

On the Perils of Living Dangerously in the Slasher Horror Film: Gender Differences in the Association Between Sexual Activity and Survival

Andrew Welsh

Published online: 2 March 2010
© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC 2010

Abstract The slasher horror film has been deplored based on claims that it depicts eroticized violence against predominately female characters as punishment for sexual activities. To test this assertion, a quantitative content analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which gender differences are evident in the association between character survival and engagement in sexual activities. Information pertaining to gender, engagement in sexual activities, and survival was coded for film characters from a simple random sample of 50 English-language, North American slasher films released between 1960 and 2009. Results indicated that sexual female characters were less likely to survive and had significantly longer death scenes as compared to those female characters who did not engage in sexual behaviors.

Keywords Gender · Violence against women · Slasher horror films · Media portrayals of victims · Content analysis

Introduction

What's the point they're all the same, some stupid killer stalking some big-breasted girl who can't act who is always running up the stairs when she should be running out the front door, it's insulting. (*Scream*, Konrad and Craven 1996, n.p)

Women in peril, or “damsels in distress”, have a long history in entertainment media. From the 1914 movie serial, *Perils of Pauline*, to Jamie Lee Curtis' initial rise to fame as the “Scream Queen”, the portrayal of women in abject terror has been a staple of cinematic suspense. The victimization of women has become particularly synonymous with the slasher film, a subgenre of horror cinema that has drawn criticism for its portrayal of women as victims of graphic violence (Linz and Donnerstein 1994). Largely considered a formulaic subgenre, the narrative structure of the slasher film follows the visceral and graphic punishment of immoral characters for various transgressions, including sexual activity. Critics have specifically deplored the depiction of violence against women, claiming that these films contain an abundance of eroticized violence against predominately female characters as a form of punishment for sexual activities (e.g, Clover 1992; Cowan and O'Brien 1990; Linz et al. 1984).

In his labeling theory of deviance, Schur (1984) argued that the sexual activity of women commonly prompts negative societal reactions, an observation that is seemingly consistent with the criticisms of slasher films. Research does in fact suggest that media depictions of female victims tend to emphasize and reinforce schemas of traditional gender roles, such as female vulnerability or the “damsel in distress” (Dietz 1998; Madriz 1997), and that these portrayals may also influence negative gender role expectations (Dietz 1998; Gamson et al. 1992). Given the adverse effects associated with negative media depictions of female victims, the impact of gender expectations and sexual activity, and the continued popularity of slasher films, there is a pressing need to examine the nature of violent content in this subgenre. As such, the purpose of the present study was to conduct a quantitative content analysis of English-language, North American slasher horror films to examine

A. Welsh (✉)
Department of Criminology and Contemporary Studies,
Wilfrid Laurier University,
73 George St.,
Brantford, ON N3T 2Y3, Canada
e-mail: awelsh@wlu.ca

the portrayals of violence against female characters. Specifically, this study examined whether there are gender differences evident in the association between character survival and engagement in sexual activities. To provide a sufficient background of the relevance of this study to the larger research on violent media and women, several issues will be discussed including: (1) a definition of the slasher film and summary of the major criticisms concerning the subgenre, (2) an overview of the general empirical literature on media presentations of female victims, and (3) a review of existing research on slasher films.

The Slasher Genre of Horror Film

Although slasher films have seen cycles in audience interest, the subgenre has evidenced remarkable longevity at the box office as well as general financial profitability. John Carpenter's (Hill and Carpenter 1978) *Halloween*, one of the major franchises in the slasher genre, is considered one of the most financially successful independent films of all time, earning \$47 million against a \$325,000 production budget (Muir 2000). Familiar franchise titles released in the 1970s and early 1980s, including *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Friday the 13th*, would introduce what would eventually become generic components of the subgenre. Molitor and Sapolsky (1993) have formally defined the slasher film as:

A commercially-released, feature-length film containing suspense-evoking scenes in which an antagonist, who is usually a male acting alone, attacks one or more victims. The accentuation in these films is on extreme graphic violence. Scenes that dwell on the victim's fear and explicitly portray the attack and its aftermath are the central focus of the slasher film. (p. 235)

Notwithstanding the continued box office popularity of slasher films, the nature of violent presentations in the subgenre has attracted criticism from researchers. In general, the source of this criticism has been the nature of the portrayal of violence against women. Some researchers argue that female characters are more frequently subjected to serious, graphic violence than male characters, and that female characters are frequently shown in prolonged states of terror. Critics of the subgenre have similarly observed that sex and violence are significantly more likely to be juxtaposed in scenes with female characters. Another criticism of the nature of slasher presentations of violent and sexual content is that the punishment of "immoral" characters who engage in sexual activities appears to be more pronounced for female characters. That is, women who are depicted engaging in sexual activities are more likely to be killed. As Cowan and O'Brien (1990) note:

In slasher films the message appears to be that sexual women get killed and only the pure women survive. This message that the good woman is asexual and that the bad (and therefore dead) woman is sexual may be almost as pernicious as the message conveyed in pornography that violence can be fun for women. (pp. 194–194)

In her analysis of gender in the slasher film, Clover (1992) distinguished the sexual or bad women from the asexual female character she coined the "Final Girl." According to Clover, the Final Girl is the lone surviving character, left to discover the mutilated bodies of her friends, and confront the central villain of the film. Virginal or, at the very least, sexually unavailable, the Final Girl survives, overcoming the central antagonist by virtue of her purity. Similar to this distinction between the Final Girl and sexual girls in the slasher film, media constructions of female victims typically classify women into two broad frameworks based on the extent to which they conform to schemas concerning traditional gender roles—the "good girl" and the "bad girl" (Benedict 1992; Finn 1989/1990; Eschholz and Bufkin 2001; Hirsch 1994; Meyers 1997). Women whose behaviors fall within the boundaries of traditional or stereotypical gender roles, such as the domesticated mother and wife or the virginal young girl, are constructed in the media as "good girls," "virgins," or "Madonnas" (Cavender et al. 1999; Eschholz and Bufkin 2001). Comparatively, female victims who challenge traditional gender roles—sexually assertive or promiscuous women—are constructed in the media as "bad girls," "vamps," or "whores."

In his research on victims, Christie (1986) advanced the concept of the "ideal victim" to describe individuals who, when victimized by crime, were perceived by others as legitimate victims. In the context of gender schemas, the "ideal victim" would include women whose behaviors and roles were consistent with expectations of traditional femininity or the "good girl." According to the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem 1974), for example, women are expected to be compassionate, sensitive, and tender. While the victimization of "good girls" is recognized, "bad girls" are disregarded, their victimization attributed to their deviance from normative behavior accorded to women (Schur 1984). In the world of the slasher film, good girls, such as Clover's (1992) Final Girl, are rewarded with survival for conforming to gender schemas concerning appropriate female behavior, while "bad girls" are punished with brutally graphic death scenes (Cowan and O'Brien 1990).

Much of the extant literature suggests that media depictions of female victims do indeed overwhelmingly reinforce negative gender stereotypes about women (Anastasio and Costa 2004; Dietz 1998; Milkie 1994). For instance, several

studies have observed that print media coverage of sexual assault cases focus on atypical cases involving white, middle-class older women or young girls attacked by a stranger, cases wherein victims are consistent with the stereotype of the “good girl” or “ideal victim” (Benedict 1992; Meyers 1997). Content analyses of rape scenes featured in popular films suggest that these depictions predominately conform to patriarchal notions of sex (Bufkin and Eschholz 2000) and that female rape victims are often portrayed as promiscuous “vamps” (Adelman 1989). Similar analyses of video games indicate that the images of women typically conform to stereotypic views of gender-appropriate behavior casting women as victims of violence or sexual objects (Beasley and Standley 2002; Dietz 1998).

Schemas about “ideal victims”, actively reinforced by images of men and women in the media (Dietz 1998), may also influence attitudes and decisions regarding female victims. Feminist and legal scholars have argued that blame in sexual assault cases is often shifted onto the female complainant through the focus on her prior sexual history and its impact on her credibility (Allison and Wrightson 1993; Larcombe 2002). In these instances, when the female complainant has a prior history of sexual conduct and, as such, does not conform to normative sexual standards expected of women, she is perceived as having instigated the assault (Larcombe 2002). In a study by Schuller and Hastings (2002), when participants received sexual history information, they judged the female complainant as less credible and more blameworthy as compared to participants who received no sexual history information.

In summary, literature on media depictions of female victims suggests that schemas concerning appropriate gender roles are reinforced in the media and that these depictions subsequently influence evaluations of female victims. Specifically, the victimization of women is apt to be downplayed or, in many cases, attributed to the woman’s own actions when the woman is perceived as violating gender norms. A frequent criticism of slasher horror films has been that female characters are more likely to be subjected to violent consequences when they engage in sexual activities or, in other words, defy traditional gender schemas. As Cavendar (1999) notes, “[the] bad women die in a manner appropriate to their transgressions” (p. 171). However, these criticisms of the slasher subgenre rest on the assumption that these films involve frequent depictions of violence against women involved in sexual activities.

To date, five analyses of the violent content of slasher horror films have been conducted with mixed findings. These studies have focused exclusively on English-language, North American films. Specifically, four studies of slasher films have reported that female characters are not in fact more likely to be victimized than male characters and were actually more likely to survive acts of violence

(Cowan and O’Brien 1990; Molitor and Sapolsky 1993; Sapolsky et al. 2003; Weaver 1991). Sapolsky et al. (2003), for example, found that male characters in slasher films were twice as likely to be victims of violence as compared to female characters. A more recent analysis of the slasher genre, however, using a broader operationalization of violence, contradicted these findings. While female characters were indeed more likely to survive violent attacks, Welsh (2009) observed that women were significantly more likely to be victims of a wide range of violent acts, including various forms of psychological terror and confinement. Of particular interest, across all of these studies, scenes of violence involving female characters were significantly longer in duration.

Analyses of slasher films have also examined the frequency of sexual content in violent scenes and the juxtaposition of sex and violence. Cowan and O’Brien (1990) found that a relatively large proportion of non-surviving characters in slasher films, both male and female, were engaging in sexual activity either prior to or immediately preceding their victimization. Both Sapolsky et al. (2003) and Welsh (2009) reported that while the juxtaposition of sex and violence was relatively infrequent in slasher films, scenes containing both sex and graphic violence were significantly more likely to involve female victims. In contrast, neither Molitor and Sapolsky (1993) nor Weaver (1991) reported significant gender differences in the likelihood of violent assaults being juxtaposed with sex or nudity.

Only Cowan and O’Brien (1990) have directly addressed the possibility of an interaction between gender, sexual activity, and violent victimization in the slasher film. These researchers coded several indicators of sexual behavior and general character traits, and observed that non-surviving female characters were more sexual than both surviving female characters and non-surviving male characters. In addition, Cowan and O’Brien noted that surviving female characters were more likely to possess several positive “survival promotive traits” (p. 190) such as independence and assertiveness, but were also less physically attractive and more androgynous. The study did not test whether the sexual behavior of characters was a moderator of the relationship between gender and character traits. Nevertheless, Cowan and O’Brien’s findings offer some preliminary support in favor of the contention that slasher films offer depictions of female victims that are consistent with negative gender schemas. However, their conclusions are limited to some extent by methodological concerns. Specifically, the researchers conducted multiple comparisons for both sexual indicators and character traits without accounting for familywise error rate. As such, the statistical significance of some reported differences is in question.

The Present Study

The axiom of the slasher horror film has been that immoral behavior, particularly sexual activity, is severely punished. Critics of the subgenre suggest that the consequences that follow sexual activity are more pronounced for female characters (Cowan and O'Brien 1991; Clover 1992). Given the continued popularity of this subgenre and the empirical outcomes associated with negative depictions of female victims, there is considerable impetus to further empirically verify these criticisms. As such, the purpose of the present study was to update the findings of the Cowan and O'Brien (1990) study with different operational measures. Specifically, the present study examined gender differences in the relationship between victim characteristics, sexual behavior, and survival in slasher horror films. A quantitative content analysis was conducted with a random sample of 50 slasher films. The nature of immoral character behavior was based upon a broad operational definition of sexual behavior and a scale designed to measure global character traits. 'Punishment' was operationalized as both character survival, or the outcome of physical aggression, and the length of death scenes for those characters who did not survive. Three sets of analyses focused on within-gender differences on survival outcomes, global character traits, and the length of death scenes. The following three hypotheses were tested:

- Hypothesis 1: It was hypothesized that female characters who engaged in sexual activity would be less likely to survive as compared to female characters who did not engage in sexual activity. No such differences in survival rates were anticipated among male characters.
- Hypothesis 2: It was also hypothesized that death scenes for female characters who engaged in sexual activity would be significantly longer than the death scenes for either female characters who did not engage in sexual activity or male characters who engaged in sexual activity.
- Hypothesis 3: Lastly, it was hypothesized that female characters who did not engage in sexual activity would be portrayed more positively as evidenced by lower Victim Trait Scale scores as compared to either female or male characters who engaged in sexual activity.

Method

Sample

The sample for the current study consisted of 50 North American slasher films selected using a simple random

sampling technique. The population of films was identified using the Power Search feature on the Internet Movie Database (IMDb), an online movie reference website. To identify a sampling frame of relevant films, the online search included films released from 1960 to 2009. The search was conducted within the horror genre and excluded films that mixed genres, such as horror/comedy films. In addition, the search was limited to English-language films that were produced and released in North America. Made-for-television films and films that had fewer than 100 votes on IMDb were also excluded.

Film listings on the IMDb include a list of plot keywords. As such, a keyword search was employed using common keywords associated with the slasher film, including "slasher", "masked killer", "gore", "blood-splatter", and "psycho-killer", that were entered individually into the search engine. The initial keyword search generated a large list of films, some of which were not clearly relevant to the study. To subsequently narrow the sampling frame, keywords were entered in pairs using the "and" Boolean operator (e.g., "slasher" and "masked killer"). The next step of the search process involved an examination of the plot summary for films to determine whether they were indeed slasher horror films. Each film was evaluated using the definition of slasher film articulated by Molitor and Sapolsky (1993). The search process described above identified 233 film titles. These films were ordered alphabetically and numbered accordingly. Using a random number table, a total of 50 films was randomly selected for coding.

Unit of Analysis

Film characters or, more specifically, characters depicted as victims of physical aggression were the unit of analysis in the current study. For the purposes of this study, a narrow conceptualization of aggression was adopted. Physical aggression was defined as "the application of physical force by one character against any other character with the intention to do bodily harm or any depictions of physically harmful consequences that resulted from off-screen means." This definition excluded various forms of psychological violence including threats, intimidation, and stalking or unwanted pursuit. Physical aggression did not include cruelty or violence towards animals or injuries that resulted from accidental means. A victim was defined as "any character in the film that was not the principal antagonist or villain and was shown to have suffered physically harmful consequences as a result of on- or off-screen physical aggression."

Undergraduate research coders were instructed to identify any character in the film that was the victim of physical aggression, as defined above. The prominence of the

character in the film was not relevant for the purposes of coding. Repeated instances of victimization experienced by a single character in the film did not impact the coding process. Simply put, if a character in the film was observed by the coders as a victim of physical aggression at any point in the narrative, that character was measured as a victim.

The Coding Protocol

For each character identified as a victim of physical aggression, six variables were measured or coded in the current study. A description of each variable is provided below:

- 1) **Character Gender:** The biological sex of each character was coded as a categorical variable (Male, Female, or Unknown).
- 2) **Involvement in Sexual Activity:** In contrast to the Cowan and O'Brien (1990) study, which coded several separate dichotomous indicators of sexual behavior (e.g., Revealing Clothing, Nude, Sexual Language), the involvement of a victim in sexual activity at any point during the film was coded as a single dichotomous variable (Present, Absent). Involvement in sexual activity was operationalized as the involvement of a character in (a) any form of nudity or partial nudity (e.g., lingerie, partial undress such as bra-and-panties in an intimate context), or (b) extended physical intimacy with another character including foreplay (e.g., open-mouthed or deep-tongue kissing, sexual caressing of erogenous body areas over or under clothing) or sexual intercourse. There are a couple of points to note regarding this operationalization. First, this operational definition is broad. For instance, engagement in sexual activity would be coded as "present" in the situation where a character was depicted as undressing, even in the absence of another character or any cue signaling the intention of physical intimacy. The rationale for adopting this approach was in recognition of the voyeuristic nature of film nudity in this subgenre of film. Second, this definition can be distinguished from promiscuity, which refers specifically to casual or indiscriminate sexual relations. That is, a character could be depicted as engaging in sexual activity that would not necessarily indicate the character was promiscuous.
- 3) **Outcome of Physical Aggression:** The Outcome of Physical Aggression was a dichotomous variable designed to measure the survival of film victims. At the conclusion of each film, coders were instructed to indicate whether characters identified as victims of physical aggression had survived their victimization(s) (Survival) or had died as a result of their victimization (Death).
- 4) **Victim Traits Scale Total Score:** Similar to the Cowan and O'Brien (1990) study, a measure of character traits was included in the current study. To measure the global positive or negative nature of film victims, a Victim Traits Scale was developed and employed in the current study. The Victim Traits Scale adopted a semantic-differential scaling approach developed by Osgood (Osgood et al. 1957). A semantic-differential scale (SDS) requires respondents to indicate their position on a subject between two bipolar adjectives using a Likert scale rating system (Babbie and Benaquisto 2002). The Victim Traits Scale contained six bipolar adjective pairings (Attractive-Unattractive, Intelligent-Stupid, Heroic-Cowardly, Amicable-Belligerent, Sympathetic-Unsympathetic, and Resourceful-Incapable). The development of the scale was informed by the series of trait categories used by Cowan and O'Brien. Coders rated each victim on a five-point Likert scale to indicate the extent to which they perceived the victim to exhibit a particular trait in each adjective-pairing. For example, a victim could be rated as either "very much" or "somewhat" *attractive*, "somewhat" or "very much" *unattractive*, or "neither." Total scores on the Victim Trait Scale ranged from 6 to 30 with higher scores indicating more negative global character qualities. Internal reliability for the scale items was high (Cronbach's alpha = .86).
- 5) **Length of Victim Death:** For those victims who did not survive their victimization, the length of the death was coded in seconds. The time recording of a victim's death commenced with the initiation of physical aggression that instigated the fatality and ended when the victim was clearly depicted as deceased. In those instances when the death scene of a character was interrupted by an edit to another setting for 60 s or less, the time recording of the character's death was stopped and then re-commenced upon a return to the death scene, with a final total length calculated. In the event that the death of a character and the initial act of fatal aggression were separated by an edit to an alternate setting for a period of time exceeding 60 s, the length of death was calculated only from the final scene showing the expiration of the character.
- 6) Lastly, the coding protocol included a dichotomous variable, Depiction of Death (Onscreen, Offscreen) to record whether a character's death was presented onscreen. The Length of Victim Death was not recorded for those characters whose deaths were shown off-screen.

Coder Training and Reliability

Three undergraduate students and the primary investigator were involved in the film coding and data collection. Prior

to the coding process, the undergraduate research assistants were introduced to and received training on the coding protocol. During the first stage of the training process, the primary investigator reviewed the coding protocol and then the undergraduate research assistants viewed the original *Friday the 13th* (Cunningham 1980) and applied the protocol under the supervision of the primary investigator. Subsequently, the results of the coding were reviewed and discussed. In the second stage of training, the undergraduate research assistants independently viewed and coded the film, *Friday the 13th: Part 3* (Miner 1982). Both films used in these stages of training were selected from the original sampling frame. Results of the coding were reviewed and discussed to ensure an acceptable level of agreement.

Following the training process, the primary investigator and all three undergraduate research assistants applied the coding protocol to a random sample of five films from the original sampling frame ($n=233$) to measure interrater reliability (*Halloween* [1978], *The Hills Have Eyes* [2006], *Scream 2*, *Wolf Creek*, *Wrong Turn*). Each reviewer independently viewed the five films in the interrater sample and completed the coding protocol. Their results were recorded on separate coding forms. A comparison of the four coders' records reflected the consistency with which information in the films were recorded in the coding protocol. Fleiss' kappa was calculated for the three variables requiring coders to assign categorical or finite ratings to film content (Character Gender, Involvement in Sexual Activity, and Outcome of Physical Aggression). The Fleiss' kappa is an adaptation of Cohen's kappa that measures the rate of agreement between two or more independent coders taking into account the agreement occurring by chance (Fleiss 1971). Intraclass correlation (ICC) was used to measure interrater reliability for the two variables measured on a ratio scale (*Victim Traits Scale Score*, *Length of Victim Death*). Reliability values ranged from .73 to .96 for the variables, indicating substantial to strong agreement (Landis and Koch 1977). For primary data collection, the 50 films in the sample were then distributed amongst the four coders, with the majority of films being coded by the primary investigator ($n=38$).

Results

Sample Overview

Table 1 presents the list of 50 films included in the current study sample. The sample included films from several popular slasher franchises (*Friday the 13th*, *Halloween*, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, and *Scream*), lesser known titles (*The Initiation*, *Nail Gun Massacre*), and recent remakes (*My Bloody Valentine 3D*). Not surprisingly, the release

dates of films corresponds with the fluctuating popularity of the slasher genre, with over half of the films in the sample being originally released between 1980 and 1989 (64.0%, $n=32$) during the golden era of the slasher film. Nearly a quarter of films in the sample were released between 2000 and 2007 (22.0%, $n=11$), following the re-emerging popularity of the slasher film in the wake of *Scream* (Konrad and Kraven 1996).

Information was coded for 490 victims of violence across the 50 films in the present study. Table 2 shows that over half of the victims were male (54.1%, $n=265$), while the remaining 45.9% of victims were female ($n=225$). Although slasher films are commonly regarded as frequently depicting both violent and sexual content, only 32.4% ($n=157$) of victims of violence in the sample were depicted as engaging in sexual activities. Female characters were more likely to be depicted engaging in sexual activities (37.4%, $n=83$) than male characters (28.1%, $n=74$), $\chi^2(1)=4.71$, $p=.03$. Not surprisingly, only 17.8% ($n=87$) of victims survived physical attacks depicted in the films. Among surviving characters, female characters were significantly more likely to survive violent encounters (59.8%, $n=52$) than male characters (40.2%, $n=35$), $\chi^2(1)=8.17$, $p=.004$.

Hypothesis 1—Gender, Sexual Activity, and Survival

It was hypothesized that female characters involved in sexual activity would be more likely to be “punished” than female characters not involved in sexual activity as evidenced by lower rates of survival. Chi-square analyses were conducted to test for within-gender differences in the association between Involvement in Sexual Activity and Outcome of Physical Aggression in slasher films. Information pertaining to both survival outcome and sexual activity was available for 485 characters (Male, $n=263$; Female, $n=222$). Because pairwise comparisons were conducted without the use of an omnibus test, a conservative approach, the Bonferroni correction, was taken to correct for family-wise error rates. An initial alpha level of .05 was chosen and divided by the number of within-gender chi-square analyses (2). This resulted in a critical value of .025 that was applied in determining statistical significance for both chi-square tests.

The first chi-square test determined whether observed frequencies of survival differed for female characters that did or did not engage in sexual activity. As hypothesized, there was a significant association between Involvement in Sexual Activity and Outcome of Physical Aggression for female characters, $\chi^2(1)=6.53$, $p=.011$. As shown in Table 3, female characters who did not engage in sexual activity were significantly more likely to survive (28.1%, $n=39$) than female characters who did engage in sexual

Table 1 Film sample list.

Film title	Year	Film title	Year
All the boys love Mandy Lane	2006	Madman	1982
April fool's day	1987	Malevolence	2004
Black Christmas	1974	Maniac	1980
The burning	1980	Mountaintop motel massacre	1986
Cherry falls	2000	My bloody valentine	1981
Chopping mall	1986	My bloody valentine 3D	2009
Don't go in the house	1980	Nail gun massacre	1985
Friday the 13th (remake)	2009	A nightmare on elm street	1984
Friday the 13th Part 2	1981	A nightmare on elm street 4	1988
Friday the 13th Part 4	1984	The prowler	1981
The funhouse	1981	Prom night	1980
Graduation day	1981	Scream	1996
Halloween	2007	Scream III	2000
Halloween II	1981	Silent night, deadly night	1984
Halloween VI	1995	Slaughter high	1986
Happy birthday to me	1981	Sleepaway camp	1983
Hatchet	2006	The slumber party massacre	1982
He knows you're alone	1980	Sorority house massacre	1986
Hell night	1981	Terror train	1980
House of wax	2005	Texas chainsaw massacre	1974
The house on sorority row	1983	Texas chainsaw massacre: the beginning	2006
I know what you did last summer	1997	The toolbox murders	1978
The initiation	1984	Urban legend	1998
Intruder	1989	Valentine	2001
Just before dawn	1981	Visiting hours	1982

activity (13.3%, $n=11$). The second chi-square analysis examined whether observed frequencies of survival differed for male characters on the basis of sexual activity. Consistent with expectations, survival for male characters in slasher films was not contingent upon sexual activity, $\chi^2(1)=1.32$, $p=.25$. Table 3 shows that male characters who did not engage in sexual activity were not significantly more likely to survive (14.8%, $n=28$) as compared to male characters who did engage in sexual activity (9.5%, $n=7$).

Table 2 Frequency distribution of male and female characters on major study variables.

Variable	Male ($n=265$)	Female ($n=225$)	Total (n)
Involvement in sexual activity			
Present	47.1% ($n=74$)	52.9% ($n=83$)	157
Absent	57.6% ($n=189$)	42.4% ($n=139$)	328
Outcome of physical aggression			
Survival	40.2% ($n=35$)	59.8% ($n=52$)	87
Death	57.1% ($n=230$)	42.9% ($n=173$)	403
Depiction of death			
Onscreen	58.2% ($n=189$)	41.8% ($n=136$)	325
Off-screen	52.6% ($n=41$)	47.4% ($n=37$)	78

Hypothesis 2—Gender, Sexual Activity and Length of Death Scene

“Punishment” in the current study was also operationalized by the Length of Death Scene for characters. It was hypothesized that death scenes for female characters would be significantly longer when they were depicted engaging in sexual activity than death scenes for female characters who did not engage in sexual activity or male characters who engaged in sexual activity. Information pertaining to the Length of Death Scene was available for 320 non-surviving characters in the sample ($M=16.82$, $SD=8.04$). A 2 (*Gender*) \times 2 (*Involvement in Sexual Activity*) ANOVA was conducted with Length of Death Scene as the dependent variable. Evaluations of statistical assumptions indicated that there were problems with normality of the distribution for Length of Death Scene and a logarithmic transformation was conducted, which largely reduced the problem. Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 4.

Overall, analyses indicated that the length of death scenes for female characters ($M=1.08$, $SD=.44$) was significantly longer than death scenes for male characters ($M=1.00$, $SD=.41$), $F(1, 316)=4.06$, $p=.05$, partial $\eta^2=.01$. The average length of death scene for characters involved in

Table 3 Male and female character survival based upon sexual activity.

Gender	Sexual activity	Outcome of physical aggression		<i>n</i>	Test
		Survival	Death		
Female					χ^2 (1)=6.53**
	Present	13.3% (<i>n</i> =11)	86.7% (<i>n</i> =72)	83	
	Absent	28.1% (<i>n</i> =39)	71.9% (<i>n</i> =100)	139	
Male					χ^2 (1)=1.32
	Present	9.5% (<i>n</i> =7)	90.5% (<i>n</i> =67)	74	
	Absent	14.8% (<i>n</i> =28)	85.2% (<i>n</i> =161)	189	

**p*<.05, ** *p*<.01

sexual activity ($M=1.13$, $SD=.40$) was also significantly longer than the length of death scene for non-sexual characters ($M=.98$, $SD=.42$), $F(1, 316)=9.40$, $p=.002$, partial $\eta^2=.03$. As hypothesized, a statistically significant interaction between Character Gender and Involvement in Sexual Activity also emerged in the findings, $F(1, 316)=5.69$, $p=.018$, partial $\eta^2=.02$. To test the significant interaction, simple effects were analyzed within gender with one-way ANOVAs. No substantial differences in the length of death scenes were observed between male characters who engaged in sexual activity ($M=1.02$, $SD=.40$) and male characters who did not engage in sexual activity ($M=.98$, $SD=.41$), $F(1, 186)=.379$, $p=.539$. Consistent with expectations, the death scenes for female characters who engaged in sexual activity ($M=1.23$, $SD=.37$) were significantly longer than the average length of death scenes for female characters who did not engage in sexual activity ($M=.97$, $SD=.45$), $F(1, 132)=12.427$, $p=.001$.

Hypothesis 3—Gender, Sexual Activity and Victim Characteristics

Finally, it was hypothesized that virginal female characters would be portrayed more positively as evidenced by lower Victim Trait Scale scores as compared to either female or male characters who engaged in sexual activity. To determine the impact of the involvement in sexual activity on character portrayals, a 2 (*Gender*) \times 2 (*Involvement in Sexual Activity*) ANOVA was conducted with the Victim Trait Scale total score as the dependent variable. Total scores on the Victim Trait Scale were available for 485 victims in the sample ($M=17.88$, $SD=5.00$). Prior to conducting the analysis, tests of the statistical assumptions underlying the ANOVA procedure were conducted. No extreme scores, outliers, or significant violations of normality were noted in the data.

Results of the ANOVA conducted on the Victim Traits Scale score revealed that all effects were statistically significant. Female characters were depicted more favorably as evidenced by lower Victim Traits Scale scores ($M=16.89$, $SD=4.99$) than male characters ($M=18.71$, $SD=4.82$), $F(1,$

476)=12.42, $p<.001$, partial $\eta^2=.03$. A main effect for Involvement in Sexual Activity was also observed, $F(1, 476)=25.89$, $p<.001$, partial $\eta^2=.05$. Victims who engaged in sexual activity had significantly higher Victim Trait Scale scores ($M=19.31$, $SD=4.70$) than victims who did not engage in sexual activity ($M=17.18$, $SD=4.97$). In addition, a statistically significant interaction between Gender and Involvement in Sexual Activity was observed, $F(1, 476)=6.73$, $p<.01$, partial $\eta^2=.02$. To test the significant interaction, simple effects were analyzed within gender with one-way ANOVAs. As shown in Table 5, differences in Victim Trait Scale scores for male characters who did engage in sexual activity ($M=19.54$, $SD=5.04$) and for male characters who did not engage in sexual activity ($M=18.38$, $SD=4.70$) did not contribute to the observed significant interaction, $F(1, 259)=3.093$, $p=.08$. Comparatively, the Victim Trait Scale scores for female characters who did not engage in sexual activity ($M=15.54$, $SD=4.87$) were significantly lower than the scores for female characters who did engage in sexual activity ($M=19.11$, $SD=4.39$), $F(1, 219)=29.881$, $p=.000$.

Moderating Effect of Time of Release

Given that the sampling frame adopted in the current study contained films from a broader timeframe than what was available to previous content analyses of slasher films, the time period of release for films may be a moderator of the relationship between character sex and survival outcomes. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a moderator is “a qualitative (e.g., sex, race, class) or quantitative (e.g., level of reward) variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent or predictor variable and a dependent or criterion variable” (p. 1174). However, chi-square analyses with Survival Outcome and Time Period of Release (1970–1989, 1990–Present) indicated that survival rates have not significantly changed over time for either male characters, $\chi^2(1)=.63$, $p=.43$, or female characters, $\chi^2(1)=.50$, $p=.48$.

Baron and Kenny (1986) proposed that a moderator effect could also be represented by an interaction in an

Table 4 Mean values for length of death scene (in seconds).

Engaged in Sexual Activity	Character gender	
	Male	Female
Present	1.02 (<i>SD</i> =.40, <i>n</i> =56)	1.23 (<i>SD</i> =.37, <i>n</i> =55)
Absent	.98 (<i>SD</i> =.41, <i>n</i> =131)	.97 (<i>SD</i> =.45, <i>n</i> =78)

analysis of variance (ANOVA). To test for the potential moderator effect of time of release, a 2 (*Gender*) \times 2 (*Involvement in Sexual Activity*) \times 2 (*Time of Release*) ANOVA was conducted for both the Length of Death Scene and Victim Trait Scale scores. No significant interactions between Gender and Time of Release were observed in any of the ANOVA analyses, thus indicating that the time period in which a film was released did not moderate the relationship between victim gender, involvement in sexual activity, and either the length of death scenes or character portrayals.

Discussion

Overall, all hypotheses were supported in the current study suggesting that while sexual behavior may generally be a perilous moral transgression for slasher film characters, there is a greater risk inherent for female characters. Specifically, three findings emerged from the study. First, within-gender comparisons revealed that female characters involved in sexual activity were significantly less likely to survive as compared to those female characters that were not involved in any sexual activity. Death scenes on average were also longer for female characters who engaged in sexual activity than the death scenes for female characters who did not engage in sexual activity. An additional significant interaction between gender and involvement in sexual activity emerged in analyses of the Victim Trait Scale scores. In her analysis of slasher films, Clover (1992) described the Final Girl, the female character, who by virtue of her pure and virginal attributes is able to survive and conquer the film's central antagonist. Although this study does not offer a direct examination of the Final Girl, the current findings further suggest that an abstention from sexual activity was positive for female characters. Consistent with expectations, female characters who were not involved in sexual activity were depicted

more positively, as evidenced by lower Victim Trait Scale scores, than female characters who did engage in sexual activity. The above-mentioned differences were not observed for male characters.

In spite of the popular acceptance of criticisms of the slasher film, limited empirical evidence previously existed to support these concerns. The consistency in the pattern of findings that emerged in the current study suggests that a clear empirical picture is beginning to emerge. In spite of differences in the operationalization of sexual behavior, the inclusion of a unique operationalization of “punishment” in Length of Death Scene, and a sample comprised of a wider time range of films, the results of the current study are consistent with Cowan and O'Brien's (1990) original comparisons of male and female survivors and non-survivors in slasher films.

These findings fit within the larger research literature on the dichotomous portrayal of female victims and the role of schemas concerning traditional gender roles. As previously discussed, media portrayals of female victims often conform to existing gender schemas of the “good girl” and the “bad girl” in which women are “either placed on a pedestal or in the gutter” (Sibley and Wilson 2004, p. 688). The impact of media portrayals of violence against women has been well-documented in nearly four decades of empirical research on the relationship between media violence and real-world aggression (Anderson and Bushman 2002; Huesmann and Taylor 2006; Huesmann et al. 2003; Paik and Comstock 1994). In particular, the sexually violent material characteristic of the slasher horror film has been linked to numerous negative outcomes among male viewers (Johnson et al. 1995; Krafka et al. 1997; Linz et al. 1984, 1988, 1989). However, most of this research has focused on the negative effects of sexually violent media on male viewers (Reid and Finchilescu 1995).

The violent narrative structure of the slasher film, wherein sexual activity represents a dangerous moral transgression for female characters, may also have negative

Table 5 Mean values for victim trait scale scores.

Engaged in sexual activity	Character gender	
	Male	Female
Present	19.54 (<i>SD</i> =5.04, <i>n</i> =74)	19.11 (<i>SD</i> =4.39, <i>n</i> =83)
Absent	18.38 (<i>SD</i> =4.70, <i>n</i> =186)	15.54 (<i>SD</i> =4.87, <i>n</i> =137)

consequences for female viewers. Other areas of research have illustrated that sexually-objectifying media may negatively impact various aspects of women's self-concept, such as body image and self-esteem (Aubrey 2006). Reid and Finchilescu (1995) also reported that female participants experienced an increase in feelings of disempowerment when they viewed film clips depicting women as victims of violence. The punishment for violating traditional gender roles observed in slasher films may similarly impact young women's self-concepts about their own sexuality.

In his discussion of female deviance, Schur (1984) noted that “the meanings attached to female sexuality remain highly ambivalent” (p. 111). Schur argued that while women are expected to be physically attractive and “sexy”, they are also tasked with moderating their sexuality to avoid extreme presentations or risk the stigma of a deviant label. In spite of advances made by women over the years, research does indeed show that sexually assertive women are still evaluated negatively for violating gender norms (Jackson and Cram 2003; Lamanna and Riedmann 1997; Sprecher et al. 1991). In some research, women have been observed to evaluate other highly sexual women negatively (Clayton and Trafimow 2007). Other research has found that women do in fact actively moderate their sexuality. Alexander and Fisher (2003), for example, reported that college-aged women tended to under-report their number of sexual partners while college-aged men were more likely to over-report their number of sexual partners. The slasher horror film appears to provide a similarly ambivalent interpretation of female sexuality wherein attractive female characters, or “bad girls”, are promiscuous, undress, and flaunt their bodies but are simultaneously punished for their sexuality with lethal violence.

Notwithstanding the consistency of findings, this study has two limitations which should be addressed in subsequent research. Perhaps the most notable limitation concerns the operational definitions of sexual activity and gender. Though a quantitative approach to coding offers more straightforward data for the purposes of analysis, it can often obscure or lose important information. For the sake of consistency with prior research (e.g., Cowan and O'Brien 1990), all categorical variables in the current study were dichotomized. In addition, the operational definition of Involvement in Sexual Activity was broad, encompassing a range of activities, not just negative sexual behavior, such as promiscuity, or aggressive sexual behavior. Simply put, the measurement of sexual behavior did not focus on subjective aspects of sexuality or the normative nature of a character's sexual behavior. Similarly, the coding of gender was merely based upon the biological classification of characters (Male, Female), and did not include a more subjective analysis of the extent to which male and female

characters were consistent with gender-role schemas. In their past study of slasher films, Cowan and O'Brien (1990) coded for some positive and negative gender-typed traits and noted that female survivors possessed some positive traits associated with the male gender role.

Future studies should focus on the measurement of gender as opposed to biological sex. The approach to coding in the current study measured whether male and female characters engaged in any sexual activity and, to what extent, this was related to survival. Measurement of the gender traits exhibited by characters and the extent to which characters' behavior is consistent with normative gender roles might provide additional insight into the nature of the relationship between violence and gender in horror films. Perhaps female characters could be further distinguished from one another based on the extent to which they conform to normative gender roles. Another avenue of potential research might involve a specific examination of Clover's (1992) concept of the Final Girl. According to Clover, the Final Girl survives in slasher films not only by virtue of her pure character, but also as a result of challenging male authority and in fact adopting stereotypically male traits. Clover's observations are consistent with Cowan and O'Brien's (1990) above-mentioned findings and suggest that the relationship between character gender, traditional gender roles, and violence in slasher films warrants further attention.

Another limitation concerns the sampling frame. Only English-language North American films were included for the purposes of sampling. European horror films, particularly the 1970s' Italian “giallo” films from directors Mario Bava and Dario Argento, significantly influenced early North American slasher films, such as the original *Friday the 13th* (1980) (Rockoff 2002). The last decade has also seen the release of several notable French horror films such as *Haute Tension* (2003), *À l'intérieur* (2006), *Ills* (2006), and *Martyrs* (2008). Cultural differences may certainly exist in the depictions of violence and sexuality in film. The Italian giallo films were noted for their stylistic depictions of graphic violence and nudity and the recent spate of French horror, referred to as the New French Extremity, has been characterized by particularly sadistic depictions of violence (Quandt 2004; Rockoff 2002). Although empirical research indicates that associations between violent entertainment and aggression are generally evident across cultures (Comstock 1991), future research should incorporate comparative analyses of gendered violence in American and European films.

Conclusion

Past criticisms of slasher films have focused on the depiction of violence against women and, specifically, the

purported tendency to “punish” female characters depicted engaging in sexual activity. Such negative responses to this subgenre of horror film have gained merit in light of research illustrating that stereotypical media depictions of female victims may in fact facilitate negative appraisals of women. Although a great deal of research has examined the effects of violent and nonviolent sexual media, relatively few studies have identified the frequency with which this type of content is depicted in the media. The current study has addressed this gap in the literature, pointing to gender differences in the association between sexual activity and violent victimization.

References

- Adelman, S. (1989). Representations of violence against women in mainstream film. *Resources for Feminist Research*, 18, 21–26.
- Alexander, M. G., & Fisher, T. D. (2003). Truth and consequences: Using the bogus pipeline to examine sex differences in self-reported sexuality. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 40, 27–35.
- Allison, J. A., & Wrightson, L. S. (1993). *Rape: The misunderstood crime*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Anastasio, P. A., & Costa, D. M. (2004). Twice hurt: How newspaper coverage may reduce empathy and engender blame for female victims of crime. *Sex Roles*, 51, 535–542.
- Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, B. J. (2002). The effects of media violence on society. *Science*, 295, 2377–2378.
- Aubrey, J. S. (2006). Exposure to sexually objectifying media and body self-perceptions among college women: An examination of the selective exposure hypothesis and the role of moderating variables. *Sex Roles*, 55, 159–172.
- Babbie, E., & Benaquisto, L. (2002). *Fundamentals of social research* (1 Canadianth ed.). Scarborough: Thomson.
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1173–1182.
- Beasley, B., & Standley, T. C. (2002). Shirts vs. skins: Clothing as an indicator of gender role stereotyping in video games. *Mass Communication & Society*, 5, 279–293.
- Bem, S. L. (1974). The measurement of psychological androgyny. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 42, 378–384.
- Benedict, H. (1992). *Virgin or vamp. How the press covers sex crimes*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cavender, G. (1999). Detecting masculinity. In J. Ferrell & N. Websdale (Eds.), *Making trouble: Cultural constructions of crime, deviance, and control* (pp. 151–175). Hawthorne: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Cavender, G., Bond-Maupin, L., & Jurik, N. C. (1999). The construction of gender in reality crime TV. *Gender & Society*, 13, 643–663.
- Christie, N. (1986). The ideal victim. In E. A. Fattah (Ed.), *From crime policy to victim policy*. London: Macmillan.
- Clayton, K. D., & Trafimow, D. (2007). A test of three hypotheses concerning attributions toward female promiscuity. *The Social Science Journal*, 44, 677–686.
- Clover, C. J. (1992). *Men, women, and chainsaws: Gender in the modern horror film*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Cowan, G., & O'Brien, M. (1990). Gender and survival vs. death in slasher films: A content analysis. *Sex Roles*, 25, 187–196.
- Deaux, K., & LaFrance, M. (1998). Gender. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (4th ed., Vol. 1, pp. 788–827). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Dexter, H. R., Penrod, S., Linz, D., & Saunders, D. (1997). Attributing responsibility to female victims after exposure to sexually violent films. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 27, 2149–2171.
- Dietz, T. L. (1998). An examination of violence and gender role portrayals in video games: Implications for gender socialization and aggressive behavior. *Sex Roles*, 38, 425–442.
- Ellison, L. (2001). *The adversarial process and the vulnerable witness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Emmers-Sommer, T. M., Pauley, P., Hanzal, A., & Triplett, L. (2006). Love, suspense, sex, and violence: Men's and women's film predilections, exposure to sexually violent media, and their relationship to rape myth acceptance. *Sex Roles*, 55, 311–320.
- Eschholz, S., & Buftin, J. (2001). Crime in the movies: Investigating the efficacy of measures of both sex and gender for predicting victimization and offending in film. *Sociological Forum*, 16, 655–676.
- Is the Final Girl Just an Excuse? (2006). Retrieved from http://www.cinemademerde.com/Essay-Final_Girl.shtml.
- Fleiss, J. L. (1971). Measuring nominal scale agreement among many raters. *Psychological Bulletin*, 76, 378–382.
- Gamson, W. A., Croteau, D., Hoynes, W., & Sasson, T. (1992). Media images and the social construction of reality. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 18, 373–393.
- Golde, J. A., Strassberg, D. S., Turner, C. M., & Lowe, K. (2000). Attitudinal effects of degrading themes and sexual explicitness in video materials. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 12, 223–232.
- Hill, D. (Producer), & Carpenter, J. (Director) (1978). *Halloween* [motion picture]. United States: Compass International Pictures.
- Hirsch, S. F. (1994). Interpreting media representations of a “night of madness”: Law and culture in the construction of rape identities. *Law & Social Inquiry*, 19, 1023–1056.
- Huesmann, L. R., & Taylor, L. D. (2006). The role of media violence in violent behavior. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 27, 393–415.
- Huesmann, L. R., Moise-Titus, J., Podolowski, C., & Eron, L. D. (2003). Longitudinal relations between children's exposure to TV violence and their aggressive and violent behavior in young adulthood: 1977–1992. *Developmental Psychology*, 39, 201–221.
- Jackson, S. M., & Cram, F. (2003). Disrupting the sexual double standard: young women's talk about heterosexuality. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 42, 113–127.
- Johnson, J. D., Adams, M. S., Ashburn, L., & Reed, W. (1995). Differential gender effects of exposure to rap music on African American adolescents' acceptance of teen dating violence. *Sex Roles*, 33, 597–605.
- Konrad, C. (Producer), & Craven, W. (Director) (1996). *Scream* [motion picture]. United States: Dimension Films.
- Krafka, C., Linz, D., Donnerstein, E., & Penrod, S. (1997). Women's reactions to sexually aggressive mass media depictions. *Violence Against Women*, 3, 149–181.
- Lamanna, M. A., & Riedmann, A. (1997). *Marriages and families: Making choices in a diverse society*. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Landis, J. R., & Koch, G. G. (1977). The measurement of observer agreement for categorical data. *Biometrics*, 33, 159–174.
- Larcombe, W. (2002). The ‘ideal victim’ v. successful rape complainants: Not what you might expect. *Feminist Legal Studies*, 10, 131–148.
- Linz, D., & Donnerstein, E. (1994). Sex and violence in slasher films: A re-interpretation. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 38, 243–247.
- Linz, D., Donnerstein, E., & Penrod, S. (1984). The effects of multiple exposures to filmed violence against women. *Journal of Communication*, 34, 130–147.

- Linz, D., Donnersten, E., & Penrod, S. (1988). The effects of long-term exposure to violent and sexually degrading depictions of women. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 55, 758–768.
- Linz, D., Donnerstein, E., & Adams, S. M. (1989). Physiological desensitization and judgments about female victims of violence. *Human Communication Research*, 15, 509–522.
- Lorber, J., & Farrell, S. (1991). *The social construction of gender*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Madriz, E. (1997). Images of criminals and victims: A study on women's fear and social control. *Gender & Society*, 1, 342–356.
- Meyers, M. (1997). *News coverage of violence against women: Engendering blame*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Milkie, M. A. (1994). Social world approach to cultural studies: Mass media and gender in the adolescent peer group. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 23, 354–380.
- Molitor, F., & Sapolsky, B. S. (1993). Sex, violence, and victimization in slasher films. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 37, 233–242.
- Muir, J. K. (2000). *The films of John Carpenter*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc.
- Mulac, A., Jansma, L. L., & Linz, D. G. (2002). Men's behavior toward women after viewing sexually-explicit films: Degradation makes a difference. *Communication Monographs*, 69, 311–328.
- Osgood, C. E., Suci, G., & Tannenbaum, P. (1957). *The measurement of meaning*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Paik, H., & Comstock, G. (1994). The effects of television violence on antisocial behavior: A meta-analysis. *Communication Research*, 21, 516–546.
- Quandt, J. (2004, February). Flesh & blood: Sex and violence in recent French cinema. *Artforum*, 42, 126–132.
- Reid, P., & Finchilescu, G. (1995). The disempowering effects of media violence against women on college women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 19, 397–411.
- Rockoff, A. (2002). *Going to pieces: The rise and fall of the slasher film, 1978 to 1986*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company.
- Ryckman, R. M., Kaczor, L. M., & Thornton, B. (1992). Traditional and non-traditional women's attributions of responsibility to physically resistive and nonresistive rape victims. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 22, 1453–1463.
- Sapolsky, B. S., Molitor, F., & Luque, S. (2003). Sex and violence in slasher films: Re-examining the assumptions. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80, 28–38.
- Schuller, R. A., & Hastings, P. A. (2002). Complainant sexual history evidence: Its impact on mock jurors' decisions. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 26, 252–261.
- Schur, E. M. (1984). *Labelling women deviant: Gender, stigma, and social control*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Sibley, C. G., & Wilson, M. S. (2004). Differentiating hostile and benevolent sexist attitudes toward positive and negative sexual female subtypes. *Sex Roles*, 51, 687–696.
- Smith, S. L., & Boyson, A. R. (2002). Violence in music videos: Examining the prevalence and context of physical aggression. *Journal of Communication*, 52, 61–83.
- Sprecher, S., McKinney, K., & Orbuch, T. L. (1991). The effect of current sexual behavior on friendship, dating, and marriage desirability. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 28, 387–408.
- Weaver, J. B. (1991). Are “slasher” horror films sexually violent? A content analysis. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 35, 385–393.
- Welsh, A. (2009). Sex and violence in the slasher horror film: A content analysis of gender differences in the depiction of violence. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*, 16, 1–25.
- Wester, S. R., Crown, C. L., Quatman, G. L., & Heesacker, M. (1997). The influence of sexually violent rap music on attitudes of men with little prior exposure. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21, 497–508.