Have Scripts for Initiation of Adult Sexual Behavior Changed in 80 years?

Evidence from Top Box-Office Films

By

Georgia Gardner

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for
Honors in the Department of Psychology

Union College June, 2019

Abstract

GARDNER, GEORGIA Have Scripts for Initiation of Adult Sexual Behavior Changed in 80 years? Evidence from Top Box-Office Films. Department of Psychology, June 2019.

ADVISOR: Suzanne Benack, Ph.D

The majority of research regarding sexual scripts in the media has examined television, however films are also an interesting avenue for study. The current study attempted to look the particular script of initiation of sexual interactions through the medium of film. The study looked at 50 top grossing films from 1940-2018 including drama, comedy and action films. Initiation of sexual interaction was defined as moving from a state of no sexual intimacy to sexual intimacy. For example, a passionate kiss on the lips between lovers is initiation of sexual interaction, but a kiss on the cheek between family members is not initiation of sexual interactions because the motivation behind the kiss is not sexual in nature. Initiation scripts include how an individual courts another and how the courted individual responds. We examined change in initiation scripts over time and the variation in initiation scripts between genres. Special interest was placed on the gender, race, and relationship status of the actors in order to understand if their actions were societally acceptable.

Introduction

Defining Sexual Scripts

How do we choose our verbal and non-verbal communication to present messages and emotions? How do we know which methods will be most successful? Social behaviors are complex and situational, but they tend to follow a pattern. Our behaviors mirror previous experiences that we have seen or participated in. Much like a movie script, we use these experiences to inform our social behaviors. For example, imagine a marriage proposal in western culture. The man buys a ring that costs 2 months of his salary and takes his partner to a romantic destination. He expresses his love for her and gets down on one knee. He holds the ring in front of him. He says, "will you marry me" and she agrees often with tears of joy and a smile. He puts the ring on her finger and the newly engaged couple kiss passionately. This interaction is traditional and even appears in pop culture movies such as Leap Year, A Walk to Remember, Sex and the City, and Twilight: Eclipse.

This idea that social behaviors follow a pattern is known as scripting theory. The term "script" acts as a metaphor to describe the socially constructed gestures and verbiage used to express one's self and provide guidance for others to know how to properly respond to you (Gagnon, 1973). Scripting theory suggests that our behaviors are routinized acts that guide our every behavior. This theory assumes that very little social behavior is performed randomly or spontaneously.

In 1973, J. H. Gagnon presented the idea that our sexual experiences, like the rest of our social interactions, were scripted. They coined this Sexual Script Theory, which was defined as, "culturally provided plans and goals of persons' that shape and coordinate both verbal and nonverbal conduct involved in sexual behavior" (Gagnon 27). This theory suggests that our

sexual behaviors are informed by society, and if we want to understand how sex is treated in society, then we need to look at the cultural scripts surrounding sexual interactions.

According to Simon and Gagnon, scripts are influenced on three levels: cultural scenarios, interpersonal scripts, and intrapsychic scripting (Simon & Gagnon, 1986). Cultural scenarios are the ritualized scripts used in society. These are the societal norms that we internalize in order guide our behavior in various social situations. For example, men initiating sexual interactions in a bar is a cultural scenario in western culture. Intrapersonal scripts involve taking the cultural scenarios and adapting them to fit particular social settings. A man might take the cultural scenario of initiating an interaction at a bar and add the interpersonal script of buying her a drink to get her attention before he walks over. Lastly, intrapsychic scripts refer to internal dialogues that an individual use to explore scenarios in their imagination. The man at the bar might think through what he intends to say to a woman to get her number and eventually begin a sexual relation with her. Simon and Gagnon argue that these three levels of scripting are used to inform our behaviors in every aspect of our social lives—including sex our sex lives.

Sexual script	Definition	Example
Cultural scenarios	Reflect culturally shared social norms and values about sexual behavior communicated through gender role norms, mass media, etc.	Gender role norms that men should initiate sexual activity
		Music video images that show men being sexually active with multiple women
Interpersonal scripts	Reflect how people believe they should enact the cultural scenarios in their sexual behaviors	Using alcohol and/or marijuana as a prelude to sex based on mass media images of this behavior
		Sequencing of behaviors from "hanging out" to foreplay to sexual intercourse based upon expectations of how such interactions should unfold
Intrapsychic scripts	Reflect individuals' sexual motives for engaging in sexual behaviors	Making love to demonstrate emotional intimacy with a sexual partner
		Having sex with many women as a form of sexual conquest

Table 1: The 3 levels of sexual scripting as cited in Bowleg et al. (2015) as cited in Simon & Gagnon (1984)

Theories behind the mental processes used in sexual script research

Several theories have been proposed on the underlying psychological mechanisms of sexual script theory. One of the most predominant is social cognitive theory, which posits that our current behaviors are driven by three forces: personal factors (affect, biology, and cognition), behavioral factors, and environmental factors (exposure to external stimuli) (Callister et al., 2011). These three forces work in a cyclical fashion. We are exposed to scripts that we see actedout in our environment (environmental factor), we process the scripts and form our own thoughts and opinions (personal factor), and then we adapt our behavior to account for the script (behavioral factor). If the script leads to the desired outcome, then the script might be added to a person's repertoire. However, if the behavioral model is punished or does not receive the desired outcome, the script will be avoided in future scenarios.

Cultivation theory is a separate concept which explains the cognitive mechanisms that lead to the formation and usage of scripts. This theory argues that the more an individual is exposed to certain scripts, the more likely they are to act those scripts out in their own lives (Signorelli & Bievenour, 2015). For example, if people are continuously exposed to the aforementioned script of a proposal in western culture either on the screen or real life, they will be more likely to act out this script for their own romantic proposal.

These theories do not suggest that we see a behavior and automatically add it to our repertoire of scripts; however, they do suggest that we model our behaviors based environmental factors and frequency of exposure. Social learning theory presents four characteristics that make sexual scripts more likely to transfer from one actor to another: (1) the model has similar characteristics (gender, race, age) to the viewer, (2) the behavior is positively reinforced, (3) the context of the situation is realistic, (4) the model is attractive (Bleakley et al., 2017). In the

context of media, this would mean that we are more likely to inherit scripts from movies that are set in present day and are largely connected to reality (MASH) than fantasy films that require large amounts of suspension of disbelief (Star Wars). In summation, a Caucasian viewer would be most likely to internalize a sexual script presented by attractive Caucasian actors of the same age and gender as the viewer especially if they were successful in their initiation attempts. Cultivation theory, and social learning theory both provide a strong support for the existence of sexual scripts in society and when we bridge the psychological phenomenon with the sociological phenomenon, we begin to form a fascinating image of the trend in sexual behavior in various culture.

Previous generalized research on sexual scripts

Since the inception of sexual script theory, researchers have explored the various sexual scripts that are prevalent in current western society. The majority of sexual scripts research targets groups within larger western culture. The researchers select groups based on select groups based on characteristic that shape a person's identity such as race, sex or gender. Research on masculinity scripts for Hispanic men find low rates of perceived male victimization in relation to the general public (Stephens, Eaton & Boyd, 2017). Hispanic men tended to reject the idea that a man could be sexually coerced by a woman due to their position of power and authority in sexual relationships. Furthermore, Hispanic men reported the mentality that a man should "just go" along with a woman's sexual advances with limited exceptions (i.e. close friend). In these scenarios, he is rejecting her advances not because he does not want sex, but rather that he is saving her from potential embarrassment. The script of masculinity presented here suggests that a man is supposed to be dominant in control sexual relationships as well as always on the prowl for a sexual partner.

A similar study researched sexual risk scripts among black men (Bowleg et al., 2015). The researchers found 7 common themes throughout their interviews of black heterosexual men and then formed a questionnaire to measure the usage of those theme in the men's sex lives. For example, condom use and communication between sexual partners was a common script throughout the interview. The researchers then took the script of condom usage and asked men, how often they talk about condoms before engaging in sexual activities. The researchers compared the frequency a script was used to the degree to which the individual was engaging in risky sexual behaviors. They discovered that a person who frequently engages in scripts related to condom usage are likely to engage in safe sexual behaviors while people who frequently engage in marijuana and alcohol scripts had higher sexual risks.

Sakaluk et al. (2014) examined the heterosexual scripts portrayed in emerging adulthood. They discovered a range of sexual scripts that differ based on gender identity. These scripts for women include: women inhibit their sexual expression, women have an emotional/relational approach to sex, women should be sexually skilled and knowledgeable (especially fellatio), and women are gatekeepers to sex. Furthermore, single women are negatively judged for expressing sexuality. Scripts for men include: men are always ready for sex, men have a physical approach to sex, men should be skilled and knowledgeable about sex, men initiate sex. Men are also praised for not being sexual, which shows that regardless of gender, remaining chaste highly valued among emerging adults. This sample of studies is just a taste of the variety of sexual script research available. Most of the scripting data is pulled from interviews, however media also proves to be an interesting source for exploring the scripts that are prevalent in society.

Sexual scripts in media

As demonstrated by sexual script theory, we develop our sexual scripts from our environmental influence. In today's western culture, we are constantly surrounded by media through television, advertisements, movies, and the internet. Media has a large impact on our scripts as a result of its prevalence in society. Cultivation theory suggests that people who watch large amounts of media tend to internalize it as an accurate representation of reality (Gerbner, Gross Morgan, Signorielli & Shanahan, 2002). For young people who are beginning to experiment with their sexuality, media might even serve as an introduction to sexual scripts and automatically be interpreted as reality (Brown & Steele, 1995 as cited in Fisher et al., 2004). Furthermore, sex is a prevalent topic in the media. One study found that 20% of scenes coded in 53.5 hours of television programing contained sexual talk or sexual behavior (Dillman, Carpentier et al., 2017). Another study examining prime-time television dramas discovered an average of 7.9 sexual references per hour of television coded (Aubrey, 2004). Another study examining scripts for sexual violence discovered that 82% of 855 coded films from top-grossing films from 1950-2006 contained sexual scripts (Bleakley, Jamieson & Romer, 2012). These statistics shows that we need to be cognizant about the scripts we are observing in the media.

In the past few decades, researchers have discovered interesting scripts within media. These studies have, to name a few areas, looked at scripts defined by relationship status, genre, gender, degree of intimacy, and type of sexual behavior. Timmermans et al. (2018) studied sexual scripts in the media based on relationship status. They discovered that sexual scripts within casual relationships were as prevalent as scripts within committed relationships. However, sexual scripts between committed partners usually was less explicit than scripts in casual sexual relationships. Scripts for casual sexual partners showed them engaging in intercourse whereas

9

scripts for committed partners usually showed intimately kissing. He also discovered that casual sexual scripts were mostly shown between main characters who were heterosexual, Caucasian, young adults (26-45yrs) and the most common genre was comedy/drama. Timmermans et al. argue that casual sexual scripts in the media are problematic because it is giving the perception that casual sex has become the "normative sexual script," which in our society isn't the case (Timmermans et al., 2018). Potentially, this could rise to an increase in casual sexual behavior, especially between young adults who are using media as a guide to understand how sexual scripts operate in society.

Gender differences in scripts is also a popular theme in script theory research. Women and men tend to use different scripts when acting in real life social settings, which suggests that we should see a difference in sexual scripts employed by women and men in media. In one study by Kim et al. (2007), the researchers coded 51 hours of content within 25 popular television shows. They discovered a "heterosexual code" of scripts that examined how women think, feel, and behave in sexual and romantic situations and how men experience the like. They discovered the following categories (in order of prevalence) of scripted gender messages: sex as masculinity, good girls, masculine courtship strategies, feminine courtship strategies, masculine commitment, feminine commitment, male-oriented homophobia, and appropriation of female homosexuality. Sex as masculinity included: obsession with the female body, men consumed by sexual thoughts, Men discussing sexual desires and, and men as initiators. Feminine courtship strategies included: women self-objectifying, women valued for physical appearance, women using passive strategies to attract men and women set sexual limits. Masculine courtship strategies included: men using power to attract women and men valued for strength wealth and power. Masculine commitment and feminine commitment included: men desiring independence and women desiring

relationships and men wanting sex and women want emotional intimacy. This study coded 51 hours of content within 25 popular television shows. The results clearly show that women and men perform vastly different scripts and roles within sexual interaction in media. Furthermore, research determined that young women who watch television frequently tend to endorse the feminine scripts portrayed in media, which has been shown to lead to having reduced confidence in the effectiveness of condoms and women increased feeling embarrassed about their level of sexual experience (Seabrook et al., 2016). The scripted portrayal of women as passive, chaste and emotionally dependent might have negative consequences on women's esteem and level of agency and therefore Seabrook et al., argue that the cognitive impact of these scripts on women should be examined further.

As society changes, we expect the sexual scripts portrayed in society to change as well. Although little research has been done on the topic, some studies have uncovered interesting changes overtime. One study evaluating teen-centered films from 1980-2007 discovered that sexual content and portrayals in films has remained relatively constant during that time span (Callister et al., 2011). On the other hand, a different study suggests that there is a significant increase in the amount of sexual content shown on primetime television between 1997/1998 and 2001/2002 (Kunkel, 2007). The number of young adults (18-24) engaging in sexual intercourse has decreased and the number of adults (+25) has increased, and even though the presence of scripts regarding risk and responsibility of sexual behavior has increased, it is still infrequent in television (6% in 2001/2002). Lastly, in an older study, researchers found that sexual content in movies has become much more explicit from the 1950's to the 1980's due to a change of social standards and legal restrictions that came around the sexual revolution of the 1970's (Abramson & Mechanic, 1983).

Present Study

The media plays a large role in developing sexual scripts; therefore, observing the scripts that are presented in popular culture films will be beneficial to understanding the sexual behaviors that are prevalent in western culture. Analyzing scripts in top-grossing films will also identify the societal expectations for individuals based on their group affiliations. For example, if women are presented as sexually submissive in films, then we can extrapolate that this is the role that they are encouraged to take in their intimate lives.

Society is constantly changing as a result of technology and social advancements and researchers should be able to examine this in every dimension of sexual interaction. Accordingly, we can expect to see these changes being mirrored in the scripted sexual interactions of pop culture films. Initiation of sexual interaction is one fascinating area to explore because the act of moving from no sexual behavior to sexual behavior has the ability to set the tone for the rest of the sexual encounter. The research described below examines sexual scripts for initiation of sexual activity. An initiation was broadly defined as the movement from a state of no sexual intimacy to sexual intimacy. For example, a kiss on the cheek between relatives is not initiation of sexual interaction, but a passionate kiss on the lips between lovers is initiation.

This study explored the changes in sexual scripts from 1940-2018 specifically looking at initiation of sexual interaction. Popular culture films act as a mirror to reflect the societal trends, which makes it the perfect platform to dive into the history of sexual scripts and examine the evolution of western cultural sexual behaviors.

Methods

Materials and procedures

The data were obtained from 48 films randomly selected from a pool of the 270 top-grossing films over the past 80 years. (BoxOfficeMojo.com was used to identify top-grossing films). The pool consisted of the five top-grossing films in each of three genres (comedy, drama, and action) within each five-year period (e.g., 1940 – 1945). One film in each genre was randomly selected to be in the sample, which consisted of three films in each of the 16 five-year periods.

Randomly selecting the movies, rather than simply using the highest-grossing films, was important to increase the variety of film themes viewed because certain movie groups, like superhero movies, tended to be the most lucrative and therefore dominated the top box-office spot. This allowed us to assess the sexual scripts that a variety of audiences are exposed to rather than the large population that views superhero films.

The movies were coded by the author and controversial scenes were discussed with a second rater until agreement was reached.

A coding scheme was created which included personal characteristics of the actor (gender, race, age, marital status), initiation strategies (direct action, indirect action etc.) and the film's interpretation of the actor's behavior as good or bad (see Appendix A for coding scheme).

48 movies were coded for a total of 151 initiation attempts (see Appendix B for list of films).

Results

General overview

A total of 98.67 hours of content was coded for initiation of sexual interaction. 151 initiations of sexual interactions occurred within this coded content. 38% of initiations occurred

in action films, 32% occurred in comedy films and 30% occurred in drama films. Intercourse occurred in 15.9% of initiation attempts. The vast majority of sexual initiations (>99%) occurred between Caucasian, heterosexual adults.

Gender differences

Women and men exhibited distinct gendered scripts for the initiation of sexual interactions. Every aspect of the interaction from initiation and response strategies to the final outcome was impacted by gender (see Figures 1 and 2 below); A number of chi-square tests were conducted and there were a variety of statistically significant and near-significant differences in the sexual scripts performed by women and men.

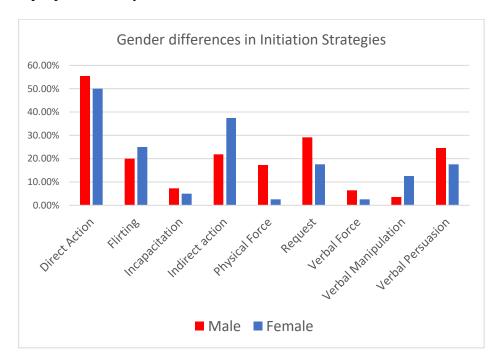


Figure 1: Sexual Initiation strategies of males and females by percentage of overall occurrences.

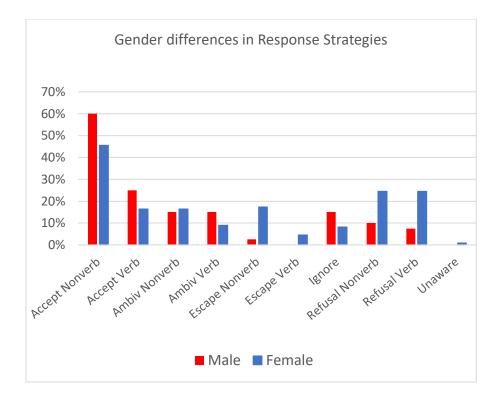


Figure 2: Sexual response strategies of Males and Females by percentage of overall occurrences.

Men initiated sexual interactions 60% of the time and women initiated 34% of the time. 6% of sexual interactions were mutual, which presented as 2 partners simultaneously leaning in for a kiss. Women were most likely to initiate through direct actions, indirect actions, and flirting. They were most likely to respond to a man's initiation with nonverbal acceptance, nonverbal refusal, or verbal refusal (See Figures 1 and 2). Men were most likely to initiate by direct action, request, or verbal persuasion. Men were most likely to respond to a woman's initiation with nonverbal acceptance or verbal acceptance. Furthermore, men are vastly more likely than women to initiate sexual interactions through physical force. Force was used in 17.3% of men sexual initiations and 2.5% of women's sexual initiation ($x^2=5.725(2)$, p=.057). Women are men differed significantly on their initiation success rates. When a man initiates, he has 53% chance of being accepted, but when a woman initiates, she has a 77% chance of being accepted

 $(x^2=6.54(1), p=.011)$. Although men are significantly more likely to initiate sex, sex is significantly more likely to occur when initiated by a woman $(x^2=4.684(1), p=.036)$. Furthermore, when a man initiates, he is generally the one in control of the situation, but when a woman initiates, the man is still the person controlling the interactions $(x^2=8.173(2), p=.017)$.

Women are more likely to initiate a relationship when there is a prior established relationship (friendship, dating, or marriage), while men are more likely to initiate without a prior intimate relationship (coworkers, strangers, acquaintances) ($x^2 = 5.1288$, p=.024).

A notable difference in the motivation for the initiation attempts was discovered. Men are frequently initiate for sexual purposes and women initiate more for romantic purposes $(x^2=9.923(5), p=.077)$. Sexual motivation means that person is initiating for the pure pleasure of the sexual act, whereas romantic motivation means that the person is initiating for the intimacy brought on by sex with their partner.

Change Over Time

No statistically significant changes in sexual scripts over time were found. From 1940-2018, there was a large decrease in the number of sexual initiations attempted in films (see Figure 3). However, there are some notable preliminary observations that deserve more attention. Men also appear to be initiating less for romance and sex than in previous decades (see Figures 4 and 5). Women appear to be rejecting men's romantic initiation attempts at increasing rates, yet women's rate of rejection of men's sexual initiation attempts is decreasing.

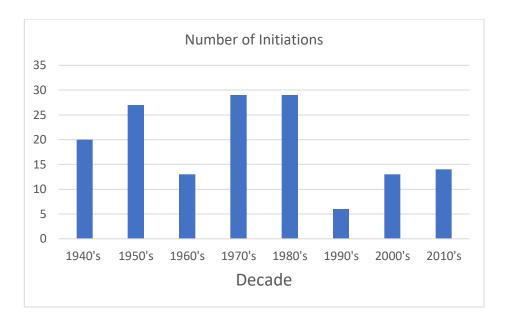


Figure 3: Number of sexual initiations per decade.

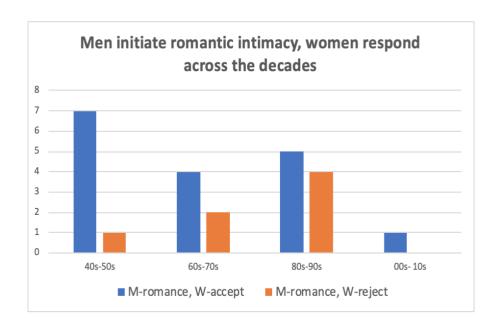


Figure 4: Women's response rates to men's romantic initiations in 20-year period.

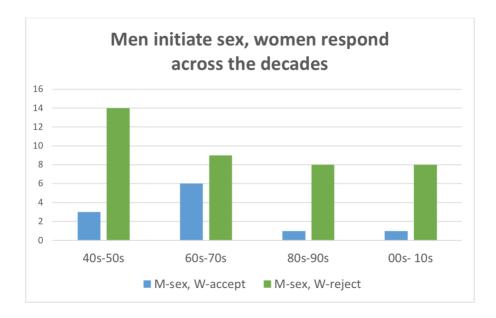


Figure 5: Women's response rates to men's sexual initiations in 20-year period.

Sexual Scripts

Four scripts were detected at high rates throughout the films: (1) men initiate and control sex and women act as the restrictors men's sexual engagements. Only after she grants permission can be control and dominate the situation, although he has the ability to overpower her and take it by force. (2) Women want romance and men want sex, although the dominant motivator for sex is a blend of romantic and sex, when a character is displaying one motive, this is generally the dynamic. (3) Women are damsels in distress needing to be saved by a heroic man. Often, the damsel in distress has been previously destroyed by another man and needs a masculine hero to right a previous wrong. (4) Men are lost heroes trying to save the world, a woman or himself. Sometimes he is portrayed as alone on his mighty quest and in other scenarios he is battling an evil to save the day.

Discussion

This study uncovered significant gender differences in the sexual scripts used in topgrossing films between 1940 and today. Men were scripted as the initiators and controllers of sex, while women acted as the restrictors sex were often subordinate to men. The sample of films also demonstrates, in terms of sexual scripts, movies have not become more diverse overtime.

The few cases of scripts with non-Caucasian characters occurred in the 40s and 50s, where they were portrayed as homewreckers and villains.

The Process

Assessing the data required both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Initially, we coded every action and reaction during a sexual script as individual data points. Subsequently, we created a coding scheme which allowed us to set of data per movie. This was advantageous because it saved time and made statistical analysis quicker. The downside to this was that it was difficult to take note of each time an action occurred. Instead, we looked at the general patterns of the interaction rather than each individual action.

A statistical analysis proved to be partially ineffective, and thus we found it essential to have a paragraph summary of each scene to then qualitatively analyze the data. Finally, we devised a numerical coding scheme which allowed us to look at general trends of accepting and rejecting initiations based on gender and motivation for initiation. This was very helpful, and we would recommend using such a mechanism in the future.

Limitations and future directions

Though this data set, we were unable to measure the changes in sexual scripts over time.

The primary issue was the size of the sample. Future studies should aim to example at least double this number of films.

One boundary in our attempt to measure sexual scripts, was that sexual scripts were not occurring in recent decades. It is impossible to compare sexual scripts without having a sampling of various scripts used in each decade. The lack of sex seems contrary to popular thought that we

live in a hypersexualized society, but this result may actually reflect reality. People in the United States are not having sex as much as in the past (Twenge, Sherman & Wells, 2017). Another potential explanation for the reduction in sexual interactions in movies is that top-grossing films, like superhero movies, are targeting younger audience, and therefore these topics are inappropriate. Relatedly, the movie themes may be less conducive to sexual relationships between characters. With the rise in CGI directors can do more with movies and the focus may be more on getting action packed shots rather than developing strong interpersonal character relationships. Lastly, sex is more available now than in the past. Anyone with a computer can get free and easy access to pornography, so there is less of a need to go seek it out in theaters. Sex may just not sell as well as it used to.

An interesting avenue for future research would be picking a more specific group of film to examine (i.e. romantic comedies, long franchise films like James Bond or Independent films).

References

- Abramson, P. R., & Mechanic, M. B. (1983). Sex and the media: Three decades of best-selling books and major motion pictures. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *12*(3), 185-206. doi:10.1007/BF01542071
- Aubrey, J. S. (2004). Sex and punishment: An examination of sexual consequences and the sexual double standard in teen programming. *Sex Roles*, *50*, 505–514. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:SE RS.0000023070.87195.0.
- Bleakley, A., Ellithorpe, M. E., Hennessy, M., Khurana, A., Jamieson, P., & Weitz, I. (2017).

 Alcohol, sex, and screens: Modeling media influence on adolescent alcohol and sex cooccurrence. *The Journal of Sex Research*, *54*(8), 1026-1037.

 doi:10.1080/00224499.2017.1279585
- Bleakley, A., Jamieson, P. E., & Romer, D. (2012). Trends of sexual and violent content by gender in top-grossing U.S. films, 1950–2006. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 51(1), 73-79. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2012.02.006
- Bowleg, L., Burkholder, G. J., Noar, S. M., Teti, M., Malebranche, D. J., & Tschann, J. M. (2015). Sexual scripts and sexual risk behaviors among Black heterosexual men:

 Development of the Sexual Scripts Scale. *Archives Of Sexual Behavior*, 44(3), 639-654. doi:10.1007/s10508-013-0193-y
- Callister, M., Stern, L. A., Coyne, S. M., Robinson, T., & Bennion, E. (2011). Evaluation of sexual content in teen-centered films from 1980 to 2007. *Mass Communication & Society*, 14(4), 454-474. doi:10.1080/15205436.2010.500446

- Dillman Carpentier, F. R., Stevens, E. M., Wu, L., & Seely, N. (2017). Sex, love, and risk-n-responsibility: A content analysis of entertainment television. *Mass Communication & Society*, 20(5), 686-709. doi:10.1080/15205436.2017.1298807
- Fisher, D. A., Hill, D. L., Grube, J. W., & Gruber, E. L. (2004). Sex on American television: An analysis across program genres and network types. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 48(4), 529-553. doi:10.1207/s15506878jobem4804_1
- Gagnon, J. H. (1973). Scripts and the coordination of sexual conduct. *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*, 2127-59.
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., Signorielli, N., & Shanahan, J. (2002). Growing up with television: Cultivation processes. In J. Bryant, & D. Zillman (Eds.), *Media Effects:**Advances in Theory and Research (2nd edition) (pp. 43-67). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Kim, J. L., Sorsoli, C. L., Collins, K., Zylbergold, B. A., Schooler, D., & Tolman, D. L. (2007).

 From sex to sexuality: Exposing the heterosexual script on primetime network television. *Journal of Sex Research*, 44(2), 145-157. doi:10.1080/00224490701263660
- Kunkel, D., Eyal, K., Donnerstein, E., Farrar, K. M., Biely, E., & Rideout, V. (2007). Sexual socialization messages on entertainment television: Comparing content trends 1997-2002.
 Media Psychology, 9(3), 595-622. doi:10.1080/15213260701283210
- Sakaluk, J. K., Todd, L. M., Milhausen, R., & Lachowsky, N. J. (2014). Dominant heterosexual sexual scripts in emerging adulthood: Conceptualization and measurement. *Journal of Sex Research*, *51*(5), 516-531. doi:10.1080/00224499.2012.745473
- Seabrook, R. C., Ward, L. M., Reed, L., Manago, A., Giaccardi, S., & Lippman, J. R. (2016).

 Our scripted sexuality: The development and validation of a measure of the heterosexual

- script and its relation to television consumption. *Emerging Adulthood*, *4*(5), 338-355. doi:10.1177/2167696815623686
- Signorielli, N., & Bievenour, A. (2015). Sex in adolescent programming: A content analysis. *Communication Research Reports*, *32*(4), 304-313. doi:10.1080/08824096.2015.1089856
- Simon, W., & Gagnon, J. H. (1986). Sexual scripts: Permanence and change. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 15(2), 97-120. doi:10.1007/BF01542219
- Stephens, Dionne P., Asia A. Eaton, and Brittany Boyd. (2017). "Hispanic college men's perceptions of appropriate strategies for initiating sexual intercourse with women." *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* 77 (3-4): 239-253.

 doi:http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.union.edu/10.1007/s11199-016-0709-8.
- Timmermans, E., & Van den Bulck, J. (2018). Casual sexual scripts on the screen: A quantitative content analysis. *Archives Of Sexual Behavior*, doi:10.1007/s10508-018-1147-1
- Twenge, J. M., Sherman, R. A., & Wells, B. E. (2017). Declines in sexual frequency among American adults, 1989–2014. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 46(8), 2389-2401. doi:10.1007/s10508-017-0953-1

Appendix A: Sexual scripts coding scheme used to measure incoming data.

Title of Film *	Time Stamp *
Your answer	Your answer
Year Film was Made *	Number of Actors in Scene (not including background actors
Your answer	without lines) * Your answer
5-Year Block *	
○ 40A	Gender of Actor #1 *
	○ Female
○ 40B	○ Male
○ 50A	Other:
○ 50B	
○ 60A	Age of Actor #1 *
○ 60B	Child (prepuberty)
○ 70A	Adolescent
○ 70B	O Young Adult (20s)
	O Adult
○ 80A	○ Elderly
○ 80B	
O 90A	Race of Actor #1 *
○ 90B	Caucasian
O0A	African American
○ 00B	○ Hispanic/Latinx
○ 10A	○ Asian
	Other:
○ 10B	
Genre of Film *	Marital Status of Actor #1 *
○ A	○ Single
○ D	○ Married
○ C	Previously Married
	Other:

Initiation Strategies of actor #1	Ownersh Balastian abia Obstaca of Automata
Request/suggestion (verbal/non-verbal)	Current Relationship Status of Actors *
☐ Direct action- without prior indication of consent/interest	Acquaintances Family Members
☐ Indirect action- indicating willingness without prior initiation	○ Friends
☐ Verbal Persuasion	Dating/Romantic/Sexually involved
☐ Verbal Manipulation	Long Term Committed Romantic Relationship/Engaged
Flirting	○ Married
Expression of anger/force/dominance (verbal)	○ Divorced
Use of physical force/power/dominance	○ Co-workers
Use of incapacitation (drugs, alcohol, being trapped)	○ Strangers
Other:	Other:
Actor 2's Response to initiations	
Acceptance of request/suggestion (verbal)	
Acceptance of request/suggestion (nonverbal)	
Refusal of request/suggestion (verbal)	Situation/Circumstance. Describe broader context in plot, describe immediate context/circumstance *
Defused of request/suggestion (nemorbal)	
Refusal of request/suggestion (nonverbal)	Your answer
Expression of ambivalence/reluctance (verbal)	
Expression of ambivalence/reluctance (verbal)	Your answer General Narrative description of what happens in the scene (2-
Expression of ambivalence/reluctance (verbal) Expression of ambivalence/reluctance (nonverbal)	Your answer General Narrative description of what happens in the scene (2- 10 sentences) * Your answer
 Expression of ambivalence/reluctance (verbal) Expression of ambivalence/reluctance (nonverbal) Attempts to escape situation (verbal) 	Your answer General Narrative description of what happens in the scene (2- 10 sentences) *

Appendix B: List of films coded

1940s	1950s
Foreign Correspondent	Singin' in the Rain
The Major and the Minor	High Noon
For Whom the Bell Tolls	20,000 Leagues Under the Sea
Duel in the Sun	The Bridge on the River Kwai
Key Largo	Auntie Mame
In the Good Old Summertime	Rio Bravo
1960s	1970s
The Guns of Navarone	Airport
The Longest Day	Love Story
Irma La Douce	MASH
Guess Who's Coming to Dinner	Heaven Can Wait
The Odd Couple	Superman
Bullitt	Moonraker
1980s	1990s
Star Wars: Episode V	Terminator 2
Arthur	The Fugitive
Terms of Endearment	Dumb and Dumber
Platoon	The Lost World: Jurassic Park
Honey, I Shrunk the Kids	Big Daddy
Batman	The Sixth Sense
2000	2010
Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl	The Hangover Part II
Bruce Almighty	Transformers: Dark of the Moon
The Passion of the Christ	The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn- Part 2
Mr. & Mrs. Smith	The Martian
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	Jurassic World
Pirates of the Caribbean. Dead Man's Chest	