

Sexual stereotypes can lead to unhealthy sexual relationships

June 12 2017

Female college students who believe women are subservient and who endorse music media's degradation of women are more likely to be involved in an unhealthy sexual relationship, according to research from WSU's Murrow Center for Media & Health Promotion Research.

Stacey J.T. Hust, associate professor in the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication, and her colleagues found that college [women](#) who believe in traditional gender stereotypes were significantly less likely to ask for and adhere to their partner's consent to sexual activity and were less likely to refuse unwanted sexual advances.

The research team also found that acceptance of [music](#) media's degradation of women was associated with unhealthy sexual consent negotiation.

"Our findings suggest college women's acceptance of degrading media portrayals of women, like those we see in current popular music videos such as DJ Khaled's "I'm the One" or Katy Perry's "Bon Appétit," plays a role in their real-life sexual relationships," Hust said.

"Holding stereotypical beliefs about sexuality and endorsing music that degrades women may be a reflection of a broader attitude that men hold power over women," suggests Kathleen Boyce Rodgers, associate professor of human development and the second author of the study.

College should be an ideal time to encourage students' participation in

sexual assault prevention programs due to the prevalence of sexual experimentation and the subsequent risk for sexual assault victimization and perpetration during this time. "Our study suggests that programs that utilize media to empower women to reject traditional sexual scripts could create awareness and stimulate conversation about consent, sexual expectations and stereotypes," Rodgers said.

More information: Stacey J. T. Hust et al, Scripting Sexual Consent: Internalized Traditional Sexual Scripts and Sexual Consent Expectancies Among College Students, *Family Relations* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/fare.12230](https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12230)

Provided by Washington State University

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