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Ellen S. Nikodym
ellennikodym@gmail.com

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Macalester College

Abstract

Research has demonstrated support for objectification theory and has established that music affects listeners' thoughts and behaviors, however, no research to date joins these two fields. The present study considers potential effects of objectifying hip hop songs on female listeners. Among African American participants, exposure to an objectifying song resulted in increased self-objectification. However, among White participants, exposure to an objectifying song produced no measurable difference in self-objectification. This finding along with interview data suggests that white women distance themselves from objectifying hip hop songs, preventing negative effects of such music.

The Effects of Objectifying Hip-Hop Lyrics on Female Listeners

Music is an important part of adolescents' and young adults' lives. It is a way to learn about our social world, express emotions, and relax (Agbo-Quaye, 2010). Music today is highly social, shared and listened to in social situations as a way to bolster the mood or experience. However, the effects of music are not always positive. Considering this, how does music affect young adults? Specifically, how does hip-hop music with objectifying lyrics affect female listeners?

To begin to answer this question, I will first present previous research on music's effects, specifically the effects of aggressive, sexualized, and misogynistic lyrics. Next, I will discuss theories regarding the processing of lyrics. Another important aspect of this question is objectification theory, thus I will explain this theory and the evidence to support it. I will then discuss further applications of this theory to various visual media forms. Finally, I will describe gaps in research, as well as the importance of this study.

Multiple studies have looked at the effects of music's lyrics on listeners. Various aspects and trends in popular music have been considered. Anderson, Carnagey, and Eubanks (2003) examined the effects of songs with violent lyrics on listeners. Participants who had been exposed to songs with violent lyrics reported feeling more hostile than those who listened to songs with non-violent lyrics. Those exposed to violent lyrics also had an increase in aggressive thoughts. Researchers also considered trait hostility and found that, although correlated with state hostility, it did not account for the differences in condition.

Other studies have explored music's effects on behavior. One such study considered the effects of exposure to sexualized lyrics (Carpentier, Knobloch-Westerwick, & Blumhoff, 2007). After exposure to overtly sexualized pop lyrics, participants rated potential romantic partners

with a stronger emphasis on sexual appeal in comparison to the ratings of those participants who heard nonsexual pop songs. Another study exposed male participants to either sexually aggressive misogynistic lyrics or neutral lyrics (Fischer & Greitemeyer, 2006). Those participants who had been exposed to the sexually aggressive lyrics demonstrated more aggressive behaviors towards females. The study was replicated with female participants and aggressive man-hating lyrics and similar results were found. Similarly, another study found that exposure to misogynous rap music influenced sexually aggressive behaviors (Barongan & Hall, 1995). Participants were exposed to either misogynous or neutral rap songs and then presented with three vignettes and were informed they would have to select one to share with a female confederate. Those who listened to the misogynous song selected the assaultive vignette at a significantly higher rate. The selection of the assaultive vignette demonstrated sexually aggressive behavior. These studies demonstrate the real and disturbing effects that music can have on listener's behaviors.

There are multiple theories as to why these lyrical effects are found. Some researchers suggest that social learning and cultivation theories are responsible (Sprankle & End, 2009). Both theories argue that our thoughts and our actions are influenced by what we see. Social learning theory suggests that observing others' behaviors and the responses they receive will influence the observer's behavior. As most rap music depicts the positive outcomes of increased sexual activity and objectification of women and downplays or omits the negative outcomes, listeners will start to engage in these activities and consider them acceptable. Cultivation theory argues that the more a person observes the world of sex portrayed in objectifying music, the more likely they are to believe that that world is reality. That is, the more they see "evidence" of

the attitudes and behaviors portrayed in hip hop, the more likely they are to believe that such behaviors are normal.

Cobb and Boettcher (2007) suggest that theories of priming and social stereotyping support the findings that exposure to misogynistic music increases sexist views. They also suggest that some observed gender differences in these responses are the result of different kinds of information processing. Women, as the targets of these lyrics, will process misogynistic lyrics centrally and will attempt to understand the information they are receiving more thoroughly. Thus, they are more likely to reject the lyrics. This finding highlights the importance of attention and how the lyrics are received and the impact these factors can have on listeners' reactions.

These theories were supported in their study as participants exposed to misogynistic music demonstrated few differences from the control group, in which participants were not exposed to any music, in levels of hostile and benevolent sexism (Cobb & Boettcher, 2007). However, exposure to nonmisogynistic rap resulted in significantly increased levels of hostile and benevolent sexism. Researchers suggested that this may be because the processing of misogynistic lyrics meant that listeners were aware of the sexism present in the lyrics and thus the music was unable to prime their latent sexism. However, we live in a society in which rap music is associated with misogyny and violence (Fried, 1999). When participants listened to nonmisogynistic lyrics this association was primed. Because the lyrics weren't explicit the processing involved was not critical and these assumptions went unchallenged and latent sexism was primed.

Objectification theory provides another hypothesis for the processing and potential effects of media. Objectification theory posits that in a society in which women are frequently objectified, that is, seen as bodies that perform tasks rather than as people, women begin to self-

objectify, or see themselves as objects for others' viewing (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). They

internalize an outsider's perspective of their body. This self-objectification comes with anxiety

and shame as well as frequent appearance monitoring (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). The

authors suggest that the frequent objectification and self-objectification that occurs in our society

could contribute to depression and eating disorders. They also suggest that frequent self-

monitoring, shame, and anxiety could make it difficult to reach and maintain peak motivational

states (that is, an extended period of time in which we are voluntarily absorbed in a challenging

physical or mental task with the goal of accomplishing something that's considered worthwhile).

These states are psychologically beneficial.

Multiple studies support this theory. One such study looked at the effects of being in a

self-objectifying state on the ability to reach and maintain a peak motivational state (Fredrickson,

Roberts, Noll, Quinn, & Twenge, 1998). Participants were asked to try on either a swimsuit or a

sweater and spend some time in that article of clothing. After this time they were asked questions

about their self-objectifying behaviors and attitudes, such as depressed mood, self-surveillance,

and body shame. They were then asked to complete a difficult math task, an activity meant to

produce a peak motivational state. A similar study was completed with members of different

ethnic groups (Hebl, King, & Lin, 2004). In this study a nearly identical procedure was

followed. In addition, researchers aimed to create a more objectifying state for men, having them

wear Speedos rather than swim trunks. In both of these studies female participants wearing

swimsuits performed significantly worse on the math test than female participants wearing

sweaters. There were no significant differences between the swim trunks and sweater conditions

for male participants. However, when male participants wore Speedos they performed

significantly worse on the math test. Further, the results of measures of self-objectifying

behaviors, like body shame and surveillance, were significantly higher for those in the swimsuit condition. These findings demonstrate support for objectification theory and suggest that it crosses ethnic boundaries. The decreased math scores for men in Speedos suggest that it is possible to put anyone in a self-objectifying state. However, it is women who most often find themselves in this situation in our society.

With empirical support for the central premises of objectification theory, research has turned to effects of popular media on self-objectification of women. One such study looked at the links between music video consumption, self-surveillance, body esteem, dieting status, depressive symptoms, and math confidence (Grabe & Hyde, 2009). Researchers found a positive relationship between music video consumption, self-objectification, and the host of psychological factors proposed by Fredrickson and Roberts, such that as music video consumption increased, so did self-objectifying behaviors. Another study looked at the effects of portrayals of the thin ideal in media, specifically magazine advertisements (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008). Participants were exposed to a magazine ad with a thin woman, a thin woman and a man, or no people. Those participants who viewed an ad with a thin-idealized woman reported higher self-objectification than those who viewed an ad with no people. Further, participants who viewed a thin-idealized women reported greater weight-related appearance anxiety, negative mood, and body dissatisfaction than those who viewed no people. Although the first study was simply correlational (participants merely reported the amount of time they usually view music videos), the second provides evidence for potentially causal negative effects of exposure to objectifying stimuli. These studies suggest that exposure to a visual stimulus that is objectifying can lead to many of the negative psychological effects predicted by objectification theory.

Whereas there have been many studies on the effects of visual stimuli on self-objectification, few have studied the effects of auditory stimuli, such as music. This is a large gap in our growing knowledge and understanding of objectification theory that merits further investigation. Nuances in lyrical processing highlight the importance of research on musical stimuli. Previous researchers suggest that the lack of visual images present when listening to a song allows more room for interpretation and application to one's real world situation (Anderson, Carnagey, & Eubanks, 2003). Thus, when viewing objectifying music videos the viewer may be less likely to self-objectify if the images presented do not relate clearly to their real-world situation. However, without the video present the images that may contribute to or inhibit self-objectification have no influence. Therefore, processes may be different and should be further examined.

This area is especially important to examine considering the role that music has in the life of adolescents and young adults. Music is a way in which adolescents learn about the world around them (Agbo-Quaye & Robertson, 2010). They learn about relationships, roles, and what it means to grow up. Common themes in music may not provide healthy messages, however. One systematic examination of popular music found six major themes: men and power, sex as a top priority for males, objectification of women, sexual violence, women defined by having a man, and women not valuing themselves (Bretthauer, Zimmerman, & Banning, 2007). These themes appear to be in line with cultural forces that would contribute to the objectification and self-objectification of women. Further, research suggests a correlation with adolescents' sexualized media environment and adolescents' beliefs about women as sex objects, with those exposed to more explicit materials more likely to hold these beliefs (Peter & Valkenburg, 2007).

Knowing that these are common themes in popular music and exposure to them may have detrimental outcomes, it is all the more important to understand how objectifying lyrics affect female listeners. If there are negative effects we can begin to understand how they come to be and what we can do to prevent them. The present research is a first step toward better understanding these potential negative effects.

Previous research has shown us that music, and specifically lyrics, can have an effect on listeners' attitudes and behaviors. Although misogynistic, violent, and aggressive lyrics have been considered, past research neglects objectifying lyrics. Considering the demonstrated effects of objectifying visual media on female consumers and the demonstrated effects of lyrics on listeners, the present studies hypothesize that exposure to objectifying hip-hop songs will cause increased self-objectification in female listeners. Further, I hypothesize that exposure to objectifying hip-hop lyrics will also lead to increased body shame, body surveillance, and depressed mood.

Study 1

Method

Participants

Thirty-nine participants were enrolled in an introductory psychology course at Macalester College and were recruited through the Macalester College Psychology Participation Pool. They received credit for their participation in the study. All participants were female. Participants ranged in age from 18-23 years (M=19.0, SD=1.2). Nineteen participants identified as white (48.7%), two as African American (5.1%), one as Native American (2.6%), thirteen identified as Asian (33.3%), two as Hispanic (5.1%), and two as "other" (5.1%).

Procedure

Participants were tested individually in 30 minute laboratory sessions. Upon arrival, participants were informed by the researcher that the study was examining differing effects of music on the listener.[1] Participants were then told that a song would be played for them; while listening to the song, they were to pay attention to the lyrics and the song as a whole. Each participant was presented with three questions about the song on SurveyMonkey to fill out while listening to the songs. Questions asked what they noticed and their opinions about the song to ensure that they were paying attention to the song and lyrics.

Participants were randomly assigned to either the control or experimental group with the experimental group listening to *Pop, Lock, and Drop It* by Huey, a hip-hop song with sexist and sexually objectifying lyrics, and the control group listening to *The Show Goes On* by Lupe Fiasco, a hip-hop song with neutral lyrics. In both conditions, the song selected was a result of pilot testing. Three songs for each condition (Experimental: *Becky*- Plies, *Pop, Lock, and Drop It*-Huey, *Money Maker*- Ludacris Control: *Forever,* Lil Wyane, Drake, Kanye West, Eminem, *The Show Goes On*- Lupe Fiasco, *Do It Like You*- Diggy Simmons) were presented to female pilot testers. The songs used for the actual experience were those two that were most divergent in their effects as demonstrated by self-report.

After completing this form, participants completed the Twenty Statements Test (Bugental & Zelem, 1950; Kuhn & McPartland, 1954). Upon completion of this task participants were told, "It is possible that there are other factors that influence our reactions to music. We are hoping to better understand these possibilities. The following information will help us do this." Participants were then given the depressed mood, self-surveillance and body shame scales (see Appendix A for all measures). After completing these, participants were given a short demographic

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[1] The study was pilot tested to ensure that instructions were clear and that they did not reveal the true purpose of the study.

questionnaire to gather information on other factors like self-identified race/ethnicity, and previous exposure to hip-hop. Upon completion of these scales participants were fully debriefed on the true purpose of the study.

Measures

State self-objectification. To determine if exposure to a song with objectifying lyrics produced increased self-objectification participants completed the Twenty Statements Test (Bugental & Zelem, 1950; Kuhn & McPartland, 1954). Participants were given the following instructions (adapted from Fredrickson et al., 1997):

> Different types of music can affect us in a variety of ways. We are hoping to examine these different effects of music, specifically varying background music in a song. In order for us to better understand these varying effects please complete this form. In each of the twenty blanks below please make a statement about yourself and your identity that completes the sentence, "I am _____." Complete the statements as if you were describing yourself to yourself, not to somebody else."

I coded responses to this task into one of six groupings: 1) body shape and size, 2) other physical appearance, 3) physical competence, 4) traits or abilities, 5) states or emotions, or 6) uncodable. This is the coding system used by Fredrickson et al. The number of statements made in groupings 1 and 2 were summed to indicate the importance of appearance in participants' self evaluations. This measure is commonly used to assess self-objectification (Fredrickson, Noll, Roberts, Quinn, & Twenge, 1998; Hebl, King, & Lin, 2004).

Self-surveillance. To measure self-surveillance- the extent to which women are aware of and thinking about their appearance- participants also completed the surveillance scale portion of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). This eight item scale asks

about awareness of one's body and appearance (e.g., "I rarely think about how I look" and "I rarely compare how I look with how other people look"). Participants provided responses on a Likert type scale, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 7 "strongly agree". After the necessary reverse coding, a mean score for each participant on the scale was computed. Cronbach's alpha was .84. This scale has been used as a measure of self-surveillance in many past studies (Grabe & Hyde, 2009).

Body shame. Body shame was measured on the body shame scale from the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). This scale considers the amount of body shame that is a result of the internalization of and failure to meet cultural standards of beauty (e.g., "I feel like I must be a bad person when I don't look as good as I could"). Participants responded to the statements on a Likert type scale, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 7 "strongly agree". Reverse coding was done for those items that need it. A mean score for each participant was then computed. Cronbach's alpha was .83. Because of significant skew, a log-10 transformation was performed on the data associated with this measure.

Depressed mood. The Beck Depression Inventory was used to measure depressed mood (Beck et al, 1961). The inventory consists of 21 items. Each provides four response statements, scored 1 to 4 (e.g., 1-"I don't feel disappointed in myself", 2- "I am disappointed in myself", 3-"I am disgusted with myself", 4- "I hate myself"). Participants were asked to select the response that best described how they felt in that moment. Scores for each item were summed to create one score describing depressed mood. Cronbach's alpha was .87. Because of significant skew a log-10 transformation was performed on the data from this measure.

Results

Four independent samples *t*-tests were run to compare scores on the Twenty Statements Test, the body shame and surveillance scales, and the depression inventory between the two conditions. No significant differences were found between conditions for body shame, surveillance, or depressive symptoms (see Table 1). There was a significant difference for the Twenty Statements Test, with those in the experimental condition reporting significantly more body related statements. This result means that after listening to an objectifying song, listeners made more statements that in some way said, "I am my body," or they engaged in increased self-objectification. There was one outlier for the Twenty Statements Tests. Analyses were run both with and without the outlier and yielded the same results.

Discussion

This study sought to examine the effects of objectifying lyrics on female listeners, specifically on their self-objectification, body shame, body surveillance, and depressive symptoms. Would listening to sexually objectifying hip-hop lyrics have similar effects on female listeners as those experienced with exposure to objectifying visual stimuli (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008)? Previous research had not considered the effects of exposure to auditory stimuli, such as objectifying songs. This research aimed to begin to fill this gap in the literature and broaden our understanding of women's lived experiences in a society that frequently objectifies their bodies. Comparing female listeners exposed to either an objectifying or neutral hip-hop song, I found no significant differences between the two groups on measures of body shame, body surveillance, and depressive symptoms. There were significant differences between the two groups in terms of self-objectification, with those listening to the objectifying song reporting higher levels of self-objectification as shown by more statements that in some way said, "I am my body."

These results in terms of self-objectification confirm the hypothesis that those exposed to objectifying lyrics will exhibit increased levels of self-objectification. This is consistent with previous research that found objectifying visual stimuli to increase women's self-objectifying behaviors (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008). However, the results do not support the hypotheses that exposure to objectifying lyrics will lead to increased levels of body shame, body surveillance, and depressive symptoms. There are several possible reasons for this finding. First considering the research design, it is possible that not enough time was given to demonstrate effects. Exposure to the objectifying content only lasted about three and a half minutes. Some previous research has allowed for ten to fifteen minutes of exposure (Fredrickson, Roberts, Noll, Quinn, Twenge 1998). It is possible that with increased exposure time, or with increased time between exposure and testing, that there would be more differences in these outcomes of self-objectifying.

Previous research has found that sex mediated levels of sexism in response to misogynistic rap (Cobb & Boettcher, 2007). Female participants who listened to misogynistic rap demonstrated lower levels of hostile and benevolent sexism in comparison to those who listened to no music and those who listened to non-misogynistic rap. This pattern differed in males, with those listening to misogynistic rap demonstrating higher levels of sexism than those who listened to no music. Researchers suggested that this gender difference in levels of sexism after exposure to misogynistic rap was because women processed the lyrics centrally, as they were the target. As such, the lyrics did not prime their latent sexism, which would result in increased levels of sexism. It is possible that a similar effect occurred in this study. Participants were instructed to pay attention to the lyrics and one of the guiding questions while listening was, "What do you notice about the lyrics?" For most participants exposed to objectifying lyrics,

their responses to this question made note of the objectifying or sexual nature of the lyrics. It is possible that this awareness helped mitigate some of the negative outcomes of self-objectification.

Although there were no differences found between groups on body shame, surveillance or depression, there was evidence for increased levels of self-objectification. Differences may have existed for other outcomes of self-objectification, such as decreased ability to maintain a peak motivational state. Sample size and sample population may also have a role in these findings. With a small sample size (N=39), the power may have been inadequate to detect differences. Results from a larger sample might vary from those reported here. The sample used, that of female undergraduates at a small liberal arts college, was not representative of the population. The environment of the institution is one that recognizes sexism and discussions on objectification are commonplace throughout the community and classroom. Thus participants may have more knowledge about objectification than the general population, which may have altered results.

The differing types of stimuli may also contribute to the difference in these findings from those of previous research. As previously mentioned, earlier research has focused on self-objectification as a result of exposure to visual stimuli. With such exposure, it is possible that viewers are more able to see how they do or do not measure up to the ideal being presented. As a result, the findings are more robust. Some previous research suggests that when those exposed to thin-ideal images identify with the image they experience self-enhancement and thus avoid the negative effects of exposure to the image (Mills, Polivy, Herman,& Tiggeman, 2002). It is possible that such a phenomenon occurred. As the stimuli was auditory rather than visual it may

be that more participants identified with message presented, or that fewer felt they did not measure up.

These findings suggest that listening to objectifying lyrics does have an effect on female listeners, although the implications of this are still not fully understood. This is a first step in this area of research.

Study 2

Study 1 provided some interesting insight into the potential effects of objectifying hip hop on female listeners. However, the data were somewhat inconclusive. Although there was a demonstrated effect on self-objectification, as measured by the TST, no other effects were found. Study 2 sought to refine the procedures in Study 1, allowing for more data and further consideration of the hypotheses. Some changes were made to the procedure and measures. First, different stimuli were used. A more rigorous pilot testing process was used in the selection of the stimuli. In comparison to Study 1, all songs selected were chosen because they were from lesser known artists and hadn't received wide radio play. Research has suggested that previous exposure to songs may alter the listener's psychological experience, as previous memories or associations may play a role (Cobb & Boettcher, 2007). All songs presented were found from local hip hop scenes and those selected for use in the study had not been heard before by any of the participants.

Additionally, there were some changes made to the measures used. The Self-Objectification Questionnaire was added as another measure of self-objectification. Rather than the Beck Depression Inventory, the Positive and Negative Affect Scale was used to measure mood. This allowed for a more time specific assessment of mood and items addressed mood more broadly, rather than behaviors associated with clinical depression. Additional coding

systems were used for the Twenty Statements Test. All responses were coded as positive, negative, or neutral. In Study 1 many of the responses to the TST that were coded a 1 or 2 were positive in nature. The most common responses were statements like, "I am beautiful." While indicating self-objectification such statements demonstrate a different effect than negative statements. Considering potential differences between conditions on the overall number of positive, negative, and neutral statements made provides more information on potential effects of the music. The coding system used in Study 1 has been used in previous research, however this research focused on objectification and the thin-body ideal. The present stimuli do not present or discuss images that support the thin body ideal. In fact, the song discusses a woman with a fuller figure, and praises her for this. As such, a new coding system that focuses on sexuality-based items was used. This aimed to assess ways in which women may consider themselves as sexual objects. This aimed to further consider potential effects of objectifying songs. These changes are further discussed in the methods.

Methods

Participants

Participants were 67 female young adults aged 18-21, with an average age of 18.9 years (SD=.93). Participants were recruited through the Macalester Psychology Participant Pool and included students in Introduction to Psychology and two research methods courses. These participants received credit for their participation and participated in a lab setting. Sixteen of the participants were recruited through Facebook and participated online. The online participants were all female and aged 20-23, with an average age of 21.1 years (SD=.62). Analyses were run to confirm that there were no significant differences between participants who completed the

study in lab and online. Forty five participants identified as White (67.2%), five as African

American (7.5%), ten as Asian (14.9%), four as Hispanic (6.0%), and three as "other" (4.5%).

Procedure

The procedure for Study 2 was very similar to that of Study 1. Again, all data were

collected through SurveyMonkey with participants either completing the study in a lab setting or

online. Participants were randomly assigned to either the experimental or control condition and

instructed to listen to a whole song and answer questions about it. Participants assigned to the

experimental condition listened to *Fatty N She Kno It* by Murphy Lee while participants assigned

to the control condition listened to *Real Live* by Toki Wright.

These songs were selected through a pilot testing process in which participants listened to

six songs performed by lesser known artists and rated them on common themes in popular music

today (Bretthauer et al., 2007), as well as on tempo, understandability of lyrics and overall

quality. The other songs considered in the control condition included *Chrysler 300* by Touissant

Morrison and *Good Times* by Evidence. The other potential songs considered in the

experimental condition were *Drop it Low* by Moufy and *Twerk Sum Girl* by Money Man Jay.

Previous research has suggested that the beat and other musical qualities of music may have an

effect on listeners that could confound information about the lyrics (Anderson et al., 2003) so

pilot testing sought to ensure the two songs selected were musically similar. Questions on themes

ensured that the two songs selected differed significantly in objectifying content and that the

neutral song was, in fact, neutral. Additionally, participants were asked if they had heard the

songs before. Pilot test results suggest that the neutral song's lyrics were somewhat harder to

understand than the experimental song's lyrics, however this song was chosen because it was

most musically similar to the experimental song; differences between the songs in

understandability during pilot testing were not significant and no differences were noted in

understandability during the study. Additionally, previous research suggests that subliminal

priming is involved in consumption of music and that listeners are capable of recognizing themes

even when they have difficulty understanding the specific lyrics (Anderson et al., 2003, Hansen

& Hansen, 1991). There were no significant differences between the songs on the other song

related variables (tempo, quality, clarity of lyrics) (for all, $F(1,65)<1.0$, n.s.). This suggests that

the songs did what they were intended to do.

Participants followed a procedure very similar to that of Study 1. While listening to the

song, participants answered the same questions that were asked in the pilot study about tempo,

quality, and understandability of lyrics. Participants completed an additional measure of self-

objectification and a different measure of depressed mood. After completing these measures

participants also were asked to consider the song they heard at the beginning to the study and to

rate it on the same prevalent themes in music today that the pilot testers used. This provided

additional information to help ensure the two songs did in fact differ in objectifying content.

Measures

Twenty Statements Test. The same measure and instructions were used in Study 2 as in

Study 1 (see Appendix A for all measures). An additional coding system was used in Study 2,

focusing on items about sexuality or sex appeal. I coded the responses into one of four

categories: 1) sexual orientation, 2) physical appearance that related to sexual appeal, 3) sexual

relationships, 4) all other responses. I also coded for the valence of all responses. All responses

to the TST were also coded as positive, negative, or neutral. Positive statements were those that

stated a characteristic that is highly regarded (e.g., kind, intelligent, good listener, beautiful) or a

positive emotion (e.g., happy, excited). Negative statements were those that represent a negative

emotion or state (e.g., sad, lonely, hungry) or characteristics that are not socially valued (e.g., lazy, emotional, disorganized). Neutral statements were those without strong positive or negative connotations (e.g., friend, a woman, student).

Self-objectification. In addition to the Twenty Statements Test participants also completed the Self-objectification Questionnaire (Fredrickson et al., 1998). Participants were presented with 10 different body attributes (e.g. health, weight, energy level) and asked to rank order them in importance to their own physical self concept. That is, they were asked to rank how the attributes contributed to and made up their own self image. Scores for self-objectification were obtained by summing the ranks for the appearance-based items and the competence-based items and subtracting the sum of the competence rank from the sum of the appearance rank. Higher scores indicated a higher importance based on appearance which is interpreted to mean higher self-objectification. This measure has been used multiple times (eg. Fredrickson et al., 1998; Hebl et al., 2004). There was some confusion among participants about the rank ordering used on this measure. As a result, this measure was not completed by all participants, although a majority completed it.

Body Shame and Self-Surveillance. The same measures of body shame and surveillance were used in Studies 1 and 2.

Depressed Mood. To measure depressed mood in a more time specific and less clinical way than in Study 1, I administered the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1998). Participants read a list of 20 different feelings and emotions (e.g. distressed, upset, guilty) and rated the extent to which they felt that way in the present moment. Answers were given on a Likert-type scale with 1 being "very slightly or not at all" and 5 being "extremely". Scores for items representing positive affect are summed to create a positive affect

score and the same is completed for those items demonstrating negative affect. Cronbach's alpha

for the positive and negative affect scales in the present study were .87 and .82, respectively.

Results

I ran MANOVAs to compare the experimental and control groups on the Twenty

Statements Test, the Self-Objectification Questionnaire, the Body Shame and Surveillance

Scales, and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale. No significant differences were found

between conditions for any measure. There were no significant differences with the TST with

either coding system or with valence. I computed correlations between the conditions for any

measure. There were no significant differences with the TST with either coding system or with

valence. Correlations were run for the measures and the participants' report of themes heard in

the music. The TST was not significantly correlated with any study variables or themes. The

self-objectification questionnaire was significantly positively correlated with the body shame and

surveillance scales as well as the theme "men having power over women" (see Table 2).

The revised coding system was also applied to the data from Study 1. An independent

samples *t*-test was run and no significant differences were found between groups.

Discussion

Study 2 sought to better understand the findings of Study 1, providing more data and a

more controlled experiment. I completed more rigorous pilot testing in order to ensure that the

two songs were different on measures of objectification and similar in musical ways.

Additionally, songs were selected with the goal that participants had not heard them before. This

was a big difference from Study 1, in which both songs had been played extensively on radio

stations nationwide. This was done to avoid potential confounds. Previous research has

suggested that previous exposure to songs may alter the listener's psychological experience, as

previous memories or associations may play a role (Cobb & Boettcher, 2007). Results from the

pilot test and responses about songs from participants suggest that selected songs did what they

intended to do; they varied significantly in objectifying content but were musically similar.

Furthermore, the written responses of participants to the song support that the objectifying song

was objectifying. Participants made comments like, "The lyrics were very derogatory towards

women" and "This song is highly objectifying of women. The lyrics put women in bad light, and

over sexualizes them, and treats them like play things and sex objects." It is clear that

participants took issue with the lyrics.

This presents a paradox: the song was clearly identified as objectifying and highly

objectionable, however, it did not increase self-objectification among listeners. There are many

possibilities for this difference for future research to consider. Measures of self-objectification

typically focus on the thin-body ideal, however this thin-body ideal is not present in hip-hop

music and is not a part of hip-hop culture. In fact, quite the opposite is true. Most commonly,

women are praised for having curves and are criticized for being too skinny. The hook of the

objectifying song used in Study 2 praised a woman who had a "fatty and she know it." It is

possible that the measures used were not sensitive to the potential effects of such language. For

example, the Body Shame Scale used focuses heavily on weight (e.g., "I would be ashamed for

people to know what I really weigh.") With the themes present in hip hop, and this song

specifically, seeing an increase in such thoughts after exposure to the song would not be

expected. Considering this, the TST was recoded for both Study 1 and 2 to investigate reactions

related to the song's objectifying themes.

However, there were still no differences when responses to the TST were coded for

content related to sexual appeal and behavior rather than body-related statements. One potential

reason for this lack of effect is the racial makeup of my sample. As most of the women

participating in this study were White it is possible that race served as a protective or distancing

factor[2]. Hip hop is frequently associated with black communities and culture. As such, it is

possible that non-black women do not identify with the messages presented in the songs, and

therefore are not affected by the lyrics. Research has demonstrated a similar effect among black

women and their consumption of media containing images supporting a thin body ideal (Duke,

2000; Fujioka et. al., 2009). These women recognized that the thin bodies and depictions of

beauty depicted in magazines were not as highly valued in their own cultures. Unlike their white

counterparts, these images did not have a large effect on self esteem for African American

women. It is possible such a phenomenon is occurring with white women; as they do not identify

the music with their culture, they do not care as much about the messages present in the music.

Further research can consider this potential effect of race in multiple ways. A focus on the

responses of African American women and interviews with white women as they listen to this

sort of music can provide insight into this question.

Study 3

The present study examines the effects of objectifying hip hop lyrics on female listeners'

self-objectifying behaviors. To contextualize the findings of this study, I will briefly consider the

history, socio-political context and discourse of hip hop and examine the nature of race and

gender in the context of hip hop.

Black cultural expression in the United States has long been controlled by whites and

simultaneously worked outside of this control (Cobb, 2007). Additionally, white people have

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[2] Also of note, participants in Study 1 were more racially diverse than those in Study 2. Analysis was run with TST data in Study 1 with only white participants and no differences were found. However, the n was relatively small (n=19) so it is possible that this small sample and inadequate power are responsible for the lack of finding.

long exerted power over and disseminated images of black people in popular media and

mainstream culture. This was true for the practice of blackface and minstrel shows in the latter

half of the 19th century and, many would argue, continues today through commercialized hip

hop. Hip hop had its origins in New York City and originally referred to four elements; graffiti,

break dancing, DJing, and rapping. Descendant from the oral tradition of the African diaspora,

specifically the blues and the black preacher, hip hop provided a form of cultural expression tied

to the past (Cobb, 2007). Hip hop was part of a vibrant group of cultural institutions such as

nightclubs, audiences, and independent record stores which both were a result of and supported

the growth of hip hop (Ford, 2012). Hip hop was full of innovation and provided a great

opportunity for cultural expression. Cobb writes, "Hip hop is so central to the development of

the post-civil rights generation of black people that it's nearly impossible to separate the music

from our politics, economic realities, gains and collective shortcomings" (Cobb, 2007,4). Hip

hop provided a forum for MCs or rappers to express their lived truths: fears, frustrations, and

joys.

Today's hip hop world looks very different from that of the late 70s in New York City.

The commercialization of hip hop has led to a clear shift for the genre. While politically

conscious and socially active hip hop is still alive and well, commercial hip hop has gained

national attention. Tate writes, "[white producers and music executives realized that] … anything

Black folk do could be abstracted and repackaged for capital gain" (Tate, 2012, 66). This is

demonstrated through the increased listening and consumption of hip hop, especially by white

adolescents, the spread of hip hop and hip hop marketing to other commercial goods (alcohol,

clothes, shoes, headphones, etc.), and the appearance of the hip hop mogul, often former artists

who expanded their business ventures, often including clothing lines or their own record label (examples include Jay-Z and Diddy).

Coupled with this commercial expansion were changes in the radio landscape. A mass consolidation of corporate media entities resulted in a limited number of companies exerting power over most of the media that the U.S. consumes. For example, as of 2008, Clear Channel owned 1,240 radio stations nationwide, reaching more than 100 million listeners or one third of the country (Rose, 2008). This significantly narrows the programming that listeners have access to, especially for black radio. Locally controlled radio has greater potential to support the development of a local and socially conscious hip hop scene and allows radio and music to be used as a form of social advocacy. Rather, this corporate control led to a much more limited playlist and greater exposure to music that corporations deemed profitable, frequently that which presents negative images of black men and women. Rose provides a poignant description of commercial hip hop today saying,

> The most commercially successful hip hop… has increasingly become a playground for caricatures of black gangstas, pimps, and hoes. Hyper-sexism has increased dramatically, and homophobia along with distorted, antisocial, self destructive, and violent portrayals of black masculinity have become rap's calling cards. Relying on an ever-narrowing range of images and themes this commercial juggernaut has played a central role in the near-depletion of what was once a vibrant, diverse, and complex popular genre, wringing it dry by pandering to America's racist and sexist lowest common denominator. (Rose, 2008, 2).

As previously discussed, commercial hip hop today is dominated by negative images of black men and women. Hip hop's recurring theme of authenticity paired with these negative

images is especially problematic. Artists today frequently defend their lyrics by saying

something along the lines of "I'm just speaking the truth. Just telling you like it is in the hood".

Some scholars argue that in the face of commodification and commercialization, these

authenticity claims are a way for artists to keep their identity and remain separate from the

commercial forces (McLeod, 2012).

Regardless of the reasoning, these claims reinforce the stereotypical images and messages

presented to white consumers about black men and women. Often, hip hop is used as

justification for accepting stereotypical images of black men and women as true. White listeners

may reason that if artists are saying that this is how their life is, then it must be true, and there is

no problem in assuming these stereotypes hold true for African Americans as well. Similarly,

this pairing of themes is damaging for young black listeners. These messages of authenticity

from artists they admire suggest that their lives should mirror behaviors and ideas depicted in

songs and that deviation from such images is problematic, or "not authentic." Research has

demonstrated that this "authenticity" is an important part of adolescents' identification with and

attraction to hip hop (Jeffries, 2011), especially for African American youth (Sullivan, 2003).

As the present study examines the effects of objectifying music on female listeners,

considering gender in the context of hip hop is also crucial. First, hip hop is an industry

dominated by males- at the artist, producer, and executive level (Rose, 2008). Hypermasculinity

and violent masculinity are prevalent themes in hip hop today and are reflective of larger values

and trends in broader American society (Dyson & Hurt, 2012). Also important to consider in

this context are constructions of black male sexuality and masculinity, especially for young black

men. In today's society, messages about black men frequently depict images of absent fathers,

hypersexuality, and violent and deviant behavior. These messages of deviance and fear are heard

and internalized. This was demonstrated in one study that had participants read a violent lyrical passage (Fried, 1999). Participants were either told that the lyrics were from a country or rap song. Participants who believed they were reading rap lyrics reported stronger negative reactions to the lyrics and believed that they were more problematic. Researchers suggest that this is because rap music receives much more criticism than other genres. However, we should consider the racialized and gendered nature of rap, that is, its association with black male voices, and how preconceived ideas of black masculinity may influence reactions to hip hop. Because of pervasive messages about black masculinity, listeners may respond differently to a song simply because it is assumed to be performed by a black male artist.

Also necessary to consider, and of central importance to this study, is femininity in the context of hip hop. Female sexuality is, and historically has been, controlled as a means of limiting women's potential (Rose, 2008). In the present day this can be seen through the common acceptance of a double standard in which men who have sex with many women are seen as "studs" while women who sleep with many men are "sluts," or through ideals of femininity that dictate the desires of her partner should take priority over a woman's desires. However, race is a necessary lens through which we must consider sexism. The construction of black female sexuality in the United States is rooted in slavery. Rose (2008) states that, "sexism against black women took place in racially specific ways involving the labeling of their sexuality as automatically deviant and uncontrollable" (152). Black women have never been able to attain the level of womanhood given to white women, whose supposed chastity gives them a sexually valued position. This lesser status allowed the rape and abuse of black women slaves to go unquestioned (Neal, 1999). These constructions of black female sexuality have continued to the present day.

Today, the discourse surrounding black femininity and sexuality remains that of deviance. Young men in hip hop commonly discuss wanting a "good sister" and not a "ho," and women are frequently blamed, by artist and critics alike, for choosing to participate in sexist hip hop music videos (Dyson & Hurt, 2012). This is especially dangerous when paired with the previously discussed themes of authenticity. Jefferies interviewed a group of young white and black men on the topic of hip hop. When asked about gender and hip hop, a large group of interviewees said that rappers are simply reflecting reality. Interviewees repeatedly stated that these rappers had encountered "bitches and hos" and while not all women are like this, the women who the rappers interacted with were. They described these women as simply being after rappers' money and trying to take advantage of them (Jeffries, 2011). As previously discussed, this pairing with discussions of authenticity makes the messages shared in hip hop all the more dangerous. Additionally, this air of authenticity divorces discussions of women in hip hop from their social and historical contexts (Jeffries, 2011).

Hip hop sits within a specific social and historical context and race, gender, and sexuality have their unique positions within this context. Therefore, it is important to consider the different ways that individuals' own positions and identities may influence their reactions to this music. Race and gender are clearly intertwined within the social context and history of hip hop today. Therefore, the present study seeks to identify specifically how black women respond to commercially driven objectifying hip hop. While Study 2 found no effects of exposure to an objectifying song this may be because of the racial makeup of the sample; largely white. I hypothesize that among African American women, exposure to an objectifying song will elicit self-objectification.

Methods

Participants

Participants were 22 African American female young adults, 18-22 years old (M=19.8, SD=1.14). Five participants were recruited through the Macalester Psychology Participant Pool and participated in Study 2. Their data were used again for this study. The other 17 participants were recruited through announcements on campus and word of mouth. Eight participants were recruited from another university. These 17 participants received $5.00 compensation for their participation in the study.

Procedure

Study 3 followed the same procedure used in Study 2.

Results

Independent samples *t*-tests were run comparing the Twenty Statements Test, the Self-Objectification Questionnaire, the Body Shame and Surveillance Scales, and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale for each condition. A significant difference was found for the TST with those women listening to the objectifying songs having a significantly higher score ($t(2)=2.1$, $p=.049$). This means that those women who listened to the objectifying song made significantly more statements that in some way said, "I am my body." No other significant differences were found (see Table 3). Specifically, there were no significant differences with the sexuality-based coding system, TST valence, body shame and surveillance scales, the self-objectification questionnaire or the PANAS.

Discussion

Consistent with previous research examining the effects of objectifying media, exposure to an objectifying song produced an increase in self-objectifying behaviors. The fact that this difference was present among African American women but not for the largely white sample

tested in Study 2 suggests that race is an important factor in the processing of objectifying hip hop songs. It is possible that among white women there is some sort of distancing that occurs during processing that prevents the negative effects of objectifying hip hop songs. Additional research is needed to better understand the different processes women of different racial identities potentially engage in when exposed to objectifying hip hop. As research continues, it is important to note the flexible and complex nature of race: race is not a simple binary variable. Participants in all three studies were able to select multiple options when identifying their race, however for purposes of conducting comparisons between groups, I had to assign participants to a single race/ethnicity category. For the present study, I included any participant who identified as African American, even if she also selected another race. Each participant included in this study may identify differently and connect to African American culture in different ways. Further research should allow participants more flexibility in identifying and describing their racial identities, perhaps using a coding system to group more qualitative data.

Of note with this study is the small sample size, meaning that there are issues with power. The sample recruited for this study differed from the sample used in Studies 1 and 2. As was mentioned, almost half of the participants attended a much larger university. The environment of the schools participants attended may have had an impact on the ways that they processed the songs, simply based on the climates and discourses of the institutions regarding sexism and objectification of women. Additionally, a majority of the participants in the study were paid for their participation. In contrast, participants in other studies received course credit for their participation. This motive may have had an effect on participants' attitudes towards completing the study. Without it being tied to credit for a course, participants may not have taken it as seriously or spent as much time completing the measures. While these are considerations to keep

in mind, this study highlights an important finding: African American women appear to experience objectifying hip hop songs in a different way than their white counterparts.

Study 4

Throughout the first two studies most participants in the experimental condition noted how objectifying the lyrics of the song were. They frequently commented about how "misogynistic", "gross", and "wrong" the lyrics were. However, among non-black participants exposure to an objectifying song had no discernible effect on self-objectifying behaviors. These findings did not support the original hypothesis. Study 4 sought to better understand potential causes for these findings through interviews. Interviews provide a way to better understand the thoughts and emotions of consumers of media. Previous research has used interviews to explore the processes at play while looking at magazines to better understand how young women construct concepts of beauty (Duke, 2000). Thus, interviews were used to better understand the processes at play when women listened to objectifying hip hop music.

Methods

Participants

Participants were 17 women, ranging in age from 18-21 years old, with an average age of 18.9 years (SD=.92). Participants were enrolled in an introductory psychology course and were recruited through the Macalester College Psychology Participant Pool. All received credit for their participation in the study. Fourteen participants identified as white (82.3%), two identified as Asian (11.8%), and one identified as "other" (5.9%). Two participants were excluded from analysis; one did not understand the lyrics in the song well enough to engage in the interview and the other misunderstood instructions and did not pay attention to the song.

Procedure

      Participants were interviewed individually in 15 minute laboratory sessions. Participants were instructed to listen to the objectifying song used in Studies 2 and 3, being sure to listen to the whole song, paying attention to the music, lyrics, and the song as a whole. Participants were given a piece of paper and pencil and told to take note of anything they were thinking about while listening. After listening to the song, participants completed the questionnaire used in Studies 2 and 3. This questionnaire asks about the prevalence of themes in the song as well as the listeners' opinion of the song, its tempo, quality, and whether the participant had heard it before.

      After completing this questionnaire participants alerted the researcher and they began the interview process. All interviews were recorded, with permission of participants. Each interview covered roughly the same series of questions (see Appendix A), however some questions were added or modified for the sake of the flow of conversation or to elaborate on participants' comments. Upon completion of the interview, participants completed a demographic questionnaire and were given a debriefing form.

<div align="center">

Results

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      All interviews were transcribed and coded for prevalent themes . Based on comments or attitudes that appeared throughout interviews, ten themes were identified. These themes were: 1. the music is objectionable (e.g.: I found the lyrics to be very offensive and it's the kind of music that if I were to hear… I would just be really uncomfortable)
 2. The song has a good beat, drawn to the music (e.g.: If I were to listen to a song like this it would be because… it's a catchy because of the beat)
 3. I don't know people who think or act like this (e.g.: I don't associate those sentiments with the people I associate with)

4. I don't like hip hop (e.g.: I didn't like it at all and I generally don't listen to this kind of music)

5. Discussion of setting in relation to control over music (e.g.: If I heard it on the radio I would probably change the radio station)

6. Not paying attention to the lyrics when listening (e.g.: I'm very much not paying attention. If I'm working out I'm focusing on finishing my run. If I'm at a club I'm focusing on dancing. If I'm at a party I'm focusing on talking with my friends or dancing.)

7. Focus on gender over race (e.g.: It's weird because it doesn't really seem like it applies to me at all but it does apply to me because it's men and women more broadly.)

 8. The music is good for the mood or activity (e.g.: It's a catchy song. If you're at a party you want the songs to be upbeat and catchy.)

 9. I don't think/act like that (e.g.: When I hear that in hip hop songs it definitely clashes with my idea about what's right and what's good.)

All emotions that participants identified after listening to the song were noted as well as the frequency with which they said they listened to hip hop (see Table 4). Of note, theme 1 was present in 100% of interviews and theme 3 was present in 60% of interviews.

Discussion

As was the case in previous studies all participants noted the objectionable nature of the objectifying hip hop song. Comments like, "It was a very offensive song, very objectifying towards women, fairly violent and condescending towards the women mentioned in the song," were common. All participants acknowledged that the songs were in some way problematic. After this recognition two patterns of response emerged. There were participants who simply stated that this music was wrong, or gross, or made them uncomfortable and that they did not usually listen to it: they never chose to listen to hip hop and when they did it was in settings

where they had no control over the music, like in a car with others or at a party. Most of these participants noted that when this music was played around them it was in a social setting so they were able to pay less attention to the music. One participant described what her reaction would be if she heard this song in a different setting saying, "If I heard it on the radio I would change songs. If I'm at a party I guess it kind of depends. But probably, if I know who's throwing the party I would ask them to change the song or if it gets really bad I'd just leave." If women are not choosing to listen to these songs, it is likely that the images and ideas presented in the song hold no personal significance to them. Even further, these women are openly rejecting the messages present in the song. This is in opposition to the media used in much of the previous research on objectification theory which focuses on images of beauty, sexuality, and thinness more prevalent and accepted in white culture. As was noted in Study 2, women may hear the lyrics and simply reject them, thus preventing negative effects.

Another group of participants reported listening to hip hop more frequently, often choosing to do so. Participants frequently reported listening to this music as a way to alter mood or motivation. Participants in this group reported using such music as motivation during a workout or as a way to lift the mood in social settings, like a party. Frequently these participants reported not listening to lyrics in these settings. When asked about her reaction to such songs, one participant, a long distance runner who frequently listened to similar songs during her runs said, "Generally I'm really enjoying it. I'm like 'This sounds great!' It's helping me finish my workout." When asked about her awareness of the lyrics she replied, "I'm mildly aware of it, very much just not paying attention to it. I'll hear the lyrics but I won't be processing them." Participants noted similar reactions when listening to songs in social settings, that is they were hearing the songs but not really listening to them.

When probed about their relationships to such songs, many of these participants noted that they didn't feel connected to the messages, thoughts, or lifestyles they associated with this music. One participant noted, "It's not your typical Macalester lifestyle." When asked about her reaction to the themes in commercially driven hip hop another said, "Confusion, because I don't know that the people I meet on a daily basis feel that way about women and what they would desire to experience." Another participant noted, "I don't associate those sentiments with the people I associate with. It feels very distant to me, like there are people who think that way or think that that kind of music is great but I don't know any of them personally so it doesn't feel very real to me." It is possible that this lack of personal connection served as a buffer for non-black women as they listened to this song. As previously discussed, research has demonstrated that the effects of exposure to objectifying and thin-body ideals are not present among African American women. Researchers suggest that this is because they do not identify the images being presented as relevant to their cultural definitions of beauty. Such comments regarding the personal relevance of the themes present in these songs suggest that an analogous process may be occurring as non-black women listen. This is consistent with previous research that has found that while both white and black teens may like rap, white participants are listening to it more for how the music sounds. In comparison, black teens were more invested in the music, knowing more about different artists, trends in the music, and describing music as more significant to their lives (Sullivan, 2003). Additionally, given the demographics of the institution, the friend groups of these participants may not be very racially diverse. This may influence how often they listen to hip hop, the settings in which it occurs, and the reactions of their peers when they do listen to it.

The interview data in this study provided interesting insight into women's processes after exposure and experience with objectifying hip hop songs. However, there are some drawbacks to such methods. Interviews, while providing more in depth information, are limited in scope. Participants' responses are limited by the questions asked and while I aimed to avoid leading questions or guiding participants down a line of discussion, such occurrences are not completely avoidable. A set of questions was developed to establish consistency between interviews. However, some participants may have felt constrained by these questions; the structure of the interview might have inhibited them from sharing other thoughts or reactions to these songs. Concerns about thoughts or opinions of the researcher may have altered responses. Participants may have worried that I would have judged them if they admitted to liking hip hop and therefore provided inaccurate responses. Additionally, relying on interviews means that participants were only able to comment on the processing that they were aware of. Not all processing is conscious and participants may not be aware of their emotions at a level required to note differences as a result of exposure to a song. Even further, research suggests that often we aren't sure why we feel as we do. In these situations we create narratives to explain our internal processes (Kahneman, 2011). These drawbacks of interviews are important to keep in mind while considering the interview data presented in this study. Moving forward, completing similar interviews with African American women would be a helpful way to better understand the processes these women engage in as they listen to objectifying hip hop songs.

General Discussion

The present study sought to bridge the gap in the literature on objectification theory and the effects of music on listeners. Female participants were exposed to either an objectifying or

neutral hip hop song and completed measures of self-objectification. After finding no differences between the two conditions with a largely white sample, race was considered as a factor in the processing and potential effects of objectifying hip hop songs. Data from Study 3 suggest that this may be the case. Additionally, data from interviews support race as an important factor to consider.

As previously discussed, hip hop is a racialized genre of music most often associated with black artists, consumers, and culture. This was brought up both directly and indirectly throughout the interviews in Study 4. This connection of hip hop to black culture may result in differing responses of black and non-black women to objectifying songs, as has previously been discussed. Of note is the discussion of race and gender present in the interviews of Study 4. The last question of each interview asked specifically about race and its relationship to hip hop. Many participants noted that they were aware that hip hop was a genre created largely by black male artists talking about women of color, however, most did not believe that this had any effect on their listening. Forty percent of participants (6 of 15) commented that gender was the more important identity in their interpretation of the song (e.g., "The rapping about women of color I don't think about as much as I just kind of think about women in general. But I don't know if that's just because I'm a girl.") Among white participants, race was not frequently discussed explicitly without some sort of prompting. This may be because among white women, race is not a salient factor in their day-to-day life experiences and identity. In a society where they are part of the dominant culture, white women are not frequently reminded of their 'whiteness' (Tatum, 1997). White women may not identify race as a significant factor in their processing of the song simply because it is not something that is frequently brought to their consciousness.

There are potential issues with these studies to consider while examining their findings. Throughout the studies, sample sizes were relatively small and power was limited as a result. It is possible that with a larger sample size results would vary. The sample used, that of female undergraduates at a small liberal arts college (and at larger universities for Studies 2 and 3), was not representative of the general population. The environment of the institution is one that recognizes sexism, and discussions about objectification are commonplace throughout the community and classroom. Thus participants may have more knowledge about objectification than the general population, which may have altered results. This was brought up by multiple participants in Study 4. Participants mentioned discussing similar issues in courses, using their "Macalester brains," and the role of education in their reaction to the song. Further research should seek a sample with more diverse experiences.

However, previous research with very similar samples has demonstrated robust effects on self-objectification after exposure to objectifying images. As noted in the introduction, exposure to sexually explicit and objectifying hip hop music videos produced effects. It is possible that it is simply because the stimuli are auditory in nature that there is no effect. As previous research has established that songs can impact thoughts and behaviors, further research should focus on objectifying auditory stimuli to better understand their impact in comparison to visual stimuli.

Further research is needed to better understand the relationship between objectifying songs and potential effects on female listeners. More specifically, research can consider the ways that prolonged exposure to objectifying songs affects women's self-objectifying behaviors. Exposure to the objectifying content only lasted about three and a half minutes. Some previous research has allowed for ten to fifteen minutes of exposure (Fredrickson, Roberts, Noll, Quinn, & Twenge 1998). With increased exposure time, or with increased time between exposure and

testing, more differences in self-objectification might have emerged. Although correlational in nature, women's listening habits and their relationship to self-objectification would be interesting to consider. Does objectifying hip hop music have more of an effect on female listeners if they listen to it frequently? What about the amount of choice they have in listening to the music? Also important to consider are the listening contexts in which women listen to these songs. As was discussed in the interviews, women believed their listening and attention was different in a laboratory setting than it was in their day to day listening. Participants discussed listening in more social settings, where they aren't paying as much attention to the lyrics. Additional research should consider how the setting and listening context influence participant processing, attention, and responses.

Moving forward in the research it is important to consider new ways to define and measure self-objectification. As was previously discussed, many of the measures used in Studies 1-3 were taken from previous research into objectification theory. This research focused heavily on body surveillance and shame and objectification within the context of the thin body ideal. However, this does not align with objectification present in many commercially successful hip hop songs. While all participants in Study 4 mentioned how objectifying the song was, no participants mentioned how they felt about their bodies or how their bodies looked in any way. There have been some moves in the research to broaden the available measures of self-objectification, such as coding items on the TST about skin tone (Buchanan, et al,. 2007). However, moving forward a new and more appropriate measure needs to be developed to more fully understand the experiences of female listeners. In attempting to address this issue I searched for an objectifying hip hop song containing lyrics promoting a thin body ideal. I was unable to find such a song. However, as such messages are in opposition to the messages and

themes present in hip hop today, even if I were able to find one, I'm not sure that such a song would really allow us to understand the effects of objectifying hip hop.

This present study focused on the effects of objectifying commercially driven hip hop songs, as these songs are widely produced, disseminated, and consumed by youth today. Research has demonstrated that music is one way that we learn about our social world (Agbo-Quaye & Robertson, 2010). This is especially true for adolescents as they are trying to start navigating the adult world and relationships. Participants in these studies were all college aged. As a result, they may be more secure in their self-concept and relationships than younger adolescents. As such, it is possible that messages present in these songs may have less of an effect. Is it possible that there is an age or some sort of critical period of development during which these songs would have a larger effect? Therefore, it is important to consider how effects of objectifying hip hop would look over the lifespan.

Exploring the potential effects of objectifying hip hop songs, findings suggest that the social and historical context of hip hop music is connected to how it is processed. Additional research is needed to better understand the effects of objectifying hip hop on female listeners, especially among African American women. Interviews or focus groups with African American women with a procedure similar to Study 4 and questions about everyday listening practices would provide helpful qualitative data. Further research should also consider varying genres or styles of music to better consider the effects of objectifying auditory stimuli on female listeners. Research has well established the effect of a variety of forms of visual stimuli (magazines, advertisements, music videos, etc.), however consideration of auditory stimuli is very limited.

This study provides an important first step in attempting to understand the effects of objectifying hip hop songs on female listeners. This study highlights the importance of

considering the position and identity of women as they listen to objectifying hip hop songs, and the roles that their identities and investment in the music may have. However, much more research needs to be done to better understand these potential effects. With more knowledge about the psychological and emotional experiences of female listeners, real pressure can be placed on the music industry to change the objectifying nature of many of the songs they produce. While only one media form of many that objectify women, better understanding the impact of hip hop songs on women of all race/ethnicities is an important step.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and t-test Results of Major Study Variables

	Experimental Condition		Control Condition		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Depressive Symptoms[1]	1.45	.09	1.44	.09	$t(37)=.21$, n.s.
Body Shame[1]	.48	.13	.49	.17	$t(37)=.22$, n.s.
Body Surveillance	4.44	.95	4.35	1.15	$t(37)=.29$, n.s.
Twenty Statements Test	1.16	1.50	.30	.66	$t(24.39)=2.29$, $p=.03$

1- Log-10 transformed data used due to significant skew

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and MANOVA results of major study variables

	Experimental Condition		Control Condition		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Twenty Statements Test[1]	.46	.55	.27	.51	$F(1,65)=2.02$, n.s.
Self-objectification Questionnaire	2.63	13.38	-1.97	14.17	$F(1,60)=1.69$ n.s.
Body Shame	3.10	1.07	3.24	1.12	$F(1,65)=.23$, n.s.
Body Surveillance	4.49	.95	4.52	.93	$F(1,65)=.01$, n.s.
Positive Affect Scale[1]	4.91	.81	4.74	.75	$F(1.64)=.70$, n.s.
Negative Affect Scale[1]	4.07	.58	3.88	.69	$F(1,63)=1.43$, n.s.

1- Square root transformed data due to significant skew

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and t-test Results of Major Study Variables

	Experimental Condition		Control Condition		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Twenty Statements Test	.91	.70	.36	.50	$t(20)=2.10, p=0.049$
Self-objectification Questionnaire	.33	15.13	1.29	6.16	$t(11.1)=-.17$ n.s.
Body Shame	2.80	1.30	2.98	1.11	$t(20)=-.35,$ n.s.
Body Surveillance	3.96	1.27	4.71	.81	$t(20)=-1.6,$ n.s.
Positive Affect Scale	28.09	8.77	25.00	8.79	$t(20)=.83,$ n.s.
Negative Affect Scale	17.10	6.54	16.64	5.85	$t(19)=.17,$ n.s.

Table 4

Frequency of Major Interview Themes

Theme	Absent	Mentioned	Highly Present
Music is objectionable	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (100%)
Song has a good beat, drawn to the music	4 (27%)	8 (53%)	3 (20%)
I don't know people who think or act like this	6 (40%)	5 (33%)	4 (27%)
I don't like hip hop	8 (53%)	6 (40%)	1 (7%)
Setting in relation to control over music	8 (53%)	4 (27%)	3 (20%)
Not paying attention to lyrics while listening	8 (53%)	5 (33%)	2 (14%)
Focus on gender over race	9 (60 %)	4 (27%)	2 (14%)
Music is good for mood or activity	7 (47%)	6 (40%)	2 (14%)
I don't think/act like this	9 (60%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)

Appendix A

Study 1

Song questionnaire

1) What did you notice about the song and lyrics?

2) What parts did you like?

3) What parts did you not like?

Self-Surveillance Scale

Indicate your response to the following statements on a scale from 1-7 (1= strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)

1) I rarely think about how I look.

2) I think it is more important that my clothes are comfortable than whether they look good on me.

3) I think more about how my body feels than how my body looks.

4) I rarely compare how I look with how other people look.

5) During the day, I think about how I look many times.

6) I often worry about whether the clothes I am wearing make me look good.

7) I rarely worry about how I look to other people.

8) I am more concerned with what my body can do than how it looks.

Body Shame Scale

Indicate your response to the following statements on a scale from 1-7 (1= strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)

1) When I can't control my weight, I feel like something must be wrong with me.

2) I feel ashamed of myself when I haven't made the effort to look my best.

3) I feel like I must be a bad person when I don't look as good as I could.

4) I would be ashamed for people to know what I really weigh.

5) I never worry that something is wrong with me when I am not exercising as much as I should.

6) When I'm not exercising enough, I question whether I am a good enough person.

7) Even when I can't control my weight, I think I'm an okay person.

8) When I'm not the size I think I should be, I feel ashamed.

Beck Depression Inventory

1. 0- I do not feel sad.
   1- I feel sad
   2- I am sad all the time and I can't snap out of it.
   3- I am so sad and unhappy that I can't stand it.

2. 0- I am not particularly discouraged about the future.
   1- I feel discouraged about the future.
   2- I feel I have nothing to look forward to.
   3- I feel the future is hopeless and that things cannot improve.

3. 0- I do not feel like a failure.
   1- I feel I have failed more than the average person.
   2- I look back on my life, all I can see is a lot of failures.
   3- I feel I am a complete failure of a person

4. 0- I get as much satisfaction out of things as I used to.
   1- I don't enjoy things the way I used to.
   2- I don't get real satisfaction out of anything anymore.
   3- I am dissatisfied or bored with everything.

5. 0- I don't feel particularly guilty
   1- I feel guilty a good part of the time.
   2- I feel quite guilty most of the time.
   3- I feel guilty all of the time.

6. 0- I don't feel I am being punished.

1- I feel I may be punished.
2- I expect to be punished.
3- I feel I am being punished.

7. 0- I don't feel disappointed in myself.
   1- I am disappointed in myself.
   2- I am disgusted with myself.
   3- I hate myself.

8. 0- I don't feel I am any worse than anybody else.
   1- I am critical of myself for my weaknesses or mistakes.
   2- I blame myself all the time for my faults.
   3- I blame myself for everything bad that happens

9. 0- I don't have any thoughts of killing myself.
   1- 1 I have thoughts of killing myself, but I would not carry them out.
   2- I would like to kill myself.
   3- I would kill myself if I had the chance.

10. 0- I don't cry any more than usual.
    1- I cry more now that I used to.
    2- I cry all the time now.
    3- I used to be able to cry, but now I can't cry even though I want to.

11. 0- I am no more irritated by things than I ever was.
    1- I am slightly more irritated now than usual.
    2- I am quite annoyed or irritated a good deal of the time.
    3- I feel irritated all the time.

12. 0- I have not lost interest in other people.
    1- I am less interested in other people than I used to be.
    2- I have lost most of my interest in other people.
    3- I have lost all of my interest in other people.

13. 0- I make decisions about as well as I ever could
    1- I put off making decisions more than I used to.
    2- I have greater difficulty in making decisions more than I used to
    3- I can't make decisions at all anymore.

14. 0- I don't feel that I look any worse than I used to
    1- I am worried that I am looking old or unattractive
    2- I feel there are permanent changes in my appearance that make me look unattractive.
    3- I believe that I look ugly.

15. 0- I can work about as well as before.
    1- It takes an extra effort to get started at doing something.

    2- I have to push myself very hard to do anything.

    3- I can't do any work at all.

16. 0- I can sleep as well as usual.

    1- I don't sleep as well as I used to.

    2- I wake up 1-2 hours earlier than usual and find it hard to get back to sleep.

    3- I wake up several hours earlier than I used to and cannot get back to sleep.

17. 0- I don't get more tired than usual.

    1- I get tired more easily than I used to.

    2- I get tired from doing almost anything.

    3- I am too tired to do anything.

18. 0- My appetite is no worse than usual.

    1- My appetite is not as good as it used to be.

    2- My appetite is much worse now.

    3- I have no appetite at all anymore.

19. 0- I haven't lost much weight, if any lately.

    1- I have lost more than 5 pounds

    2- I have lost more than 10 pounds

    3- I have lost more than 15 pounds

20. 0- I am no more worried about my health than usual

    1- I am worried about physical problems like aches, pains, upset stomach, or constipation.

    2- I am very worried about physical problems and it's hard to think of much else.

    3- I am so worried about my physical problems that I cannot think of anything else.

21. 0- I have not noticed any recent change in my interest in sex.

    1- I am less interested in sex than I used to be.

    2- I have almost no interest in sex.

    3- I have lost interest in sex completely.

Demographic Questionnaire

1. Age

2. Race/Ethnicity

3. What are your favorite genres of music?

4. On a scale of 1-5 (5=most, 1=least) how often do you listen to hip-hop/rap in comparison

    to other genres of music?

Study 2

Song Questionnaire

1) What did you notice about the song and lyrics?

2) On a scale of 1-7 how clearly could you understand the lyrics? (1=not at all understandable, 7= clearly understandable)

3) On a scale of 1-7 how would you rate the tempo of the song? (1=very slow, 7= very quick)

4) On a scale of 1-7 how would you rate the quality of the song (beat, production value, etc)? (1=very poor quality, 7=excellent quality)

5) On a scale of 1-7 what was your opinion of the song? (1=hated it, 7=loved it)

6) Have you heard this song before?

7) Additional comments?

Self-Objectification Questionnaire

It is possible that there are other factors that influence our reactions to music. We are hoping to better understand these possibilities. The following information will help us do this.

We are interested in how people think about their bodies. The questions below identify 10 different body attributes. We would like you to rank order the body attributes from that which has the greatest impact on you physical self-concept (rank this as a 9) to that which has the lease impact on your physical self-concept (rank this as a 0). Note: It does not matter how you describe yourself in terms of each attribute. For example, fitness level can have a great impact on you physical self-concept regardless of whether you consider yourself to be physically fit, not physically fit, or any level in between.

Please first consider all attributes simultaneously, and record your rank ordering by selecting the number that belongs with each. (0= least impact, 1=next to least impact, 8=next to greatest impact, 9= greatest impact)

1) What rank do you assign to physical coordination?

2) Health?

3) Weight?

4) Strength?

5) Sex appeal?

6) Physical attractiveness?

7) Energy level (eg. Stamina)?

8) Firm/sculpted muscles?

9) Physical fitness levels?

10) Measurements (eg. Chest, waist, hips)?

Positive and Negative Affect Scale

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then select a number from the scale. Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now, that is at this present moment. (1=very slightly or not at all, 2= a little, 3=moderately, 4=quite a bit, 5= extremely)

1) Interested

2) Distressed

3) Excited

4) Upset

5) Strong

6) Guilty

7) Scared

8) Hostile

9) Enthusiastic

10) Proud

11) Irritable

12) Alert

13) Ashamed

14) Inspired

15) Nervous

16) Determined

17) Attentive

18) Jittery

19) Active

20) Afraid

Additional Song Questionnaire

Consider again the song you heard at the start of this study. For each of the following themes

select the number that best represents the prevalence of the themes in the lyrics. (1=not at all

present, 7=highly present)

1) Men as having poser over women (eg. Men "owning" women, men as "boss" and female

as subordinate.

2) Sex as top priority for males

3) Objectification of women (when women are seen as objects for others' viewing)

4) Sexual violence

5) Women defined as having a man

6) Women as not valuing themselves

7) Gun violence

8) Drug related themes

Demographic Questionnaire

1) Age

2) Race/Ethnicity

3) What's your sexual orientation?

4) On a scale of 1-5 (1=least, 5=most) how often do you listen to hip hop in comparison to

other genres of music?

Study 4

Interview Questions

- Can you tell me about your reaction to the song you just heard? What are some of your thoughts or feelings?
- When listening to a song what do you usually focus on? Was the listening you just did any different? How?
- What was your reaction to the lyrics you just heard? What's your general reaction to songs like these? Are they any different? Who are these lyrics relevant for?
- Who or what are these artists rapping about? What re your reactions to those themes?
- What's your relationship to hip hop, especially commercial hip hop? How often do you listen to it? In what settings? Does the setting you listen to the song in have any effect on your reactions? Do you purchase it? Do you watch hip hop music videos? What are your reactions to those videos? Do they have any effect on your opinion of the song?

- The majority of commercially successful and driven hip hop today is made by black male artists who are speaking about women of color. Is this something you're aware of while you're listening? Does it have any impact on your listening or reaction? How?

Acknowledgements