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Influences on Self-Objectification and Restrained Eating Behaviors in College Aged Women By the Romantic Scripts Found in Modern Women's Magazines

Kimberley Ann Newell
Lake Forest College, newellka@lakeforest.edu

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Abstract

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Debra Levis

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Printed Name: Kimberley Ann Newell

Thesis Title: Influences on Self-Objectification and Restrained Eating Behaviors in College Aged Women By the Romantic Scripts Found in Modern Women's Magazines

LAKE FOREST COLLEGE

Senior Thesis

Influences on Self-Objectification and Restrained Eating Behaviors in College Aged
Women By the Romantic Scripts Found in Modern Women's Magazines

By

Kimberley Ann Newell

April 15th, 2015

The report of the investigation undertaken as a
Senior Thesis, to carry two courses of credit in
the Department of Psychology

Michael T. Orr

Krebs Provost and Dean of the Faculty

Susan Long, Chairperson

Debra Levis

Robert Flot

EFFECTS OF THE ROMANTIC SCRIPT ON COLLEGE WOMEN

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my loving mother and father who have always encouraged me to be myself.

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EFFECTS OF THE ROMANTIC SCRIPT ON COLLEGE WOMEN

Influences on Self-Objectification and Restrained Eating Behaviors in College Aged

Women By the Romantic Scripts Found in Modern Women's Magazines

The goal of this research is to investigate the possible influence of romantic scripts in women's magazines on women's level of self-objectification and restricted eating behaviors. Current experimental research has found strong links connecting media and self-objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Previous research used *sexual* scripts and this study will be the first that will look at the connection between *romantic* scripts found in women's magazines and self-objectification. A sexual script influences all aspects of sexual behavior such as views on whom we should have sex with, relationships appropriate for sex, and emotions connected to sex (Bowleg, Lucas, & Tschann, 2004). A romantic script is different from a sexual script because it includes all behaviors related to the relationship dynamic as a whole, including dating behaviors, nurturing behaviors, and the acceptance of many gender stereotypes including self and partner objectification (Haywood, 2013). This study will examine the link between romantic scripts and self-objectification.

Self objectification might increase cognitive load, and vice-versa. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) found that when a woman sees herself as others see her, she self-objectifies. She consequently spends less time focusing on internal body sensations. This split focus makes tasks that need full attention difficult. Additionally, studies suggest that restricted eating is a direct psychological outcome of self-objectification, caused by the women's need to focus on obtaining the gendered script of the culture (Muehlenkamp, 2011). In this case, the U.S. expects women to be thin to be attractive (Muehlenkamp, 2011). This study investigated the influence of both cognitive load and romantic scripts on self-objectification and consequently restricted eating.

In the upcoming sections I will discuss types of scripts and the hierarchy of scripts, the media and its role in creating and maintaining scripts, self-objectification caused by the media, and psychological outcomes of self-objectification.

Scripts

A script is a culturally created and maintained social guide that specifies how people should behave and act in their social surroundings. Scripts define what types of behaviors are appropriate and expected for specific social roles within the culture (Kostamikel, 2003). Scripts guide behavior by enforcing specific behaviors/actions, and they can vary in strength (Rose & Frieze, 1993). Specifically, scripts can be thought of as a sequence of events, behaviors and manners, that can be expected to happen based on different cultural situations. Scripts can involve a participant or an observer (Rose & Frieze, 1993). Scripts direct whom we consider as suitable partners, and what we define as acceptable actions and behavior for ourselves and others (Bowleg et al., 2004). The fundamentals of scripts, especially gender related scripts, are learned in childhood and adolescence (Simon & Gagnon, 1986).

People encounter scripts everywhere in their daily life in the media, and from people important in one's life such as parents and same-gender peers (ter Bogt, Engels, Bogers & Kloosterman, 2010). Media is a significant source for young adults' knowledge of physical, social, and emotional aspects of dating and romance, falling in love, values, and "normal" practices (ter Bogt et al., 2010). For this reason a large source of scripts are found in all types of media, including television, movies, magazines, commercials, books, music styles, music, social networking sites, and internet pleasure reading (Kostamikel, 2003; Menard & Kleinplatz, 2007; ter Bogt et al., 2010; Vanderbosch & Eggermont, 2012; Zurbriggen, Ramsey & Jaworski, 2011). Menard and Kleinplatz (2007)

found that for women, magazines are the preferred source of information about the opposite sex and their own behavior, because of their wide circulation and readability.

Women's magazines, however, have narrow sexual scripts that promote gender role stereotypes (Menard & Kleinplatz, 2007). These magazines provide unique scripts in that they not only act as a guide for how women should behave in order to attract men, but also teach women the goals, plans, and strategies of managing relationships, how to understand men, and how to transform yourself to be successful (Haywood, 2013; Menard & Kleinplatz, 2007). Kim and Ward (2004) describe magazines as unique script sources because they are written specifically for young women, speak intimately to their readers, and they are available for multiple readings, and are inexpensive. These scripts are also framed as though meeting them were a matter of personal choice, which produces social pressure for female readers to meet them (Aubrey, 2007).

Further, women's magazines create a model of the romantic ideal and are sources of sexual and relationship advice. Their advice is almost solely based on how men view women not how women view themselves (Kosta-Mikel, 2003). They contain the "rules, rituals, and skills of the 'emotional labor' of romance and relationships," (Kosta-Mikel, 2003; Menard & Kleinplatz, 2007). Women's magazines focus on what men's opinions of women's behavior should be, and suggest that men's opinion is most important, and that women should worry about pleasing men in order to have a good relationship (Kosta-Mikel, 2003). In fact, based on Kosta-Mikel's (2003) content analysis of popular women's magazines, the most popular topics in women's magazines are about romance, sex, and relationships concerning the opposite sex (Kosta-Mikel, 2003). While some progress has been made by publishing more articles empowering women outside of relationships with men, women are shown to be empowered but still needing a man to make their life full and happy (Kosta-Mikel, 2003). Ter Bogt and Colleagues (2010)

suggest that this places women's ability to create and maintain a relationship at the center of a woman's identity, placed above their education, career, participation in politics or athletics and peer relationships. Magazines like this may present an unrealistic and skewed description of romance and sexuality. The prescribed gender roles and sexuality seen in women's magazines raise the concern that young women who read them may internalize and promote such gendered schemas (ter Bogt et al., 2010). The psychological consequences of scripts will be explored later in the literature review. Next, I break down the types of scripts that women receive.

Types Of Scripts

Scripts are a type of social schema that people use in order to understand their social world. A schema is a person's organized pattern of thought that creates categories of information in order to understand the relationships between them. Scripts are organized into three levels: cultural, interpersonal, and intrapsychic scripts. Cultural scripts are the largest and most general of the levels. They encompass general action sequences with a smaller range of actions than the other two levels (Bowleg et al., 2004; Rose & Frieze, 1993). The media plays a major role in defining the cultural scripts of a society (Kosta-Mikel, 2003). Interpersonal scripts are the actual behaviors that are carried out in specific circumstances. The last level of scripting is the intrapsychic level, where hypothetical interactions played out in an individual's mind but not yet in reality. These scripts can be thought of as the hypothetical conversations and actions that take place in one's mind (Bowleg et al., 2004; Rose & Frieze, 1993).

Cultural scripts. Like a hypothetical conversation in your mind, people use scripts every day. They reflect cultural values and expectations about relationships, sex, and gender roles. In this manner, scripts are a way that culture is expressed and reinforced. From a research perspective, the heterosexual script is the most commonly

defined and well-understood cultural script, with broad roles and behaviors defined by gender (Kim & Ward, 2004; Kirsch & Murnen, 2013). The heterosexual script encompasses the interpersonal level sexual and romantic scripts. This script has four themes: sexual double standard, power in romance and courtship, attitudes toward commitment, and negative attitudes toward homosexuality (Kim & Ward, 2004). Consequently, the script reinforces male dominance and female submission (Vanderbosch & Eggermont, 2012). This script is commonly encountered when reading women's magazines and watching television. Common interpersonal requirements of this script are described in Kirsch and Murnen's study and placed in the Table 1 of Appendix B (Kim & Ward, 2004; Kirsch & Murnen, 2013).

Interpersonal Scripts

These were just a few of the requirements Kirsch & Murnen found in their study (2013) where they examined the first season of seven¹ different children's television shows. They found that in each show, boy characters tended to objectify and value girls exclusively for their appearance. For girls self-objectification and ego stroking of boys were the most common themes across all of their selected programs. Researchers recorded 121 occurrences of heterosexual script appearing. In the 121 occurrences, 61% of them were performed by boys, and 39% were performed by girls. Thirty-three percent of the interactions coded between girls and boys had a common element that depicted sex as a masculine act. The girls often dressed provocatively, touched themselves suggestively, or acted coy to impress boys. Boys were often portrayed using material or status power to seduce girls by buying them gifts or singing songs for them. Interestingly,

¹ Drake and Josh (2004–2008), Suite Life of Zack and Cody (2005–2008, continued with Suite Life on Deck from 2008–2011), Wizards of Waverly Place (2007–2012), Hannah Montana (2006–2011), iCarly (2007–2012), Sonny with a Chance (2009–2011), and Jonas (2008–2010).

the shows in which stereotyping was most likely to take place were shows in which the characters were often in the presence of opposite gender peers. This suggests that this script is related to expectations of and within heterosexual relationships. Heterosexual relationships in this study consisted of relationships where men are attracted to women and women are attracted to men. Kirsch and Murnen's study is important because it provided evidence that men and women are socialized for the heterosexual script from a young age.

This socialization continues as we age. Kim and Ward's (2004) study explored female college students' sexual attitudes in comparison to the number of magazines that are routinely read. They evaluated adult-focused and teen-focused magazines, reading motivations, sexual attitudes, and femininity ideologies. Results revealed that women who most frequently read magazines supported the strongest male and female stereotypes. Therefore, it can be acknowledged that the more an individual is exposed to their cultural scripts, the more likely they are to internalize and promote them. The internalization and promotion of social scripts has a profound effect on the beliefs, expectations, and actions of men and women alike. It is important to note that this could be a mutually reinforcing process in which the opposite could be true and women who hold strong stereotypes about gender might choose magazines that support and reinforce those stereotypes, as opposed to reading other media.

Scripts are often very specific and might be so specific that people are able to intimately imagine the sequence of events that should take place at any given time. For example, Rose and Frieze (1993) found that by asking young men and women to list the typical first date events, they found highly scripted behavior expectations for early dating scenarios with prescribed roles and actions based on gender. The purpose of their study was to understand scripts for hypothetical and actual first dates of college age women and

men. They gave participants hypothetical dates and they were asked to describe the events that took place on this hypothetical date. They also asked participants to write down what behaviors took place on actual first dates that the individual has gone on. Results showed strong scripts for both. Both types of dates had very gender-typed behaviors where women took a reactive role and men took a proactive role in the date. Behaviors for women included waiting to be asked for a date and being concerned about appearance while men's included asking for the date, planning and paying for it, initiating courtly behaviors such as opening car doors, and initiating sexual activity. Specifically, these behavior expectations can be described as a first date script. Scripts like the first date script, are useful in the social sphere because they are a way for people to feel in control of and understand their social world. This is consistent with the intrapersonal romantic script that will be discussed later in this section.

As seen in Rose and Frieze's (1993) study, men and women have very different and gendered scripts when interacting with one another, especially in sexual or romantic situations. Today, many people perceive men and women to be naturally different in regards to their likes, dislikes, wants, and needs (Haywood, 2013). Although there are certainly physical differences in regards to men and women, most of a sexual relationship's behavior expectations are defined by the scripting level lower than the cultural heterosexual script: the intrapersonal sexual script. Sex is a central part of how we define ourselves in our social world, as well as how we see ourselves internally. Therefore the intrapersonal sexual script is often at the heart of what we expect in our own sexual experiences. This script influences all aspects of sexual behavior like beliefs in whom we should have sex with, relationships appropriate for sex, emotions connected to sex (Bowleg et al., 2004). Haywood's (2013) qualitative study was done with a feminist approach in order to recognize patterns of inequality and oppression. Using this

method of studying data, Haywood was able to better understand and take into account cultural standards while recognizing that the media is not a neutral party but takes an active part in shaping the way a woman views herself and her role within society. Specifically, she studied the ways sexuality was represented in women's magazines. The articles suggest that primary importance is placed on women to work to attain "great sex" and stable relationships. The magazines repeatedly discussed goals, plans and strategies to achieve "great sex" in a manner that suggests that the reader (a female) did not have the ability to obtain these on their own. They also repeatedly favored men's sexual pleasure over women's but directing their reader on how to please their partner but not themselves.

Haywood's (2013) results support a previous study in 2008 by Menard and Kleinplatz that investigated the components of "great sex" in men's and women's magazines by using both qualitative and quantitative methods to obtain data. Their study broke down the sexual script into five main components portrayed and taught to men and women about how "great sex" is acquired and maintained. These components included technical/mechanical/physical factors, variety, relationship factors, psychological factors and pre-sex preparation. They also found that the advice prescribed to the readers of both genders was defined in ways that enforced limited sexual scripts, and encouraged sexual and gender role stereotypes. Women are either portrayed as "good" women or "bad" women based on if they follow prescribed scripts. Those who break script are socially punished for such behavior. Both studies found that magazines propagandize specific stereotypes behaviors that are listed in the Table 2 of Appendix B (Bowleg et al., 2004; Haywood, 2013; Menard & Kleinplatz, 2007).

The core of the sexual script teaches women goals, plans, and strategies of managing relationships, how to understand men, and that self-transformation of self is needed to be successful and happy (Haywood, 2013). The media that portrays these scripts teach women that following the sexual script will result in relationship commitment from men, which is framed as a woman's ultimate goal and path to happiness and fulfillment (Menard & Kleinplatz, 2007; Haywood, 2013). The present study will focus on a different intrapersonal script called the romantic script.

The interpersonal sexual script and the interpersonal romantic script overlap in some ways. Bowleg et al. (2004) studied both scripts in their qualitative study of relationship and sexual scripts for 14 women between 22 and 39 years old. All women in the study were currently in an intimate and heterosexual relationship. The participants took part in semi-structured interviews and completed questionnaires about their relationships and sexual behaviors. After data analysis, scripts were generated when half or more of the women acknowledged and confirmed a behavior expectation. Three relationship script patterns were generated from the questionnaires including: men are in control of relationships, women sustain relationships, and infidelity is normative. This means that men controlled if there would be a relationship and how intimate the relationship would be, women were expected to take part in activities that sustained the chosen relationship status, and both men and women expected and expected that men would be unfaithful to their partners. The purpose of this study was to better understand women's interpersonal scripts, sexual scripts, and condom use.

Kosta-Mikel (2003) studied both sexual and romantic scripts as well by exploring script patterns of sexuality, romance, and the opposite sex in different age focused women's magazines aimed at pre-adolescent, teen, and adult women. In the content analysis, researchers were looking for more than just how often each topic surfaced, but

how they were presented to each age group. The dependent variables of this study were the mentions of opposite sex, romance, and sex, while the independent variables were age groups of each magazine (preteen, teen, and adult). Results revealed that women's magazines were more likely to discuss how to please a man, celebrities, male behavior, and male opinions. Teen magazines most frequently discussed celebrities, cute boys, and men's opinions about women's behavior and dress. All age groups discussed behaviors men liked and disliked, fashion, and men's opinions of relationship and dating behaviors. It is acknowledged in both studies that, while there is an illusion of sexual empowerment, the underlying messages is almost always redirected or proposed in a traditional and stereotyped way. What the researchers suggested was that the message portrayed to women in sexual and romantic scripts is often two-fold (Kosta-Mikel, 2003). From first glance it appears to be one of liberation and enjoyment but the deeper ideologies are that women's behavior is only for the benefit of her male partner (Haywood, 2013). Recently, in the economic sphere, there has been some change. Women can now hold nontraditional roles in the workforce but are still seen as needing to be traditionally feminine within their sexual lives and intimate relationships (Bowleg et al., 2004). Behaviors defined by the romantic script are listed in Table 3 in Appendix B. (Haywood, 2013; Kim & Ward, 2004; Kirsch & Murnen, 2013; Kosta-Mikel, 2003; Merurio and Landry, 2008; Rose and Frieze, 1993).

The polarized roles and actions of romantic scripts paint dating as a game or competition between the sexes (Kim & Ward, 2004). For example, in the first date scripts defined by Rose and Frieze (1993), men and women seem to play a cat and mouse type courtship game where men take proactive roles (ask women on date, driving, opening doors, initiation sexual activities) and women reactive roles (worry about the way they look, ask men to take care of her, respond positively but with restraint to sexual advances

from man to obtain his commitment) (Bowleg et al., 2004; Kosta-Mikel, 2003; Rose and Frieze, 1993). Clearly the romantic script puts the process of creating a romantic relationship as centrally important to women (Haywood, 2013; Menard & Kleinplatz, 2007). Essentially, the romantic script, promoted and maintained through the media, created an atmosphere where men control relationships and women sustain relationships (Bowleg et al., 2004). Romantic scripts are pervasive and reinforce stereotypical gendered behavior that may objectify and sexualize women. The next section of the paper examines the outcomes of feeling objectified.

The Media, Self- Objectification, and Psychological Outcomes

Concern about the connection between media exposure and the frequency of negative cognitive, psychological, and behavioral consequences in young women ignited researchers in the field of psychology to take a closer look at what causes these negative effects. Most of this research focuses on the media's objectification of women when presenting the narrow gendered scripts that it often does. Objectification separates a woman from her body and her body becomes the representation of her whole self (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Muehlenkamp, 2002). Psychological research has investigated how being objectified teaches women to view themselves as an outsider would, and to not be focused on their internal sensations and feelings (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Muehlenkamp, 2002). In 1997, Fredrickson and Robert's study on the experience of women living in an objectifying culture lead Fredrickson & Roberts to produce the Objectification Theory. As Feminist Theory pointed out earlier, and as is now elaborated on in Objectification Theory, women live in a culture that objectifies their bodies, which causes a train of negative cognitive, psychological, and behavioral reactions including body surveillance, shame, anxiety, reduced motivational states, and

poor internal awareness of body states and emotion. These outcomes have been demonstrated in subsequent research, and will be described below.

According to this theory, the consequences listed above are hypothesized to be caused by women internalizing the objectifying standard of their culture and turning their focus inward to view themselves from an outsider's perspective. Fredrickson and Roberts called this phenomenon self-objectification. The researchers also found that the negative psychological outcomes of self-objectification can manifest into negative mental health risks that include depression, low self-esteem, and disordered eating (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Below I will outline Objectification Theory and how in an experimental setting, objectifying media has been shown to produce negative psychological effects in women that can in turn lead to unhealthy behaviors.

The current study and the previous self-objectification research discussed in this section use measures of media exposure, body shame, anxiety, body surveillance, and internalization of beauty standards to understand potential causes of self-objectification, what promotes whether a woman internalizes objectification, and the psychological and behavioral outcomes of it. In cultures where women are objectified, such as in many current Western cultures, women experience many sources of objectifying messages. Objectifying media include many different sources such as TV, radio, marketing ads, magazines, and social media networks (Kosta-Mikel, 2003; Menard & Kleinplatz, 2007; ter Bogt et al., 2010; Vanderbosch & Eggermont, 2012; Zurbriggen, Ramsey & Jaworski, 2001). Media is a source of objectification because it is highly scripted, and focuses on women's bodies in an objectifying manner. It can also take form outside of the media in actions including sexual gazing by others, comments about women's bodies, evaluations of a woman's worth based on her looks, sexual harassment and violence (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Muehlenkamp, 2002). Psychological research has investigated how being

objectified teaches women to view themselves as an outsider would and to not be focused on their internal sensations and feelings (Muehlenkamp, 2002; Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). This is because women are valued for their bodies and their looks. There are clear punishments and rewards for complying or not complying to the cultural expectations of women (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Women who internalize and follow these norms experience better life experiences. Those who do not, have less social mobility, worse educational experiences, experience job discrimination, and hostility in the workplace and in everyday interactions with others (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). In this section, I will discuss the current literature on how this objectification process happens and the psychological outcomes of objectification.

As stated in Objectification Theory, an objectifying culture has negative consequences on those which it objectified. Those that are objectified by their culture, media, and others, internalize those ideals in a process called self-objectification (Zurbriggen et al., 2011). Researcher Aubrey (2007) studied the way exposure to objectifying media can have negative consequences for a woman's self-perception. Her study focused on exploring the relationship between body self-consciousness, a function of self-objectification, and objectifying TV and magazines. Participants in this study were college students between the ages of 18 and 23 years old. They measured the participants' exposure to sexually objectifying television and magazines. They also filled out inventories to measure body self-consciousness, body shame, appearance anxiety, and sexual esteem. Results from this study found that, as hypothesized, women who had high self-objectification also participated in high body surveillance. Women with high body surveillance also had high body shame and anxiety. This supports the notion that body surveillance, shame, and anxiety are behaviors and feelings associated with self-objectification. The women who scored high on both self-objectification and body

surveillance and had high levels of objectifying media, had the highest levels of self-objectification. The study can therefore draw strong connections between high levels of objectifying media leading to high levels of self-objectification.

When women self-objectify by viewing themselves as an outsider would and do not focus on their internal sensations and feelings, they are *spectatoring* (Aubrey, 2007). Spectatoring is an action, whereas self-objectification is a state. Spectatoring can be thought of as the act of self-judgment which is caused by self-objectification. Taken together, the women who self-objectify are likely to take part in spectatoring. This study suggests that spectatoring (body surveillance and anxiety) leads to self-objectification which is the internalization of one's perspective and social standards on one's own body (Aubrey, 2007; Vanderbosch & Eggermont, 2012). This same relationship was also found in younger teenage women (Vanderbosch & Eggermont, 2012). In this study, teens who read women's magazines reported higher levels of self-objectification and internalization. Therefore, teens who consumed these magazines had higher levels of internalization of the body image expectations found in the magazines and also had higher levels of self-objectification. Vanderbosch and Eggermont (2012) extended Aubrey's conclusions by emphasizing that self-objectification is a process with internalization playing a central role in that process. Morry and Staska (2001) found similar results for their participants, when they were presented women's magazines that depicted the ideal body, had increased self-objectification. This process was found to be a result of the internalization of such ideals while reading the magazine, then applying the ideals to one's own body. Both studies highlight the importance of media's part in leading women to internalize and therefore monitor their appearance because they are trying to fit into the unobtainable body standards set by the media.

Exposure to objectifying media, like in Vandebosch and Eggermont's study, prompts a chain of events that may put women's health at risk through negative cognitive, psychological and behavioral outcomes. As Eggermont and Vandebosch demonstrated, research has found that consumption of magazines is associated with higher levels of self-objectification (Kirsch & Murnen, 2013; Kosta-Mikel, 2003; Vandebosch & Eggermont, 2012; Zurbriggen et al., 2011). Higher self-objectification is related to higher behavioral manifestations of scripts, gender roles, and unhealthy behaviors in order to obtain the social standard (Vandebosch and Eggermont, 2012). Unhealthy behaviors may include body shaming, anxiety, eating disorders, depression, reduced creativity, impaired cognitive performance, and sexual (Zurbriggen et al., 2011). Zurbriggen and colleagues' study focused on the link between self-objectification in the context of romantic relationships. Participants in this study were college age men and women. They measured the participants' exposure to sexually objectifying media. They then filled out inventories for self-objectification, objectification of one's romantic partner, relationship satisfaction, and sexual satisfaction. Results from this study showed a strong correlation between self- and partner objectification, meaning those who are objectified, tend to self-objectify at a higher level. This is an important study because it recognized that people can be objectified by their significant others, known as partner-objectification. According to objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) self-objectification teaches women to view themselves as an outsider would and to not be focused on their internal sensations and feelings, therefore partner objectification may proceed, or be a causal factor in self-objectification. Partner-objectification was correlated with lower relationship satisfaction, especially in men when they objectified their female partners. This study also supported previous research by finding that

consumption of magazines that portrayed traditional scripts and gender roles lead to higher self-objectification.

Self-objectification can also be induced in a lab setting. When women are forced to self-objectify in a controlled experiment, by being asked to evaluate their own bodies, results find that the forced evaluations do put women at risk in a variety of ways (Aubrey, 2007; Vanderbosch & Eggermont, 2012). Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) stated that self-objectification produces body shame, restrained eating, as well as creating a high cognitive load in women, which inhibits their mental performance. There is research to support this theory. In one novel experiment, college women were asked to try on a swim suit or sweater. They then measured participants' BMI, had them take a challenging mathematics test, measured self-objectification, body shame, and restricted eating. Higher self-objectification, due to high cognitive load and a focus on one's own body, was significantly correlated with shame and restricted eating. In a second experiment, in which they added men, self-objectification and restricted eating were only seen in the women. Fredrickson and Roberts (1998) posit that the poor math performance was due to self-objectification which causes woman's mental resources to be diminished because of the split in their cognitive resources (p. 269). Support for this theory has been found in other research that concluded that women who self-objectify do not perform as well in math as do women who do not self objectify because of the split in mental resources and high cognitive load (Muehlenkamp, 2002).

As seen in Fredrickson and Roberts' (1998) study, discrepancy between actual-self and ideal-self, which splits a woman's mental resources especially when cognitive load is high, can put women at risk for developing negative psychological symptoms (Aubrey, 2007; Muehlenkamp, 2002). Muehlenkamp and Saris-Baglama's (2002) studied this phenomenon when they explored the psychological outcomes of self-objectification

for college women, and tested the relationship between self-objectification, eating disorders, and depressive symptoms for women in college society. They based their study on Frederickson and Roberts' previous research that postulates that self-objectification due to cognitive load and lack of internal awareness in women can promote such outcomes. Participants in the study were college age women. They had the women complete multiple inventories to measure self-objectification, disordered eating, depressive symptoms, and internal awareness. Results showed a strong connection between restricted eating, bulimic symptoms, depression and self-objectification, which supported the theory of a causal connection between self-objectification and negative psychological and behavioral outcomes. Low internal awareness (caused by cognitive load and split attention) was not found to significantly correlate with disordered eating but was significantly correlated with self-objectification in this study.

This reinforces the concept that the allocating and splitting of cognitive resources may subject women to higher levels of self-objectification before behavioral effects take place. Simply put, as hypothesized by Objectification Theory, when women consistently focus on multiple things (such as internal feelings and sensations, how others view them, and if they are attractive) they are more susceptible to higher levels of self-objectification. The link between depression and self-objectification in this study seemed to be one in which self-objectification, which includes body shame, significantly contributed to depression symptoms. Muehlenkamp's study created a path model in which cognitive load, and therefore decreased internal awareness due to lack of cognitive resources, premeditates self-objectification and depression, and self-objectification and depression premeditates disordered eating. Women who have high cognitive load are less aware of themselves, and are more vulnerable to self-objectification and depression, which in turn, could lead to disordered eating.

The negative psychological side effects of self-objectification go beyond depression and shame and might affect women's sense of overall self-worth and life-satisfaction was well (Merurio and Landry, 2008). Merurio and Landry's research reached beyond previous understanding of the effects of self-objectification and expanded their measurements to examine the relationship between self-objectification, a woman's well-being, and what role shame plays in psychological outcomes. Participants were undergraduate women. The study measured self-objectification, body shame, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. Results supported the hypothesis that self-objectification, which includes body shame and self-esteem, have a significant impact on a woman's life satisfaction. This study provides further "evidence that a preoccupation with the body is not only associated with depression, disordered eating, and other negative emotional and physical outcomes but also that it is associated with aspects of well-being such as the degree to which one feels satisfied with one's life as a whole" (Mercurio, 2008).

It is clear from past research that objectifying media and that internalization of those standards through self-objectification can greatly affect a woman's behavior in a negative way. The behavioral and psychological consequences of an objectifying culture affect every aspect of a woman's life, from the way she dresses, her self-concept, possibility of developing depression, and how satisfied she may be with her life overall. (Mercurio, 2008) This study attempted to build on past research and connect romantic scripts to the types of media that may be a cause for self-objectification among college age women. There were four different experimental groups in this study, A. Mathematics test and Romantic Script, B. Mathematics test and neutral script, C. No mathematics test and Romantic Script, and D. No mathematics test and neutral script. The mathematics test was to create cognitive load in 50% of the participants, and the scripts were used to create self-objectifying conditions or neutral conditions. I hypothesized that women who took

the mathematics test and read the script would show higher levels of self-objectification and acceptance of feminine norms. I predicted that because of the high cognitive load, these women would also eat the most M&Ms. For the group that took no mathematics test but read the romantic script, the women should show higher self-objectification and feminine norms than groups that did not receive the script, but lower than the group that received the mathematics test and script. This group should participate in the most restricted eating because they received the script but no cognitive load. The two groups that received the neutral script would show less self-objectification and acceptance of feminine norms. The group with no cognitive load and neutral script should have the lowest self-objectification and acceptance of feminine norms and they should show the least amount of restricted eating.

Method

Participants

Sixty-four participants were recruited using a convenience sample of Lake Forest College students. They were recruited via announcements as well as email flyers. Women in sororities were also invited to participate via email and flyers at meetings. This sample was restricted to heterosexual, college age (18-23) women, who were active students at Lake Forest College. Excluded participants were; Men, non-Lake Forest College students, any one below the age of 18 and above the age of 23, women who identify as lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or other, and women who are allergic to dairy, gluten, glucose, and peanuts

Measures

This experiment was a between groups 2 (Cognitive load: high, low) X 2 (Script: romantic, neutral) design with four randomly assigned groups. (A. Mathematics test and

Romantic Script, B. Mathematics test and neutral script, C. No mathematics test and Romantic Script, and D. No mathematics test and neutral script.)

Self-Objectification. Self-objectification was measured using the Self-Objectification Questionnaire (Fredrickson, 1997). Participants ranked 10 body attributes from the greatest to smallest impact on their physical self-concept. This inventory was designed to measure how much a woman self-objectifies and assesses her level of concern with her appearance without a judgmental or evaluative component seen on other objectification questionnaires (Fredrickson, 1997). This is important because negative outcomes from self-objectification are caused by being concerned with physical appearance, whether or not they were satisfied with their body is inconsequential. Scores range from -25 to +25, with positive scores indicating self-objectification. No published studies have established measurement reliability or validity for this measure. An unpublished dissertation found divergent validity was established for this measure through positive correlations with appearance anxiety, $r = .56$, body size dissatisfaction, $r = 0.33$. Body shame and self-objectification were found to be positively correlated at $r = .54$, although these are not strong measures. Test-retest reliability has not been reported in the literature (Ilaria, 2006).

Social Desirability Bias. Because participants might have felt a need to conform to their own pre-conceived standards of beauty and objectification, I measured each participant's level of social desirability with the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale is a 33-item measure that assesses response bias (Robinson, 1991). A response bias is the degree to which an individual attempts to present him or herself in a favorable light. Respondents are asked to answer true or false to the 33 items. Higher scores reflect a greater degree of socially desirable

responding. This inventory has high internal consistency ($\alpha = .88$) and test-retest reliability ($r = .89$).

The Acceptance and Action Questionnaire was also used to assess a person's experiential avoidance. The items on the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (never true) to 7 (always true) (Hayes et al., 2004). High scores reflect greater experiential avoidance, while low scores reflect greater acceptance. Hayes et al. (2004), found that the AAQ was particularly good at measuring avoidant coping and self-deceptive positivity. Hayes et al. (2004) concluded that the AAQ was reliable and valid although it seems to be more so with women than men. The social desirability inventory was found to be loosely reliable ($\alpha = .52$).

Femininity Ideals. In the current study, the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory is a 45-item scale measuring the degree to which a woman's behaviors, feelings, and thoughts, are consistent with the norms for traditional femininity. Each item is measured on a four-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Previous research has found that the CFNI-45 has strong internal consistency and high test-retest reliability (Mahalik et al., 2007). In the current study, this inventory was found to be very reliable ($\alpha = .815$).

Procedures

Participants met with the researcher in a reserved room in Hotchkiss Hall on the Lake Forest College campus. They were greeted and asked to read and sign an informed consent form (see Appendix A). Participants were asked if they have any questions. Half of the sample was randomly assigned to complete a difficult mathematics test (Cognitive load condition, See Appendix B for the mathematics problems). The other half of participants went directly to the next portion of the study (No cognitive load condition). Next, the participants were randomly assigned to read either an article about a neutral

topic, about the life of ladybugs, (No scripts condition) or an article from a woman's magazine relationship advice (Romantic script condition) (See Appendix D), that fulfills the requirements of the traditional romantic script. The participants then retake the self-objectification survey, conformity to feminine norms inventory, and a participant reliability scale again as well as an added demographic questionnaire (see Appendix E). While they were filling out the questionnaire, the researcher placed a one-pound bowl of M&Ms on the table and offered it as thanks for their participation. The bowl was weighed after the participant is finished with the surveys to measure the amount of M&Ms consumed. After completing the questionnaire, each participant went through a short meditation exercise (see Appendix F) to reduce any extra cognitive load or negative emotions that resulted from this study. They were fully debriefed and given the researcher's contact information in case they had any further questions.

Results

Data Cleaning

The first step in analyzing data is to look for skewness and kurtosis. We found that the Marlow Crowne Social Desirability scores were positively skewed, M&Ms eaten was positively skewed, the Domestic sub-scale of the CFNI was negatively skewed and had positive kurtosis, the relational sub scale was negatively skewed and had positive kurtosis, the children sub scale was positively skewed had positive kurtosis. To normalize the data that was found to be skewed or have kurtosis we searched the five non-normal scales for outliers. There were no more than two outliers for each variable so we deleted the extreme scores and reran analysis for skewness and kurtosis. The corrections to the data fixed all normality issues except for M&Ms eaten where there continued to be two outliers. To preserve the data we chose not to delete them.

Descriptive Statistics

Demographics about participants

Sixty-four women participated in this study. The mean age of participants was 19.78 years old ($M = 19.78$, $SD = 1.175$). Most participants identified as White ($n = 43$), five identified as Black, nine identified as Hispanic, and seven as other. Twelve of the participants were athletes and twenty-eight were in a sorority. On average participants exercised three times a week ($M = 3$, $SD = 1.727$).

Social desirability

The next step in the analysis process was to check for participants with high desirability to determine if social desirability may have affected scores on the dependent variables. The Marlow Crowne inventory (MC) ranges from 33-66 and the mean for participants in this sample was 45.98 ($SD = 46$) which is normal. The Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (AAQ) ranged from 10-70 and the mean score was 35.98 ($SD = 33$), thereby also showing no strong social bias. Because the MC was given prior to the script, and the AAQ was given after the script (when a script was present), it was important to understand if social desirability levels were affected by the script. The two inventories showed no correlation. Next we ran two one way ANOVAs comparing levels of social desirability on each scale between the four experimental conditions and found no significant differences between groups with regard to social desirability MC: $F(3, 57) = 0.725$, *ns*, AAQ: $F(3, 57) = 0.978$, *ns*.

Cognitive Load

There were no main effects in the dependent variables for cognitive load. Those who had high cognitive load were statistically similar on the dependent variables to those who had low cognitive load.

Study Variables

Because no negative effects of social desirability were found to affect participants

responding, we went on to look for differences in the dependent variables of Self-Objectification, CFNI, and M&Ms eaten, without controlling for social desirability. To find mean, medians and standard deviations of the dependent variables for the entire sample, see Table 5.

Correlation between Dependent Variables

Next I ran bivariate correlations between the main dependent variables (self-objectification, M&Ms eaten, and CFNI). I found no significant correlations between the main variables. Because the main dependent variables were not correlated, we ran a series of one-way ANOVAs for all of the subscales of the CFNI, instead of a MANOVA that compares multiple correlated dependent variables at the same time. We did however find correlation between self-objectification and desire to be thin (a subscale of the CFNI) ($r(62) = .388, p = .002$) and focus on appearance (also a subscale of the CFNI) ($r(62) = .287, p = .024$). There was a significant correlation between M&Ms eaten and sexual propriety, and as expected most CFNI subscales correlated strongly with each other with thinness ($r(63) = .532, p \leq .0001$), domestic ($r(62) = .365, p = .004$), appearance ($r(62) = .311, p = .013$), modesty ($r(63) = .107, p = .404, ns$), relational ($r(62) = .503, p \leq .0001$), children ($r(62) = .461, p \leq .0001$), sexual propriety ($r(63) = .482, p \leq .0001$), romance ($r(63) = .648, p \leq .0001$), and sweet and nice ($r(62) = .404, p = .001$) having significant correlations to the CFNI.

Comparing Experimental Conditions for Each Dependent Variable

To examine the effects of experimental condition on self-objectification, feminine ideals, and M&Ms eaten, we ran separate ANOVAs for each dependent variable. There were no significant differences in self-objectification between experimental conditions, $F(3, 59) = .895, ns., \eta^2 = .044$. There were no significant differences in feminine ideals between experimental conditions, $F(3, 59) = 1.74, ns., \eta^2 = .081$. There were no

significant differences in M&Ms eaten between experimental conditions, $F(3, 58) = .269$, $ns.$, $\eta^2 = .014$. Many of these analyses dependent variables showed a medium to large effect size. This suggests that although they may not be significant, there is some effect and adding more power to the study may have resulted in significant findings.

In order to increase power, I collapsed across categories to determine main effects of reading a neutral script or romantic script, regardless of cognitive load for participants who ate M&Ms. I ran an ANOVA to look for an effect of script verses no script on those who ate M&Ms to see if the use of the script affected the dependent variables. The only significant effect found was that those who received the script were significantly more interested in domestic tasks than those who did not read the romantic script $F(1, 21) = 4.713$, $p = .056$, $\eta^2 = .046$.

Because the CFNI means between conditions revealed a medium effect size, I examined each CFNI subscale individually. The one-way ANOVA comparing the thinness between the experimental conditions revealed a large significant effect $F(3,60) = 3.808.$, $\eta^2 = .16$, $p = .014$. See Table 6 for means and standard deviations of the CFNI subscales.

Exploratory Analyses: Demographic differences in objectification and feminine norms

Next I ran a series of ANOVAs to look for differences between demographic variables on the dependent variables (and subscales). Sorority women were found to significantly value maintaining friendships more ($F(1,61) = 3.19$, $p = .059$), to be more accepting of sexually promiscuous acts ($F(1,62) = 5.53$, $p = .022$), and want to be perceived as a sweet and nice person ($F(1,62) = 4.16$, $p = .049$) than women who were not in a sorority. See Table 7 for means of each dependent variables and CFNI subscales by sorority involvement.

In comparison to non-athletes, athletes scored significantly higher on the CFNI ($F(1,62) = 12.15$), ate more M&Ms ($F(1,60) = 4.714$), valued thinness more ($F(1,62) = 3.97$), valued children more ($F(1,61) = 4.06$), valued romantic relationships more ($F(1,61) = 1.2$), and felt a stronger need to be perceived as sweet and nice ($F(1,62) = 3.27$). See Table 8 for means of each dependent variable and CFNI subscales by athletic involvement.

Exploratory Analyses: Differences between women who ate M&Ms and those who had no M&Ms

There was a negative skew in the number of M&Ms eaten, due to many people ($n = 17$) not eating any M&Ms at all. Therefore, I separated the participants into eaters and non-eater groups to look for differences in the dependent variables based on if the person ate M&Ms or not. A medium significant effect was found on the CFNI dependent variable between those who ate M&Ms and those who did not $F(1,60) = 4.09$, $p = .048$, $\eta^2 = .064$. Those who ate M&Ms had a higher CFNI score ($M = 82.71$, $SD = 12.13$) than those who did not ($M = 76.11$, $SD = 9.33$). Those who did not eat M&Ms endorsed more sexually promiscuous activity and those who ate M&Ms endorsed sexual promiscuous acts significantly less $F(1,60) = 25.057$, $p \leq .0001$.

When looking at the participants who ate M&Ms, they scored significantly higher on the CFNI children subscale scale, with a large effect size, than participants who did not eat M&Ms, $F(60, 1) = 7.24$, $p = .009$, $\eta^2 = .108$. Thinness was trend between groups with Math and Script having the highest scores, then No Math & No Script, then No math & Script, and math and No Script having the lowest interest in thinness $F(60, 1) = .062$, $p = .052$, *ns*. See Table 9 for means in each conditions.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to investigate the possible influence of romantic scripts in women's magazines on women's level of self-objectification, feminine ideology, and restricted eating behaviors. Past studies have found solid connections linking media to self-objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). I also examined the role that cognitive load plays in self-objectification. Additionally, studies suggest that restricted eating is a direct psychological outcome of self-objectification and cognitive load, created from a woman's need to focus on attaining the gendered script of the culture (Muehlenkamp, 2011). Therefore this study investigated the influence of both cognitive load and romantic scripts on self-objectification, feminine ideology, and consequently restricted eating.

The current study and the previous self-objectification research used measures of media exposure, body shame, anxiety, body surveillance, and internalization of beauty standards to understand potential causes of self-objectification, what promotes whether a woman internalizes objectification, and the psychological and behavioral outcomes of it. The validity of respondents' data was checked by administering a social bias inventory to make sure respondents were responding honestly, and not how just how they think they should respond. Validity of the participants' responses was found to be high because the results of the social bias inventories showed no significant social bias in respondents answers.

I hypothesized that women who have high cognitive load and are subjected to the romantic script would show higher levels of self-objectification and acceptance of feminine norms. I predicted that because of the high cognitive load, these women will also eat the most M&Ms. For the group that had no cognitive load with exposure to romantic script, the women should show higher self-objectification and feminine norms than groups that did not receive the script, but lower than the group who received the mathematics test and script. The two groups that received the neutral script would show

less self-objectification and acceptance of feminine norms. The group with no cognitive load and neutral script should have had the lowest self-objectification and acceptance of feminine norms and they should show the least amount of restricted eating. However, there were no significant findings due to low power. One reason for non-significant results was that power was lacking in this study, which will be discussed later on in the discussion session.

The results of this study did show a positive correlation between self-objectification, thinness, and focus on appearance with higher levels of self-objectification correlating with a strong need to be thin and invest in one's appearance. This is consistent with Fredrickson and Robert's (1997) Objectification Theory where women internalize the objectifying standard of their culture and turning their focus inward to view themselves from an outsider's perspective. In American culture, women are objectified in a way that pressures them to be thin and to view themselves as an outsider would by focusing on appearance rather than internal sensations and feelings (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Muehlenkamp, 2002). Therefore, the positive correlation between self-objectification, thinness, and focus on appearance supports Objectification Theory.

One of the main demographics collected from participants was their involvement in sorority life. Sorority women were found to significantly value maintaining friendships more, to be more accepting of sexually promiscuous acts, and want to be perceived as a sweet and nice person than women who were not in a sorority. This is congruent with ter Bogt and colleagues' (2010) study which suggested that the heterosexual script teaches women that they are responsible for creating and maintaining relationships, and must do it well in order to be happy. A sorority is a primarily social and philanthropic organization for women focused in creating lasting relationships and doing good in the

community. Therefore, it is no surprise that sorority women want to be perceived as nice and friendly, as well as highly value relationships.

I did look for demographic differences and found no significant differences. This may be because of the small number of each race, or because the romantic script used in this study was pulled from a magazine primarily focused on white women. There are women's magazines marketed toward racial minorities but in order to keep the study as consistent as possible, all participants reading a romantic script, read it from the same magazine. Future research should investigate if there are different romantic scripts by race and what effects they may have.

Another piece of demographic information collected from participants was their involvement in athletics. In comparison to non-athletes, athletes scored significantly higher on the CFNI, ate more M&Ms, valued thinness more, valued children more, valued romantic relationships more, and felt a stronger need to be perceived as sweet and nice. These results are also congruent with ter Bogt and Colleagues (2010) in the same way that is applies to those who are in a sorority because an athletic team typically spends a vast amount of time together and social cohesion, shared goals, and strong relationships are valued in a well working team. Athletes were more likely to eat M&Ms than non-athletes. However, it is hard to tell if the athletes ate more M&Ms due to the higher caloric intake needed or because they showed less restricted eating.

I also analyzed the data for only the women who consumed at least one gram of M&Ms. I chose to run this analysis due to the negative skew in the number of M&Ms eaten because many people ($n = 17$) ate no M&Ms. Those who ate M&Ms had a higher CFNI score than those who did not eat M&Ms, particularly the CFNI children subscale scale. This could be due to those women being more susceptible to the influence of the independent variables than the women who did not eat any M&Ms. Conversely, those

who did not eat M&Ms endorsed more sexually promiscuous activity and those who ate M&Ms endorsed sexual promiscuous acts significantly less. This interaction is interesting and could be further explored as to the reason in future research.

Power limitations

This study had several potential power limitations that could have contributed to the non-significant results regarding the main hypotheses. First, the sample size was very small with only around 15 participants for each group. I found it particularly hard to recruit women to participate in this study, and of the women who signed up, only about 50% showed up to participate in the study. Having such a small sample ($N = 64$) may have been the cause for results showing medium to large effect sizes without reaching statistical significance. If the study were to have had more participants, there may have been significant results.

A second reason for lack of power may have been lack of strength in the independent variable of script type. The article used as a representation of the romantic script took about ten minutes to read. If a woman were to read through an issue of a women's magazine, it would take much longer and may therefore have a larger effect on the internalization of the scripts. Although I could have required participants to read a full issue of a women's magazine, this option was inconvenient and it would have muddled my independent variables by exposing participants to multiple types of scripts when my goal was to only have them exposed to a romantic script. It was my hope that reading an article for about ten minutes, as was done in this study, could impact the participants enough to affect their responses to the inventories. Additionally it would be helpful to measure what magazines women on this campus do read the most.

Limitations

Like every study, this study has multiple limitations. The first limitation of small sample size was already mentioned above. Small sample size limited the power of the results. The sample was also a convenience sample. Women were recruited through psychology classes, by direct request from the researcher, and overwhelmingly through the Greek life system. While a convenience sample is fast, inexpensive, and easier than random sampling, a disadvantage of using the convenience sample is the limitation it places on the studies' ability to generalize the results to the whole population. It follows then, that the convenience sample used in this study may have lower external validity than the same study done with random sampling because the sample is may not be truly representative of the population. For example, my participants may not have been easy to generalize because the people who were most convenient for me to recruit were my own sorority sisters and psychology students. To say that the results from girls in my specific sorority and psychology majors can, or should, be applied to all college women is because the decision of which major or social groups could be a result of a personality trait that people who do not choose to be in those groups do not have.

Another limitation to this study is that the use of the experimental method may have produced unnatural behavior and results that did not reflect real world situations. For example, the lab experience may make participants uncomfortable and affect the way they would act naturally. Women may feel pressure to "be polite" and not eat M&Ms, or the stress of the experiment caused them to eat more than they typically would. This means that it is hard to know how reliable the M&Ms dependent variable was. Participants may not have read the whole article or consciously resisted the internalization of the scrip. Both failures to read the script and resist the script could have been confounding variables. Regardless, I believe that in this study, the trade off of

experimental control for lower ecological validity was more helpful to the study than harmful in order to maintain the internal validity of the study.

The variability of M&Ms consumed could have also been a limitation to this study. Some women indicated on their informed consent that they were not allergic to chocolate yet a good portion of participants refrained from eating any M&Ms. This could be because some women do not like chocolate and therefore did not eat it. Chocolate is also a food that some people may want to eat later in the day than earlier, so timing of the study may have affected the participants' hunger for chocolate. Several participants were run in the morning before noon, and therefore their appetites for chocolate might have been muted, regardless of their experimental condition. This might have made detecting differences between groups difficult.

This experiment may have confounding variables such as individual variability including affiliation is sorority life, social class, and student's major. Because of the constrained convenience sample from women at Lake Forest College it could be hard to generalize to all women of this age. There are also environmental factors such as time of time of day, time in semester, and season that may affect the participants.

Lastly, regional influences may have played a role in the results of this study. Residing in a Midwestern state may influence the culture that the women participating in the study live in daily. The Chicago area is known for liberal values, often associated with the feminist movement toward equality and lack of traditional roles. This regional culture may obstruct the ability of the independent variable of script to have a strong effect because the women are conditioned by the regional culture to reject traditional, often objectifying standards for women. Similarly, one may expect those living in a southern state that is predominately conservative and values tradition to score higher on inventories assessing the internalization of traditional femininity ideals (CFNI) and self-

objectification inventories. Future research may want to look into how different regional cultures affect women's vulnerability to self-objectification.

General Conclusion

While none of my original hypothesis were supported in this study, they were not completely refuted either. The medium and large effect sizes indicate that a larger sample size would have pulled those results with medium and large effect sizes into significant findings. The significant results I found between dependent variables, subscales, and demographics, remained consistent with past research. Overall, women who are involved with teams or social clubs that require social cohesion, shared goals, and emphasize the importance of strong relationships score significantly higher on their acceptance of feminine norms including thinness and appearance. While self-objectification was not significantly high for these groups, the internalization of such traditional feminine norms, as Vanderbosch and Eggermont (2012) demonstrated, is highly correlated with self-objectification that could lead to negative psychological and behavioral outcomes.

Future research should strive to strengthen the romantic script and possibly look to differences in geographical regions. To create more power in the script variable, researchers could have set up an interaction setting where the researcher initiates the script with the participant in order to make it more personal and therefore increase internalization. Other ways to create more power for the romantic script would be to lengthen the script by having participants read more articles or watch long videos depicting the romantic script. If I were given the chance to complete another study on this subject I would want to compare the psychological and behavioral reactions of women to men when they are confronted with their gender's romantic script. Finally, it would be interesting to see how men react to their romantic script and if it encourages them to objectify themselves or others.

This study has laid the groundwork for future studies on the Lake Forest Campus to investigate the effects of romantic scripts. While the main variables were found to have non-significant results, the significant effects and differences found within the CFNI subscales, as well as the medium to large effect sizes suggests that there is more research to be done here. Generalization of results may be hard due to the possible confounding variables of convenience sampling and low power. It would be best to generalize the results to athletes and Greek life because of the large numbers of each in the study.

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Appendix A

The Acceptance and Action Questionnaire

Below you will find a list of statements. Please rate how true each statement is for you by circling a number next to it. Use the scale below to make your choice.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
	never true	very seldom true	seldom true	sometimes true	frequently true	almost always true	always true				
1	It's OK if I remember something unpleasant.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	My painful experiences and memories make it difficult for me to live a life that I would value.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I'm afraid of my feelings.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I worry about not being able to control my worries and feelings.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	My painful memories prevent me from having a fulfilling life.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I am in control of my life.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Emotions cause problems in my life.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	It seems like most people are handling their lives better than I am.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Worries get in the way of my success.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	My thoughts and feelings do not get in the way of how I want to live my life.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Marlow-Crowne

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Please read each item and decide whether the statement is true or false as it applies to you. For each item, please circle TRUE or FALSE.

1. Before voting I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates.

TRUE or FALSE

2. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.

TRUE or FALSE

3. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.

TRUE or FALSE

4. I have never intensely disliked anyone.

TRUE or FALSE

5. On occasion I have had doubts about my ability to succeed in life.

TRUE or FALSE

6. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.

TRUE or FALSE

7. I am always careful about my manner of dress.

TRUE or FALSE

8. My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out at a restaurant.

TRUE or FALSE

9. If I could get into a movie without paying and be sure I was not seen I would probably do it.

TRUE or FALSE

10. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.

TRUE or FALSE

11. On a few occasions I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.

TRUE or FALSE

12. I like to gossip at times.

TRUE or FALSE

13. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority, even though I knew they were right.

TRUE or FALSE

14. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.

TRUE or FALSE

15. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.

TRUE or FALSE

16. I am always willing to admit when I made a mistake.

TRUE or FALSE

17. I always try to practice what I preach.

TRUE or FALSE

18. I don't find it particularly difficult to get along with loud-mouthed, obnoxious people.

TRUE or FALSE

19. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.

TRUE or FALSE

20. When I don't know something, I don't mind at all admitting it.

TRUE or FALSE

21. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.

TRUE or FALSE

22. At times I have really insisted on having things my own way.

TRUE or FALSE

23. There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things.

TRUE or FALSE

25. I never resent being asked to return a favor.

TRUE or FALSE

26. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.

TRUE or FALSE

27. I never begin a long trip without checking the safety of my car.

TRUE or FALSE

28. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.

TRUE or FALSE

29. I have almost never felt the urge to tell someone off.

TRUE or FALSE

30. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.

TRUE or FALSE

31. I have never felt that I was punished without cause.

TRUE or FALSE

32. I sometimes think when people have a misfortune they only got what they deserved.

TRUE or FALSE

33. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.

TRUE or FALSE

Self-Objectification

We are interested in how people think about their bodies. The questions below identify 10 different body attributes. We would like you to rank order these body attributes from that which has the

greatest impact on your physical self concept (Rank this a “9”),
to what which has the

least importance on your physical self-concept (Rank This a “0”).

Note: it does not matter how you describe yourself in terms of each attribute. For example, fitness level can have a great impact on your physical self-concept regardless of whether you consider yourself to be physically fit, not physically fit, or any level in between.

Please first consider all attributes simultaneously, and record your ranking ordering by writing the ranks in the rightmost Column.

IMPORTANT: Do not assign the same rank to more than one attribute.

9 = greatest impact

8 = next greatest impact

:

1 = next to least impact

0 = least impact

When considering your physical self-concept... _____

1. ...what rank to you assign to physical coordination? _____

2. ...what rank to you assign to health? _____
3. ...what rank to you assign to weight? _____
4. ...what rank to you assign to strength? _____
5. ...what rank to you assign to sex appeal? _____
6. ...what rank to you assign to physical attractiveness? _____
7. ...what rank to you assign to energy level (e.g., stamina)? _____
8. ...what rank to you assign to firm/sculpted muscles? _____
9. ...what rank to you assign to physical fitness level? _____
10. ...what rank to you assign to measurements (e.g., chest, waist, hips)? _____

Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory

The following pages contain a series of statements about how women might think, feel or behave.

The statements are designed to measure attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors associated with both traditional and non-traditional feminine gender roles.

Thinking about your own actions, feelings and beliefs, please indicate how much you personally agree or disagree with each statement by circling **SD for "Strongly Disagree", D for "Disagree", A for "Agree," or SA for "Strongly Agree."** There are no right or wrong responses to the statements. You should give the responses that most accurately describe your personal actions, feelings, and beliefs. It is best if you **respond with your first impression** when answering.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1 I would be happier if I was thinner	SD	D	A	SA
2 It is important to keep your living space clean	SD	D	A	SA
3 I spend more than 30 minutes a day doing my hair and make-up	SD	D	A	SA
4 I tell everyone about my accomplishments	SD	D	A	SA
5 I clean my home on a regular basis	SD	D	A	SA
6 I feel attractive without makeup	SD	D	A	SA

7 I believe that my friendships should be maintained at all costs	SD	D	A	SA
8 I find children annoying	SD	D	A	SA
9 I would feel guilty if I had a one-night stand	SD	D	A	SA
10 When I succeed, I tell my friends about it	SD	D	A	SA
11 Having a romantic relationship is essential in life	SD	D	A	SA
12 I enjoy spending time making my living space look nice	SD	D	A	SA
13 Being nice to others is extremely important	SD	D	A	SA
14 I regularly wear makeup	SD	D	A	SA
15 I don't go out of my way to keep in touch with friends	SD	D	A	SA
16 Most people enjoy children more than I do	SD	D	A	SA
17 I would like to lose a few pounds	SD	D	A	SA
18 It is not necessary to be in a committed relationship to have sex	SD	D	A	SA
19 I hate telling people about my accomplishments	SD	D	A	SA
20 I get ready in the morning without looking in the mirror very much	SD	D	A	SA

21 I would feel burdened if I had to maintain a lot of friendships	SD	D	A	SA
22 I would feel comfortable having casual sex	SD	D	A	SA
23 I make it a point to get together with my friends regularly	SD	D	A	SA
24 I always downplay my achievements	SD	D	A	SA
25 Being in a romantic relationship is important	SD	D	A	SA
26 I don't care if my living space looks messy	SD	D	A	SA
27 I never wear make-up	SD	D	A	SA
28 I always try to make people feel special	SD	D	A	SA
29 I am not afraid to tell people about my achievements	SD	D	A	SA
30 My life plans do not rely on my having a romantic relationship	SD	D	A	SA
31 I am always trying to lose weight	SD	D	A	SA
32 I would only have sex with the person I love	SD	D	A	SA
33 When I have a romantic relationship, I enjoy focusing my energies on it	SD	D	A	SA

34 There is no point to cleaning because things will get dirty again	SD	D	A	SA
35 I am not afraid to hurt people's feelings to get what I want	SD	D	A	SA
36 Taking care of children is extremely fulfilling	SD	D	A	SA
37 I would be perfectly happy with myself even if I gained weight	SD	D	A	SA
38 If I were single, my life would be complete without a partner	SD	D	A	SA
39 I rarely go out of my way to act nice	SD	D	A	SA
40 I actively avoid children	SD	D	A	SA
41 I am terrified of gaining weight	SD	D	A	SA
42 I would only have sex if I was in a committed relationship like marriage	SD	D	A	SA
43 I like being around children	SD	D	A	SA
44 I don't feel guilty if I lose contact with a friend	SD	D	A	SA
45 I would be ashamed if someone thought I was mean	SD	D	A	SA

Appendix B

Table 1

Heterosexual Script Examples

<u>Heterosexual Scripts</u>	
<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
Women should meet men's needs in order to obtain a mate.	Men should focus on their own, uncontrollable, needs.
Women should be impressed and attracted to male displays of power.	Men should impress women by showing physical and material power
Women should prioritize relationships.	Men should prioritize work and success.
Women require relationships to be happy.	Men do not require relationships to be happy.
Women should ask for increased commitment.	Men should avoid increased commitment
Women should make personal sacrifices to obtain and maintain relationships.	Men should not make personal sacrifices to obtain and maintain relationships.

Table 2

Sexual Script Examples

<u>Sexual Scripts</u>	
<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>

Good sex only happens in a committed relationship, long term relationship.	Men can have good sex without commitment.
Women must improve their sexual techniques to enhance the pleasure of their partners.	Men do not need to know sexual techniques because it comes naturally.
Women should not show that they like sex.	Men should love sex.
Women should not be interest in sex for themselves, but primarily to fulfill the wishes of their partner.	Men should think about sex consistently and try and it should feel good to them.
Women should worry about their body image.	Men do not need to worry about the way they look.

Table 3

Romantic Script Examples

<u>Romantic Scripts</u>	
<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
Women should encourage men to communicate and be emotionally intimate.	Men should avoid commitment and emotional intimacy.

Women should relieve men's anxiety about their performance through assurance.	Men should not participate in the maintenance of relationships and will put others and sex above a relationship.
Women should be submissively waiting to be asked out through dressing provocatively, ego stroking, pretending to be helpless, or light flirtation.	Men should be assertive and ask women out, make the first move, and require sexual intimacy.
Women should worry about their body image.	Men do not need to worry about the way they look.
Women sustain relationships.	Men control relationships.

Table 4

Cognitive Load Statistics

	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>F</u>
Marlow-Crowne	61	45.98	2.58	.238
Acceptance and Action	61	35.1	6.85	1.52

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Self-Objectification, CFNI, & M&Ms Eaten

	<u>Self-Objectification</u>			<u>CFNI</u>			<u>M&Ms Eaten (g)</u>		
	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u><i>M</i></u>	<u><i>SD</i></u>	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u><i>M</i></u>	<u><i>SD</i></u>	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u><i>M</i></u>	<u><i>SD</i></u>
All Pp	63	-0.968	12.93	63	80.67	11.79	62	19.48	18.94
Ate M&Ms	45	-1.69	12.6	45	82.71	12.13	46	28.09	18.96
No M&Ms Eaten	17	2.11	13.21	17	76.1	9.33	17	0	0
Condition									
Romantic Script, Cog Load	15	-0.6	10.91	15	85.8	13.01	15	17.06	14.79
Neutral Script, Cog Load	17	-3.65	11.94	17	77.47	9.22	16	22.9	18.13
Romantic Script, No Cog	16	-2.56	14.72	16	78.06	10.28	16	45.69	2.8

Load

Neutral 15 3.4 13.92 15 81.93 13.65 15 19.47 22.2

Script,

No Cog

Load

Table 6

CFNI subscale Means and Standard Deviations

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>η</i> ²
Thinness	8.1	3.17	3.81*	.16
Domestic	10.9	2.6	.958	.046
Appearance	8.9	2.8	1.09	.052
Modesty	6.73	2.3	.178	.009
Relationships	9.24	2.02	.156	.008
Children	9.76	3.4	.316	.016
Sexual	7.09	3.62	1.37	.064
Propriety				
Romantic	7.8	3.02	.615	.03
Relationships				
Sweet and Nice	11.34	2.14	.338	.017

Note. * indicates a significant finding

Table 7

Dependent Variable Means by Sorority Involvement

	<u>In a Sorority</u>	<u>Not in a Sorority</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>η^2</u>
CFNI	81.36	80.11	.17	.003
Self-Objectification	.46	-2.11	.615	.01
M&Ms Eaten	18.53	20.26	.126	.002
Thinness	9.32	8.41	1.29	.02
Domestic	11.85	10.11	7.73*	.112
Appearance	9.1	8.5	.69	.01
Modesty	6.86	6.63	.14	.002
Relationships	9.92	9.02	3.19	.05
Children	9.57	9.91	.15	.003
Sexual Propriety	5.9	8	5.52*	.081
Romantic	8.03	7.6	.31	.005
Relationships				
Sweet and Nice	10.75	11.8	4.01*	.061

Note. * indicates a significant finding

Table 8

Dependent Variable Means by Athletic Involvement

	<u>Athlete</u>	<u>Non-Athlete</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>η^2</u>
CFNI	90.5	78.35	12.15*	.17
Self-Objectification	-2.16	-.69	.126	.002

M&Ms Eaten	29.83	17	4.71*	.072
Thinness	10.41	8.44	3.97	.06
Domestic	11.58	10.72	1.06	.017
Appearance	8.59	8.82	.07	.001
Modesty	7.5	6.55	1.66	.026
Relationships	10	9.29	1.19	.019
Children	11.5	9.35	4.06*	.062
Sexual Propriety	8.41	6.71	2	.031
Romantic Relationships	10.17	7.25	10.42*	.143
Sweet and Nice	12.33	11.11	3.27	.05

Note. * indicates a significant finding

Table 9

Means of M&M Eaters By Condition (M&M eaters only)

	Math and <u>Script</u>	Math and No <u>Script</u>	No math & <u>Script</u>	No Math & No <u>Script</u>
CFNI	89.75	79.23	78.66	82.45
Self-Objectification	-1.17	-4	-5	3.18
M&Ms Eaten	26.15	28.23	32.56	26.54

Thinness	10.07	7.07	8.11	9.36
Domestic	11.77	10.23	11.26	9.72
Appearance	9.83	9.23	7.55	8.63
Modesty	6.92	6.46	5.89	6.45
Relationships	10.08	9.33	9.56	9.64
Children	10.92	10	11	10.1
Sexual	9.08	8.69	7.44	7.55
Propriety				
Romantic	8.92	7.46	7	7.82
Relationships				
Sweet and Nice	11.53	11.31	11.67	11.49

Table 10

Dependent Variable Means by type of Script

	<u>Script</u>	<u>No Script</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>η^2</u>
CFNI	85	80.7	1.414	.032
Self-	-2.8	-.71	.307	.007
Objectification				
M&Ms Eaten	28.77	27.46	.054	.001
Thinness	9.27	8.13	1.72	.037
Domestic	11.71	10	4.71	.098
Appearance	8.86	8.96	.015	.00
Modesty	6.5	6.46	.004	.00
Relationships	9.86	9.48	.73	.016

Children	10.95	10.04	.99	.023
Sexual Propriety	8.4	8.17	.067	.001
Romantic Relationships	8.13	7.63	.381	.008
Sweet and Nice	11.59	11.38	.127	.003
