group acted as a control, and therefore did not view a film, but rather just completed the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale questionnaire.

**Measures**

Because this study analyzed the responses of millennial males within three independent groups (horrific, glorified, and control), a one-way ANOVA was run on each of the individual attitudinal scales to identify any possible significant differences. The raw data was transferred from Survey Monkey into SPSS. Once the data was converted, the researcher assigned each group of questions unique identifiers and appropriate value
scaling. These separating identifiers are known as, “SRS-Sex Role Stereotyping, ASB-Adversarial Sexual Beliefs, SC-Sexual Conservatism, AIV-Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, and RMAS-Rape Myth Acceptance Scale” (Burt 1980, p.222-223). Question numbers four (A wife should not contradict her husband in public), 16 (A woman shouldn’t give in sexually to a man too easily or he will think she is loose), 24 (A man is never justified in hitting his wife), and 30 (People should not use “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” as a rule for living) were recoded with opposite scaling attributes due to negative wording. Once the questions were identified and recoded, the researcher then ran reliability analysis on all scales using Cronbach’s alpha to ensure they had reliable measures of internal consistency. Questions were removed from the scales in order to improve reliability and Cronbach’s alpha. Questions that have been crossed out were removed from final analysis. (See TABLE I.) After reliability analysis was ran, the researcher then created composite measures from the aforementioned scales.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS/DISCUSSION

Rape Myth Acceptance Scale

H1: Millennial males who view objectifying images in a “horrific” rape scene will have lower rape myth acceptance than millennial males who view objectifying images in a “glorified” rape scene.

A one-way ANOVA provided evidence that millennial males did not differ in their general believability of rape myths based on women’s reactions to sex in media. Specifically, millennial males who were placed in the horrific rape group (M=2.40; SD=0.71), the glorified rape group (M=2.63; SD=0.83), and the control group (M=2.40; SD=0.71) did not differ in their levels of rape myth believability, regardless of the scenes they may have or have not been shown, $F(2, 67)=.81$, $p =.05$, partial $\eta^2=0.024$.

Attitudinal Scales

Sex Role Stereotyping

Additionally, a one-way ANOVA indicated that millennial males did not differ in their general believability of rape myths based on preconceived attitudes about sex. Specifically, millennial males who were placed in the horrific rape group (M=3.53; SD=0.67), the glorified rape group (M=3.41; SD=0.75), and the control group (M=3.53; SD=0.67) did not differ significantly in their levels of rape relevant attitudes in regards to sex role stereotyping, regardless of the scenes they may have or have not been shown, $F(2, 68)=0.28$, $p =.05$, partial $\eta^2=0.008$. 
Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence

Moreover, a one-way ANOVA also indicated that millennial males did not differ in their general believability of rape myths based on preconceived attitudes about sex. Specifically, millennial males who were placed in the horrific rape group (M=2.45; SD=0.84), the glorified rape group (M=2.41; SD=0.76), and the control group (M=2.45; SD=0.84) did not differ significantly in their levels of rape relevant attitudes in regards to acceptance of interpersonal violence, regardless of the scenes they may have or have not been shown, $F(2, 65)=.02, p = .05$, partial $\eta^2=0.001$.

Sexual Conservatism

Further, a one-way ANOVA also provided evidence that millennial males did not differ in their general believability of rape myths based on preconceived attitudes about sex. Specifically, millennial males who were placed in the horrific rape group (M=3.34; SD=0.92), the glorified rape group (M=3.73; SD=0.83), and the control group (M=3.34; SD=0.92) did not differ significantly in their levels of rape relevant attitudes in regards to sexual conservatism, regardless of the scenes they may have or have not been shown, $F(2, 67)=1.59, p = .05$, partial $\eta^2=0.045$.

Adversarial Sexual Beliefs

Additionally, a one-way ANOVA also indicated that millennial males did not differ in their general believability of rape myths based on preconceived attitudes about sex. Specifically, millennial males who were placed in the horrific rape group (M=2.72; SD=0.75), the glorified rape group (M=3.08; SD=0.82), and the control group (M=2.71; SD=0.75) did not differ in their levels of rape relevant attitudes in regards to adversarial
sexual beliefs, regardless of the scenes they may have or have not been shown, $F(2, 68)=1.79, p = .05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.050$

**Discussion**

The present study investigated the effects of women’s reactions to sexual encounters on rape myth believability amongst millennial males using Fredrickson and Roberts’ 1997 theory of objectification as the underlying foundation. Contrary to my hypothesis, findings indicate that regardless of objectifying images sex (glorified rape scene, horrific rape scene, and control), there were no significant differences in participants’ pre-established conditions to believe in common rape myths. Unlike previous research that established how attitudes toward women and rape myths were significantly related to rape perceptions (Lee, Lee, and Lee, 2012), results from this research most closely corresponded with Sprankle, End, and Bretz’ (2012) research on sexually degrading music videos resulting in aggression and increased rape myth believability towards women; both this study and the current research failed to reject their null hypotheses revolved around the portrayals of women being correlated with higher rape myth believability amongst males.

However, it is important to note that these findings controvert key aspects of Albert Bandura’s (1997) Social Learning Theory. “Social learning theory assumes that modeling influences produce learning principally through their informative functions and that observers acquire mainly symbolic representations of modeled activities rather than specific stimulus-response associations” (Bandura, 1977, p.6). Media are constantly portraying women as sexualized objects to be envied by both men and women. This can be seen and heard in movies, music, print advertisements, television advertisements, and
a plethora of various other media outlets. For instance, often times when advertisers use a female model to sell their products, the woman is not shown holistically. Rather, only her legs, lips, stomach, or some other isolated body part will be shown in seclusion. By constantly portraying women as objects rather than as entire human beings, media heavily contribute to, and form the Western societal norms, values, and beliefs that women are merely a collection of body parts, making them severely dehumanized in the eyes of both children and adults. Thus, it is through this constant reinforcement that make people believe it is okay to treat women as sex objects, which then leads to the reinforcement of rape myths and using sex as a weapon (i.e., “only young, pretty women are assaulted” or “women “ask for it” by their dress or actions”).

Once again, according to social learning theory, “…under conditions where stimulus events are highly correlated, as when a name is consistently associated with a given person, it is virtually impossible to hear the name without experiencing imagery of the person’s physical characteristics…things that one has previously observed immediately elicits vivid imaginal representations of the absent physical stimuli” (Bandura, 1977, p.7). Therefore, one would wonder how participants would view socially prominent media regarding well-known and well pronounced rape myths, but would not have consistency between what they were seeing and what they were relaying.

One of the key components of Social Learning Theory is that children often build their behaviors based off of their environment and vice versa. In Western society, media are largely responsible for creating our environments by establishing our norms, values, and beliefs, by constantly reinforcing the images we see on a daily basis. Additionally, “psychological behavior can be modeled through many avenues and research has
provided significant evidence to suggest that children are learning about themselves and their environment through media portrayals (e.g., Peterson & Lach, 1990)” (Hollis-Sawyer and Cuevas, 2013, p. 908). Therefore, because media are portraying women as the objects of sexual desire, or as prizes to be one by both the same and opposite genders, Social Learning Theory would assume the environment of objectifying women is causing children to be raised with the inclination to naturally objectify women, which in turn may cause stronger believability in rape myths.

Because of this, along with the wide array of rape myth acceptance research that produced significance throughout their findings, one might assume that by only using one instrument (Martha Burt’s 1980 Rape Myth Acceptance Scale and questionnaire), researcher bias and social desirability may have limited the respondents’ true responses to the questionnaire in fear of being judged by the researcher, or by thinking that the researcher wanted the participants to answer in a specific way.

The majority of questions on Martha Burt’s 1980 Rape Myth Acceptance Scale and questionnaire could be perceived as socially undesirable, thus possibly making participants weary of answering truthfully. Although measures were taken to try and eliminate social desirability factors, participants most likely realized that the study was about rape, which therefore made them answer in what they thought to be a more favorable light. As stated by Fisher (1993), “Respondents are often unwilling or unable to report accurately on sensitive topics for egodefensive or impression management reasons” (p. 303). When social desirability bias occurs in research, it can cause an experiment to portray results misleading results, thus warranting incorrect conclusions about the desired sample population. Thus, for future study, it is strongly recommended
that indirect questions be incorporated as an additional instrument to help identify social desirability, and eliminate it where needed.

Another possibility for the lack of significant differences between conditions may indicate that the videos shown may not have been an effective reinforce to alter participants’ perceptions and attitudes regarding rape myth believability. Further, much like the findings in Burt’s (1980) original research, “younger and better educated people reveal[ed] less stereotypic, adversarial, and proviolence attitudes and less rape myth acceptance” (p.217). Thus, for future study, it would be beneficial to run a factorial analysis of variance between younger and older generations of males with differing academic backgrounds. By running this analysis, the researcher would generate more comprehensive reasoning as to why objectifying media affects the generations so differently.

An additional limitation of the experimental design is the incapability to truly gauge whether or not the participants viewed the horrific and glorified rape scenes in their entirety. Results suggest that the glorified rape scene was viewed in its entirety, giving it some variation against the other two groups (horrific and control). However, throughout the analysis of each individual scale, the majority of the time the horrific and control group had identical means and standard deviation scores. This is a strong indicator that the horrific rape scene may have been too uncomfortable for participants to view. Although a question was put into the electronic survey asking participants to confirm their viewing, it is impossible to know if they were truthful in their response. If the participants skipped the scene, or did not watch it in its entirety, it is possible that their responses to the endorsement of rape myths may have been skewed. Because the
survey gave the option to click “yes or no” when participants finished watching, there is a good possibility that participants may have skipped the scene, and just said yes. If this were the case, it would make sense because the control did not have a scene, and rape myth believability between the control and horrific scenes were identical; in reality, rape myth believability should have been significantly lower for participants placed in the horrific rape scene group due to the graphic nature of the scene they have viewed.

Furthermore, it would have been useful to incorporate elements regarding general negative attitudes towards women in order to understand the relationship between rape myth acceptance and traditional masculine ideologies. These ideologies may include notions such as, “men should be powerful, nonfeminine, tough, and independent” (Lutz-Zois, Moler, and Brown, 2015, p.95).

For instance, Koss, Heise, and Russo (1994) asserted that rape myths can be subsumed under three main categories: victim precipitation, victim masochism, and victim fabrication. People who subscribe to the myth of victim precipitation believe that women who are raped often provoke the sexual assault (e.g., due to their choice of clothing) or that rape only happens to certain types of women (e.g., women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds). Victim masochism refers to the myth that women secretly enjoy rape. Victim fabrication refers to the myth that women lie or exaggerate about the severity of the rape incident (e.g., women make false reports for revenge). This myth also encompasses the belief that men are justified in raping women or are not responsible for unanticipated results.¹

Much like the present research, Lutz-Zois, Moler, and Brown (2015) categorized rape myths into identifiable categories that may be expressed by millennial males. However, unlike the present research, their study was able to eliminate social desirability by incorporating “predictors of rape myth acceptance” among college males (observations

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¹ While the method of examination correlating rape myths and traditional masculine ideologies provides important insight to this research, it is not the primary focus of this experimental design. (Lutz-Zois, Moler, and Brown, 2015, p.85).
made by traditional masculine ideologies and rape myth believability (Lutz-Zois, Moler, and Brown, 2015, p.85). Had this been conducted in the current research, more accurate and desirable results may have been achieved.

After discussing the restraints of the current research, it is now important to turn the attention to reinventing Fredrickson and Roberts’ (1997) original objectification theory to better represent the effects of modern media and their influence on Western society. The objectification of women throughout mass media is not a new concept. Think about an Axe body spray commercial. How many women in those commercials are portrayed as smart, independent individuals who do not revolve their lives around men? The answer: zero. Numerous studies have been conducted to study the effects of objectification and how it affects perceptions among societies. Throughout these studies, many suggest media are solely responsible for increased rape proclivity among males through strong, objectifying images of women. However, contradictory results could be presented in future research, because it would be proposed that the theory of objectification does not stem solely from individual psychological input, but rather suggests that objectification is a natural tendency among humans, leading to an increased physiological rape proclivity.

Thus, for future study, it is proposed that an experiment set to test the parameters of effectiveness in regards to objectification theory be conducted for a more thorough understanding of both rape myths and responses to media. Objectification theory in its present, unaltered state references the psyche on an existential level in respect to the individuals’ feelings of objectification on the experiential level. While highly effective on an introspective degree, the application of the present objectification theory on a
general level leaves room for much enhancement and development. By introducing core components from the disciplines of sociology, media studies, biology, and psychology, objectification theory adopts a range that encompasses the general population while still remaining effective on the individual level.

Theories in sociology bestow norms, values, and beliefs among the general population to guide a stable framework in which to follow, to provide order and stability throughout cultures. These norms, values, and beliefs have been established based on early Christian morals to protect the integrity of every human life. The act of rape strongly disrupts the aforementioned norms because it imposes on the will of another human being. Although these cultural norms create the framework for all human beings, the recent development of mass media has contradicted the integrity of the established morals and norms.

Through the development of mass media, many disturbing images have been released and engrained into the norms of society, thus interfering with the moral foundation from which they were created. Because media are constant throughout our lives, they become our main source of information. However, the information being received can be manipulated to portray any image media feels society needs to adopt. Both media and sociology create conflicting ideas and beliefs about the way of life on a cognitive scope, but one must consider the motives and drives that are innate in human beings to fully comprehend their actions.

The biological field of neurobiology takes the limbic system and instincts under review. The limbic system, when viewed independent of higher brain functioning, is the core of human instincts and drives. Without the integration of higher processing, humans
are nothing but survival driven beasts geared towards hunger, shelter, and procreation. Because morals do not exist on the instinctual level, procreation occurs freely, as all creatures innately understand that it is for the survival of their species. Media are processed on higher brain functioning but target the instinctual desires of humans. By isolating and exploiting the instinctual, procreative drive, media can influence human cognition, using biological denotations to stimulate the objectification of women.

After considering these three disciplines, we now turn our sights to psychology and where it falls in the integrated theory. The application of psychology maintains the integrity of the experiential and individual foundations that are inherit in existentialism. At the same time, however, the application of the other disciplines allows for structured psychological analysis on a global level that includes looking at the general population with an examination of their biosocial status, and their exposure to media. By using both of these methods, whether independent or in conjunction with each other, the level of understanding for objectification theory adopts a wider range of functions and can be applied on any level.

Through the influences of social norms, mass media, biology, and psychology, it is necessary to create a new theory of objectification that encompasses the aforementioned disciplines to fully understand the realm of what objectification truly is. The original objectification theory stems from an internal theoretical foundation, meaning it was derived from the inner experiences and mental interpretations of the individual. Because of this, the original theory becomes solely existential in nature. This component of the theory is in conjunction with the sociocultural aspects which yields negative responses towards rape.
However, my proposed theory of objectification will account for the biological aspect which dictates a positive response towards rape, by examining rape myth believability among millennial males. In the current state of American society, the constant influx of sexual portrayals of women through mass media and our innate biological responses are currently stronger than American social norms and moral obligations. This in turn means objectification of women will stay prominent throughout American society until it is recognized that is not solely existential in nature.

Overall, this research contributes to our understanding of women’s reaction to sex in objectifying media, and how these reactions could potentially affect the believability of rape myths amongst millennial males. Rape has become one of the most flagrant crimes across college campuses. However, preventative rape programs continue to be aimed at women and what they can do to prevent themselves from being put into a dangerous situation. Yet, societally, we have failed at providing the same education to males, causing a major disconnect between what is right and what is wrong for each of the genders in regards to perceived reactions to rape and actual reactions to rape.

**Limitations of the Study**

Although this research was carefully prepared, it is still important to note its limitations and shortcomings. Throughout the study, the most prominent limitations included sample size, demographics, and measurement issues. Each of the aforementioned limitations will be examined in further detail below to provide areas of improvement for future research.

**Sample size limitations.** To begin, because participants were recruited from a college campus with strong female presence, it was difficult to obtain a significant
sample size of Millenial males. Moreover, the time constraints on data collection also inhibited the ability to collect further data across a wider range of academic departments. In the future, it would be helpful to recruit participants outside of a college campus to see if rape myth believability would be as/more persistent in less educated, older males. However, the study was primarily limited by its small sample size (n=70). Because of this, it is difficult to infer statistically significant relationships from the data, as larger sample sizes are required to ensure a representative distribution of the general population to which my data would be transferred upon. By including a wider acceptable age range and genders other than males, the sample size could have been greatly expanded (n=228), thus allowing for a much more comprehensive scope and analysis.

Additionally, an earlier start in data collection across a myriad of departments could have allowed access to more participants who fit the desired sample population. Participants who accessed the survey were primarily females, whilst the study aimed to examine males. Further, conducting a focus group rather than an online survey may have allowed for a greater depth of information to be obtained from the desired sample population. For example, it would have allowed me to conduct group interviews of males between the ages of 18-29, and gauge their attitudes, whether positive or negative, on rape myths after possibly watching either the glorified or horrific rape scenes given in the survey.

**Demographic limitations.** Another prominent limitation of the study is the restricted demographics of the active participants. The integrated theory of objectification implies the objectification of women increases rape myth believability amongst Millenial males. The current study only examines the psychological findings of males. In order to
gain a more representative sample of the population, women should also be tested using different rape scenes and rape myth acceptance questionnaires. Additionally, if the study allowed for females to view the rape scenes, a factorial ANOVA could have been run to compare and contrast the differences in rape myth believability across the two genders, and allowed for a broader examination of how objectifying media portrayals are affecting Millennials as a whole.

**Measurement limitations.** Finally, because only one measurement is being used to measure rape myth believability, the reliability of the study may be lowered. Because the rape myth acceptance questionnaire used in the survey is from 1980, its questions may not register with today’s young male adults. In turn, the questions regarding rape myths may not address modern issues and experiences as thought by Millenial males. Thus, a different rape myth believability scale meter should be used in addition to Martha Burt’s (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance scale (RMAS) to validate the reliability of the study, and eliminate any confounding variables that may affect the current data. In addition to using multiple scales, it is also important to note that because a manipulation check was not run on the two scenes shown (stimuli), reliability may have been lowered. For example, I, the researcher, may have identified “horrific” and “glorified” rape scenes differently than my participants, thus allowing for possible false inferences and correlations to have been made between the data from the modified RMAS and the scenes that may or may not have been shown.

Further, it would have been beneficial to merge two instruments together, such as Hudson, Murphy, and Nurius’s (1983) Sexual Attitudes Scale (SAS), to reduce participant bias. This is a 25-item scale that measures liberal versus conservative attitudes
regarding sexual beliefs (Hudson, Murphy, Nurius, 1983, p. 259). For example, it measures attitudes such as, “I think the only proper way to have sex is through intercourse”, and “Movies today are too sexually explicit”, on a 5-point Likert scale (Hudson, Murphy, Nurius, 1983, p. 260). Because the questions asked on Martha Burt’s (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance scale may have been viewed as socially unacceptable behavior, participants may have been influenced to answer how they think the researcher would want them to answer, rather than how they would truly answer, in fear of being judged for going against societal norms. By implementing a more modern instrument along with the RMAS, such as the SAS, questions could have been paired in conjunction with one another, allowing for correlations to be made between socially acceptable behavior and unknowing beliefs held in regards to rape myths.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Currently, research on objectification solely stems from an internal, existential point of view. Media are extremely influential in encouraging objectification throughout society because it is a main driver of capital investment. Yet, the results of these constant portrayals of objectifying images are often overlooked, and can often times become detrimental to a society as a whole. The purpose of the present study was to determine if objectifying media portrayals of women increase rape myth believability among Millennial males within Western society; specifically it aimed to explore how a woman’s reaction to sex, as portrayed in mass media, influenced rape myth believability among males in young adulthood.

The results of this study indicated that regardless of the type of exposure to women’s reactions to sex (either through a glorified or horrific media outlet), there were no significant differences in participants’ endorsements of rape myths and sexual attitudes. Although the present research suffered from methodological limitations, its overall design could still provide further direction in understanding how constant portrayals of objectified women in media contributes to rape myth believability within Western society. Additionally, although no significant findings were presented, this study still contributed to the ever expanding body of knowledge surrounding objectification and rape myths. By accepting this study’s findings, future researchers could use the present data and limitations to create a study that is more versed in the present research’s limiting factors. For example, future studies could improve upon its methodology by
incorporating more modern instruments in conjunction with Martha Burt’s (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale.

Further, in order to gain a complete understanding of objectification theory, an integrated theory of objectification that encompasses biological, social, psychological, and media influences must be generated. Therefore, for future study, it is proposed that a physiological measure be added to the current study in order to gauge the differences between psychological and physiological effects from objectifying media. In the added study, one group would be designated by participants who have been convicted of committing rape crimes and the other group would be designated by participants who have not been convicted of committing rape crimes. Each individual participant would enter a private room where they would then be briefed on how to apply a penile plethysmography, a device which measures the circumference of the penis when aroused. Once applied, the participant would then be shown the “horrific” rape scene from the present research while using and “arousometer”, a meter designed to measure how psychologically aroused one is feeling via quantifiable levels (ie, not at all aroused–extremely aroused). The penile plethysmography would measure the participants’ physiological arousal during the film, while the “arousometer” would measure the participants’ psychological arousal.

Additionally, it would be useful to test women’s responses to objectifying media in regards to rape myth believability and physiological and psychological arousal. For future study, physiological measures, such as a vaginal arousal meter and penile plethysmography, should be used to study physiological arousal in both males and females to determine how objectification affects individuals both psychologically and
physiologically. For example, if a participant is under stress or preoccupied with other life inferences, the volume or circumference of the penis may be affected, thus showing he is aroused by rape when in fact he may not be. By using more than one arousal measurement, reliability could be increased and eliminate these confounding variables. In addition to this, a vaginal arousal meter could be used to study the effects of rape proclivity in women to allow for a more representative sample of the general population in relation to objectification and biological inference.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research or authorship of this thesis.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research or authorship of this thesis.
References


Appendix A
Recruitment Email

Dear students,

You are invited to take part in an online questionnaire that will help benefit the academic community in understanding how gender is portrayed in media, and its resulting effects on audience members. During this study, you may be asked to watch a short scene and then fill out a survey immediately after your viewing. If you are not asked to watch a short scene, you will only fill out a survey. This study should take approximately 20 minutes.

Participating in research is a great way to get involved with the academic mission of the university. At the end of the questionnaire, you will have an opportunity to enter your participating course so that you may receive any extra credit your professor might have offered. If you are unable to enter your course for some reason, please email me at khoh@uccs.edu.

If you are interested in participating in the study, you can click on the following link (or cut and paste it into your web browser):

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NB3CBBF

Please keep in mind that your responses will not be linked to your identity in anyway. At the end of the questionnaire, you will be redirected to another page that will ask for your name, course, and instructor in order for you to receive participation credit. Again, none of the responses you provide in the questionnaire will be associated with any personal identifiers, so please take your time to answer the questions and be honest as possible with your responses.

After all the processes are completed, the instructors in courses that offered extra credit will receive a roster indicating students who are to receive participation credit. You must complete the survey by 12:01 a.m., Monday, October 26, in order to get credit.

Thank you very much for your interest in taking part in this online questionnaire. I truly appreciate your time and effort in contributing to this research.

Sincerely,

Kirsten Hoh
UCCS Department of Communication
Graduate Student
Appendix B
Informed Consent

Protocol Number: 15-141

Title: Gender Portrayals in Media Principal Investigator: Kirsten Hoh Funding Source: N/A

Introduction

Version and Date Received: V2 – 4/9/15

University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) Consent to be a Research Subject

Valid through date: 4/19/16

You are being asked to be in a research study. This form is designed to tell you everything you need to think about before you decide to consent (agree) to be in the study or not to be in the study. A member of the research team will describe this study to you and answer any questions. It is entirely your choice. If you decide to take part, you can change your mind later on and withdraw from the research study. You can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

Before making your decision:

- Please carefully read this form or have it read to you.
- Please ask questions about anything that is not clear.

Feel free to take your time thinking about whether you would like to participate. By signing this form you will not give up any legal rights. If you are completing this consent form online, you may want to print a copy of the consent form for your records.

Study Overview: This study plans to learn more about how gender is portrayed in media, and its resulting effects on audience members.

Procedures: You are being asked to be in this research study because the researcher is trying to expand the knowledge of gender roles and their effects in media. During this study, you may be asked to watch a short scene and then fill out a survey immediately after your viewing. If you are not asked to watch a short scene, you will only fill out a survey. This study should take approximately 30 minutes.

Other people in this study: Up to 120 people will participate in this study.

Risks and Discomforts: Minimal psychological risk and discomfort may be associated with this research. You may be asked to view scenes that may cause uneasy feelings, and may act as triggers for some participants. These scenes may include
graphic images of violence, sex, harsh language, rape, gore, and horror. Additionally, you will be asked to fill out a survey that may include any of the previously mentioned topics. Because you will be participating in this experiment with other participants present in the room, if at any time during the study you become uncomfortable with the procedures, or do not wish to answer questions on the survey, please raise your hand and the Principal Investigator will remove you from the research. The Principal Investigator will be present throughout the entirety of the experiment. You will not be penalized for withdrawing your participation.

Benefits

This study is designed for the researcher to learn more about the effects of gender roles in media. Therefore, you will not directly profit from your participation in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the greater good of society, by advancing knowledge and development in the field of media effects research. Receiving extra credit for participation in this study is a possible additional benefit; please consult your professors for details.

Compensation

Extra credit compensation shall be determined by individual professors. It is at their discretion as to whether or not they wish to offer extra credit to participants.

Confidentiality

We value your confidentiality. In order to protect your identity throughout the course of this study, the Principal Investigator will deidentify your data, secure it in a locked cabinet and password protected computer, and keep all personal information separate from your results.

Certain offices and people other than the researchers may have access to study records. Government agencies and UCCS employees overseeing proper study conduct may look at your study records. These offices include the UCCS Institutional Review Board, and the UCCS Office of Sponsored Programs, and the Principal Investigator’s thesis advisor. UCCS will keep any research records confidential to the extent allowed by law. A study number rather than your name will be used on study records wherever possible. Study records may be subject to disclosure pursuant to a court order, subpoena, law or regulation.
Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal from the Study

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You have the right to leave a study at any time without penalty. You may refuse to do any procedures you do not feel comfortable with, or answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. If you withdraw from the study, you may request that your research information not be used by contacting the Principal Investigator listed above and below.

Contact Information

Contact (PI’s info): Kirsten Hoh; khoh@uccs.edu

- if you have any questions about this study or your part in it,
- if you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research, or
- if you would like information about the survey results when they are prepared.

Contact (Advisor to the PI): Dr. Chris Bell; cbell3@uccs.edu

- if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or
- if you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research.

Contact the Research Compliance Coordinator at 719-255-3903 or via email at irb@uccs.edu:

- if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or
- if you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research. Consent A copy of this consent form will be provided to you.

__________________________

I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to participate in the research. By signing this consent, I am confirming that I am 18 years of age or older.

Signature of Participant       Date
Appendix C
Survey

On a scale from 1 to 7, 1 being “Strongly Disagree” and 7 being “Strongly Agree”, please rate each of the items below.

1. A man should fight when the woman he is with is insulted by another man.

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2. It is acceptable for the woman to pay for the date.

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3. A woman should be a virgin when she marries.

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4. There is something wrong with a woman who doesn’t want to marry and raise a family.

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5. A wife should not contradict her husband in public.

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6. It is better for a woman to use her feminine charm to get what she wants rather than to ask for it outright.

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7. It is acceptable for a woman to have a career, but marriage and family should come first.

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8. A woman will only respect a man who will lay down the law to her.

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9. A lot of men talk big, but when it comes down to it, they can’t perform well sexually.

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10. A lot of women seem to get pleasure in putting men down.

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11. Men are only out for one thing.

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12. A man has got to show the woman who is boss right from the start or he will end up whipped.

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13. One reason that women falsely report a rape is that they frequently have a need to call attention to themselves.

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14. A nice woman will be offended or embarrassed by dirty jokes.

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15. Men have a biologically stronger sex drive than women.

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16. A woman shouldn’t give in sexually to a man too easily or he will think she is loose.

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17. Any healthy woman can successfully resist a rapist if she really wants to.

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18. A woman who initiates a sexual encounter will probably have sex with anybody.

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19. Women have the same needs for a sexual outlet as men.

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20. Sometimes the only way a man can get a cold woman turned on is to use force.

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21. When women go around braless or wearing short skirts and tight tops, they are just asking for trouble.

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22. Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped, and may then unconsciously set up a situation in which they are likely to be attacked.

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23. Being roughed up is sexually stimulating to many women.

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24. A man is never justified in hitting his wife.

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25. A wife should move out of the house if her husband hits her.

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<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. If a woman engages in necking or petting and lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

27. Any female can get raped.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

28. A woman who is stuck-up and thinks she is too good to talk to guys on the street deserves to be taught a lesson.

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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. In the majority of rapes, the victim is promiscuous, or has a bad reputation.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. People should not use “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” as a rule for living.

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<tbody>
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<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
31. If a woman gets drunk at a party and has intercourse with a man she has just met there, she should be considered “fair game” to other males at the party who want to have sex with her too, whether she wants to or not.

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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being “Almost None” and 5 being “Almost All”, please rate each of the items below.

32. What percentage of women who report a rape would you say are lying because they are angry and want to get back at the man they accuse?

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost None</td>
<td>About 1/4</td>
<td>About Half</td>
<td>About 3/4</td>
<td>Almost All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. What percentage of reported rapes would you guess were merely invented by women who discovered they were pregnant and wanted to protect their own reputation?

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<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost None</td>
<td>About 1/4</td>
<td>About Half</td>
<td>About 3/4</td>
<td>Almost All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being “Never” and 5 being “Always”, please rate each of the items below.

34. A person comes to you and claims they were raped. How likely would you be to believe their statement if the person were:

   a. Your best friend?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Always</td>
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   b. An Indian woman?

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<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Always</td>
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</table>
c. A neighborhood woman?

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Always</td>
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d. A young boy?

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Always</td>
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</table>

e. A Black woman?

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Always</td>
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</table>

f. A White woman?

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D
Debriefing Statement

Debriefing Statement

Thank you for participating in this experiment. The goal of this study was to determine if objectifying media portrayals of women increased rape myth believability among participants; particularly, the researcher was interested in seeing how a woman’s reaction to sex through mass media influenced rape myth believability among society.

In order to avoid biased responses to the questionnaire, information about rape myths and objectification were withheld so that your responses to the survey were your true beliefs based on the scene you may have been asked to watch. If you were not asked to watch a scene, this information was withheld so I could gauge general beliefs about rape myths without biasing your thought process.

In this study, I was interested in understanding how media portrayals of women being objectified affects rape myth believability among audience members. In 1997, two feminists, Fredrickson and Roberts, delivered a theoretical framework to provide an understanding of objectification theory. Their theory describes the experiential consequences of being female in a culture that sexually objectifies the female body. Specifically, it is the foundation for beginning to understand why people are treated as just a body, or a collection of body parts, valued predominantly by its use to others. Moreover, mass media play an enormous role in objectifying women by flaunting a plethora of women’s body parts through a wide array of social outlets, thus taking them out of a sociocultural context, and placing them into a purely physical one. Therefore, according to the theory, mass media are largely responsible for the indirect causes of increased shame and anxiety in women due to objectification. Because of this ongoing objectification, I am curious to see the rates of rape myth believability within Western society. Rape myths are defined as, “false but widely held beliefs regarding rape, rape survivors, and perpetrators” (Burt 1980; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2012). For example, women fantasize about being raped, or because a woman was wearing certain type of outfit, she wanted to be raped.

Participants were divided into three groups: The first group watched a “horrific” rape scene (The Last House on the Left (2009)), and then took Martha Burt’s Rape Myth Acceptance Scale survey; the second group watched a "glorified" rape scene (The Accused (1988)), followed by Martha Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance Scale survey; the third group acted as the control, and only took Martha Burt’s Rape Myth Acceptance Scale survey.

Your participation is not only greatly appreciated by the researcher involved, but the data collected could possibly aid in helping to reduce rape myth believability within our society by adding to its correlating body of knowledge.
I hope this clarifies the purpose of the research, and the reason why I could not tell you all of the details about the study prior to your participation.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact us. Names and email addresses for the Principal Investigator, her Advisor, and the Research Compliance Coordinator can be found on your Informed Consent Form. If this experiment caused you distress and you need someone to speak with, you may visit or contact the University Counseling Center (UCC) at 719-255-3265, or at counsel@uccs.edu. The UCC is located in Main Hall, room 324.

Finally, it is very important that you do not discuss this study with anyone who is currently participating, or who may participate in the future. As you can understand, I will not be able to honestly examine the differences between objectifying media portrayals and their correlating influences on rape myth believability amongst audience members if participants know about the experiment’s true purpose prior to participation.

Thank you!

If you wish to learn more about Objectification Theory and Rape Myth Believability, please review the below articles:


Thank you for submitting your Request for IRB Review of a proposed change to your original IRB protocol, to use SurveyMonkey, include female students between 18-29, and the updated debriefing form. The protocol identified above has been reviewed according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations. The review category is noted above, along with the expiration date, if applicable.

Once human participant research has been approved, it is the Principal Investigator’s (PI) responsibility to report any changes in research activity related to the project:

- The PI must provide the IRB with all protocol and consent form amendments and revisions.
  - The IRB must approve these changes prior to implementation.
- All advertisements recruiting study subjects must also receive prior approval by the IRB.
- The PI must promptly inform the IRB of all unanticipated serious adverse (within 24 hours). All unanticipated adverse events must be reported to the IRB within 1 week (see 45CFR46.103d). Failure to comply with these federally mandated responsibilities may result in suspension or termination of the project.
- Renew study with the IRB prior to expiration.
- Notify the IRB when the study is complete.

If you have any questions, please contact Research Compliance Specialist in the Office of Sponsored Programs at 719-255-3903 or irb@uccs.edu

Thank you for your concern about human subject protection issues, and good luck with your research.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Sanderson

Michael Sanderson, MBA
IRB Committee Member
A. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR INFORMATION
Name: Kirsten Hoh
Check one: Faculty/Staff ☑️ Graduate Student* ☐ Undergraduate Student*
Department, Center, or Institute: Communication
Mailing Address: 7432 Colonial Dr, Fountain, CO 80817
Phone: 719-433-3314
Fax: ______
E-mail address: khoh@uccs.edu
Original Investigator (if different from above): ______

B. FACULTY ADVISOR (* REQUIRED FOR STUDENTS)
Name: Dr. Christopher Bell
Department, Center, or Institute: Communication
Phone: 8193
Fax: ______
E-mail address: cbell3@uccs.edu

C. ORIGINAL PROTOCOL INFORMATION
Title of Protocol: Gender Portrayals in Media
IRB #: 15-141 Approval Date: April 20, 2015
Original Investigator (if different from above): Original
Category of Review: Expedited ☐ Full ☑️ Exempt

D. CHANGES TO PROTOCOL
Please describe any intended changes to your project, e.g., change in principal investigator(s) or faculty sponsorship, change in procedure affecting risk/benefit ratio, significant change in study population or recruitment method, etc.:
Rather than conducting an in-lab experiment, I will instead be using SurveyMonkey to distribute my experiment. The survey will randomize participants into 3 equal groups. All 3 groups will take a survey (the one that was previously provided), while only two groups will watch videos (scenes from "The Last House on the Left" and "The Accused"). Because my study is looking at males between the ages of 18-29, I have also included an opportunity for female students to participate, without impacting my overall inquiry. Female students will have the chance to take the survey if they are within the appropriate age range (18-29). These findings will be incorporated into a "Additional Findings" section within my analysis.

The survey will capture identifying information to allow extra credit to be assigned (if their professor wishes to grant it). When the data is exported, all identifying information will be
deleted as to not associate any results with any particular individual before the data is even looked at.

The online survey will be shared with research participants through a web link that will be emailed to them via the Principal Investigator and appropriate instructor (instructors who are able to help with this experiment will forward the link I send to them to their students).

Additionally, a minor change has been made in the attached debriefing form, in order to make it a more educational experience for participants.

Please let me know if there is any additional information I need to provide.

E. CERTIFICATIONS/ASSURANCES:

INVESTIGATOR’S CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITY TO IRB:
Once the renewal request has been approved it is the Principal Investigator’s (PI) responsibility to:

- Ensure additional personnel take the CITI training and understand their responsibility when working with human participants. CITI - https://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp
- Report additional changes in research activity related to the study. Submit a Report of Change to the IRB. (http://www.uccs.edu/osp/forms.html#IRB)
- Provide the IRB all study and consent form amendments and revisions. The IRB must approve these changes prior to their implementation. All changes to advertisements recruiting study participants must also receive prior approval by the IRB.
- Promptly report any injury, adverse event, or detrimental incident experienced by a research participant that is or may be related to the research procedures.
- Continue to renew the study with the IRB prior to expiration. Retro-active approval for lapsed studies is not allowed. If the study approval lapses, you need to complete a new Request for Review.
- Notify the IRB (irb@uccs.edu) when the study is complete.

Failure to comply with these federally mandated responsibilities may result in suspension or termination of the study.

INVESTIGATOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

- I will conduct my study in compliance with the UCCS IRB Policies and Procedure manual
- By submitting this Request for Continuing Review, I attest to my agreement to continue to conduct this research study in such a manner that acts of misconduct in research and conflicts of interest will not be committed and I will comply with the continuing responsibilities to the UCCS IRB.

FACULTY ADVISOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

By submitting this Request for Continuing Review to the IRB, I acknowledge that the information contained in the study is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I verify that I am the faculty advisor for the Principal Investigator for this study and that I shall be
responsible for the oversight of the conduct of the research and adherence to all applicable University policies and procedures.

**By submitting this form,** I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information furnished above is true and complete, and that I have read and understand the Investigator Acknowledgement section. I understand that if found to be otherwise, it is sufficient cause for refusal or dismissal. I authorize representatives of the University of Colorado Colorado Springs to make any and all appropriate inquiries regarding the information listed in this supplement. I hereby release you or others from any liability or damage that may result from furnishing the information requested.

**SUBMISSION PROCEDURES:**

- Attach all consent/assent documents and a copy of the methods and human subjects sections of your grant proposal (if applicable).
- **UCCS Graduate and Undergraduate students must have their faculty advisor submit the application via the faculty advisor’s email address to [irb@uccs.edu](mailto:irb@uccs.edu).**

Submit Requests for Review as a PDF to [irb@uccs.edu](mailto:irb@uccs.edu).
Table I
Reliability Analysis on Modified Scales

*Sex Role Stereotyping, Adversarial Sexual Beliefs, Sexual Conservatism, and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale Items* (Burt, 1980, p.222-223)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</table>
| Sex Role Stereotyping (Cronbach’s alpha=0.59) | - A man should fight when the woman he’s with is insulted by another man.  
- It is acceptable for the woman to pay for the date.  
- A woman should be a virgin when she marries.  
- There is something wrong with a woman who doesn’t want to marry and raise a family.  
- A wife should never contradict her husband in public.  
- It is better for a woman to use her feminine charm to get what she wants rather than to ask for it outright.  
- It is acceptable for a woman to have a career, but marriage and family should come first. |
| Adversarial Sexual Beliefs (Cronbach’s alpha=0.53) | - A woman will only respect a man who will lay down the law to her.  
- A man’s got to show the woman who is boss right from the start or he’ll end up “whipped”.  
- A lot of me talk big, but when it comes down to it, they can’t perform well sexually.  
- Men are only out for one thing.  
- A lot of women seem to get pleasure in putting men down. |
| Sexual Conservatism (Cronbach’s alpha=0.40) | - A woman who initiates a sexual encounter will probably have sex with anybody.  
- A woman shouldn’t give in sexually to a man too easily or he’ll think she’s loose.  
- Men have a biologically stronger sex drive than women.  
- A nice woman will be offended or embarrassed by dirty jokes.  
- Women have the same needs for a sexual outlet as women. |
| Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence (Cronbach’s alpha=0.42) | - People today should not use “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” as a rule for living.  
- Being roughed up is sexually stimulating to many women.  
- A wife should move out of the house if her husband hits her.  
- Sometimes the only way a man can get a cold woman turned on is to use force.  
- A man is never justified in hitting his wife. |

*Note. Responses to all items are recorded on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Responses that have been crossed out were
given in the original survey, but were removed from analysis to improve Cronbach’s alpha.

Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Items (Burt, 1980, p.222-223)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Any female can get raped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ One reason that women falsely report a rape is that they frequently have a need to call attention to themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Any healthy woman can successfully resist a rapist if she really wants to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ When women go around braless or wearing short skirts and tight tops, they are just asking for trouble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ A woman who is stuck-up and thinks she is too good to talk to guys on the street deserves to be taught a lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped, and may then unconsciously set up a situation in which they are likely to be attacked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ If a woman gets drunk at a party and has intercourse with a man she has just met there, she should be considered “fair game” to other males at the party who want to have sex with her took, whether she wants to or not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ What percentage of women who report a rape would you say are lying because they are angry and want to get back at the man they accuse?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ ——A person comes to you and claims they were raped. How likely would you be to believe their statement if the person were:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|     ○ Your best friend?
|     ○ An Indian woman?
|     ○ A neighborhood woman?
|     ○ A young boy?
|     ○ A black woman?
|     ○ A white woman? |

“Note. Cronbach’s alpha=0.72. Responses to all items were recorded on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”, except: items marked □ used “almost all, about ¾, about half, about ¼, almost none” and items marked ○ used “always, frequently, sometimes, rarely, never”.”