Do Lyrics Objectify Women?

Alyssa Klinksiek
Radford University (graduate student)

Timothy L. Channell
Radford University

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Abstract

Popular music should empower women as individuals with lyrics that recognize them as equals to men. Further, music should contain positive messages that promote respect for women from men. This study examines the prevalence of female objectification in popular music media through a textual analysis of 100 songs from the 2012-2016 end-of-year lists of the Billboard Hot 100 and Hot Country Songs. Objectification, as this study’s framework, is defined as the depersonalization of an individual with an emphasis on their instrumentality (Loughnan, Haslam, Murnane, Vaes, Reynolds, and Suitner 2010). According to Gervais and Eagan (2017), women often face objectification from men and themselves in daily life through objectifying gazes and appearance commentary. Various studies have shown that female objectification leads to depression, anxiety, disordered eating, decreased intellectual performance, and internal motivation. This study takes five objectifying categories to analyze the text: objectifying gaze, appearance commentary, sex as a main priority, women portrayed as a sexual possession, and women portrayed as subordinate. This session will discuss the analysis and research findings.

References


development, and has presented numerous workshops on fundraising throughout the east coast. Dr. Channell serves as the advisor to the RU-Grammy U., Radford Records (a lab-based student record label), Radford University Music Business Student Association, and a former co-advisor to Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity. He also oversees the Covington Center Performance Hall, providing leadership for performances and all audio and video recordings. Dr. Channell is a sought after adjudicator/clinician and is president of Channell Consulting Services, a firm providing specialized consulting for various arts organizations helping them better understand their current position and potential for financial and artistic growth.