The Intersection between Popular Culture and Female Identity, Violence Victimization and Related Health Risks

Amy Bonomi
Professor & Chair, Human Development
Michigan State University
bonomi@msu.edu

Asia Eaton
Assistant Professor, Psychology
Florida International University
aeaton@fiu.edu

Dionne Stephens
Associate Professor, Psychology
Florida International University
stephens@fiu.edu

Overview: Scholars argue that problematic depictions of violence against women in popular culture—such as in film, novels, music, pornography—creates a broader social narrative that normalizes these problem risks and behaviors in women's lives. Internet-based pornography, popular fiction such as the *Fifty Shades* and *Twilight* series, and popular music such as Rihanna and Eminem's "Love the Way You Lie," include problematic physical, sexual and psychological abuse against women under the guise of "romance" and "eroticism." Despite the theoretical recognition that the larger social context influences behaviors and experiences, few studies have empirically characterized the relationship between interactions between popular fiction and music, in particular, and violence against women. The symposium presents learnings from recent empirical studies on the relationship between pop culture, the feminine ideals upheld in pop culture, and women's risk for violence victimization and related health problems, such as eating- and substance abuse- disorders. The symposium addresses a critically important (modifiable and preventable) aspect of violence against women: the contribution of problematic messages perpetuated in the larger societal context. The symposium also addresses the conference goal (to advance the health care system's response to domestic violence) by targeting critical factors that influence health risks (e.g., violence victimization, disordered eating) for which women interact with health care providers.

Activities for the 80-minute symposium: 1) During the first 10 minutes, the moderator will introduce concepts on how popular culture is a standardizing vehicle for violence against women, referring to initial questions for participant consideration throughout the symposium; 2) Three presenters will follow (10-minute presentations each, followed by 10 minutes of audience questions each) on empirical studies that assess violence victimization risk (physical, sexual and psychological/emotional) at the intersection of race/ethnicity, gender and popular culture; and 3) The last 10 minutes will engage participants in dialogue about the initial questions posed and ideas on critical steps for prevention.

Questions for audience reflection:
1) In your experience as professionals, how do you see popular culture playing a role in adolescent girls and women's perceptions of themselves and their risk for violence victimization and other health risks?
2) In your professional estimation, does popular culture play a bigger role in creating risks for women of specific racial/ethnic backgrounds as compared to others? In which groups?
3) What are you doing in your professional practice and in informal interactions with adolescent girls and young women to address the role of problematic popular culture messages and factors that could protect against such messages?
4) What questions are most pressing, from your perspective, related to popular culture and risks among girls/women?

References:
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2) Bonomi, A.E., Altenburger, L., Walton, N. (2013). "Double crap!" Abuse and harmed identity in *Fifty Shades of Grey*. Journal of Women's Health 22(9):1-12.
3) Eaton, A. A., & Matamala, A. (2014). The relationship between heteronormative beliefs and verbal sexual coercion in college students. Archives of Sexual Behavior 43(7):1443-57.
4) Stephens, D. P., & Eaton, A. A. (In preparation). Negotiating IPV messaging in Hip Hop: Black adolescent women's use of social networks.